



NATIONAL DAY OF SWEDEN



MESSAGE

IT gives me great pleasure to extend to the Government and people of Bangladesh my warm and sincere greetings on 6th of June, the National Day of Sweden. This year, however, it is also a sad time for me, completing my final 5th year as Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh. It is now time for me to leave, but the people of Bangladesh will always be dear to my heart.

6 June has since the early part of the last century been observed as the Swedish Flag Day, with celebrations involving the Royal family and ceremonies of various kinds. However, despite a long tradition of celebrating this day, it was not until 1983 that it officially became the National Day. This day commemorates the date of two important events in the history of Sweden: the coronation on 6 June, 1523 of King Gustav Vasa, who unified the country; and the adoption, on the same day in 1809, of Sweden's first modern constitution which included the establishment of civil rights and liberties.

With only nine million people, Sweden is a small nation in terms of population. Physically, however, Sweden is three times the size of Bangladesh and the third largest country in Western Europe (after France and Spain). Because of its large area and limited number of inhabitants, Sweden is one of Europe's most sparsely populated countries with an average of only some twenty inhabitants per square kilometre with most of the population concentrated to its southern parts. Out of our 9 million inhabitants two million are under the age of 18. Sweden sees its children as a great asset and puts a lot of effort into making childhood as good as possible. Sweden topped the mothers index in the "States of the world's mothers 2009. Some of the indexes that put Sweden on the top place is that almost every child enjoys good health and education and that skilled personnel are present at virtually every birth in Sweden.

Sweden is one of the most open countries in the world when it comes to peaceful relations with other countries, not the least in the area of trade. Based on Sweden's wealth of forests, ore, hydroelectric power, engineering ingenuity and product development, Sweden is one of the world's most advanced industrialised nations. Much of the success depends on a long series of ingenious Swedish inventions and refinements of inventions. As a result, Sweden today has a large number of multinational corporations and brands compared to its modest population. Some of the names probably have a familiar ring to them for the people of Bangladesh; for example Ericsson, Volvo, Atlas Copco, IKEA, Tetra Pak, AstraZeneca, Electrolux and H&M to mention some of the most well known companies.

Although raw materials and processed raw materials still account for a sizable proportion of Swedish exports, Swedish business lies primarily in knowledge-intensive industries, where Sweden can take advantage of its advanced technological development, sophisticated infrastructure and high general educational level. Information Technology (IT) and biomedicine are two such knowledge-intensive sectors in which Swedish companies have been successfully engaged for years. Aside from these, a third Swedish industry for the future is mentioned increasingly as the "experience industry". This concept

is a new comprehensive label for inter-related creative sectors as design, music, fashion, the art industry, gastronomy, media, advertising and tourism, in which Sweden has experienced a creative revolution over the past decade. This has attracted worldwide attention and given the country substantial new export income.

Trade is not only exports. Sweden also imports much more than its relative small size would make you believe. For example, most of the Swedish textile industries were closed down in the second half of the last century and today most garments, knitwear and other textiles are imported from countries like Bangladesh. Actually, textiles make up about 98% of Bangladesh's export to Sweden. There are now more than 50 companies or agents representing Swedish exporting and importing companies in Bangladesh. While doing business Sweden sees it as a great virtue to do so responsibly and we put a lot of emphasis on corporate social responsibility (CSR). Sweden has always been in the front line regarding CSR and continues to stress the importance of conducting business in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way.

Sweden is a long-standing development partner of Bangladesh. The development cooperation began in 1971, shortly after independence, and has over the years been substantial and covered many different areas. At present the cooperation has a focus on primary health care and primary education where Sweden along with other development partners support the Government of Bangladesh in its efforts to turn the vision of equitable health care and education for all into a reality. Recently, Sweden has also engaged in the areas of urban environment and climate change. Furthermore, Sweden also supports a number of civil society organisations that work with the poor and in various ways seek to promote the respect for human rights and democratic governance. Sweden, ranked as one of the world's most successful countries when it comes to equality between men and women; has a special interest in supporting NGOs that work to support the rights of women, girls and boys. Sweden has recently undergone a mid-term review of its Development Cooperation with Bangladesh to ensure that our resources are in line with Bangladesh's priorities, and that the direction of our cooperation is still relevant.

We also look forward to implementing the Joint Cooperation Strategy, which we believe will be an important tool to maximise the impact of our combined resources and improve the way development partners and the Government of Bangladesh work together. As a member of the EU we welcome the Government's leadership in the aid effectiveness agenda and look forward to entering into discussions on Division of Labour among Development Partners.

In 2010 Sweden will allocate 1% of its GNP to official development assistance, thereby surpassing the UN goal of 0.7% set in 1970. About half of the development assistance is channelled as bilateral development cooperation via the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The other half is channelled to multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations agencies. The values and

spirit of multilateralism remains a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy and Sweden is a major donor to several multilateral organisations.

Sweden had the privilege of being the President of the Council of the European Union in second half of 2009. The European Union today has a population numbering over half a billion and constitutes the world's largest integrated economy, representing around 25 per cent of global production and one fifth of global trade. The EU also contributes around 60 per cent of total global development assistance. Holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union was a unique opportunity for Sweden to lead and influence work on important EU issues. In this regard I would like to take this opportunity to extend to the Government of Bangladesh and to all my colleagues in foreign missions a thank you for your support and good cooperation during our local Presidency.

Another cornerstone of our foreign policy is the close cooperation with the other Nordic countries. It has therefore been a special pleasure to jointly celebrate the Scandinavian National Days as we have done again this year, the third consecutive year. Our joint celebration is a good expression of our close Nordic cooperation and strong common values.

An event that currently lies close to all Swedes' hearts is the upcoming royal wedding, Sweden's first royal wedding since 30 years back. Crown Princess Victoria and her soon to be husband Daniel Westling will be married 19 June in the Great Church in the heart of the Old Town in Stockholm. Crown Princess Victoria, who visited Bangladesh in 2005, became Sweden's deputy head of state at the age of 18 and she will become Sweden's first reigning queen.

On behalf of the Swedish Government and the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka, it now gives me great pleasure in extending to the Government and the people of Bangladesh my warm and sincere greetings on this occasion. I also extend my best wishes and hopes for the continued and growing co-operation between Sweden and Bangladesh. I am convinced that there is a large scope for a further widening and deepening of our already excellent relations. The people of Bangladesh will remain close to my heart and I will continue to be an Ambassador for the future development of Bangladesh wherever I am.



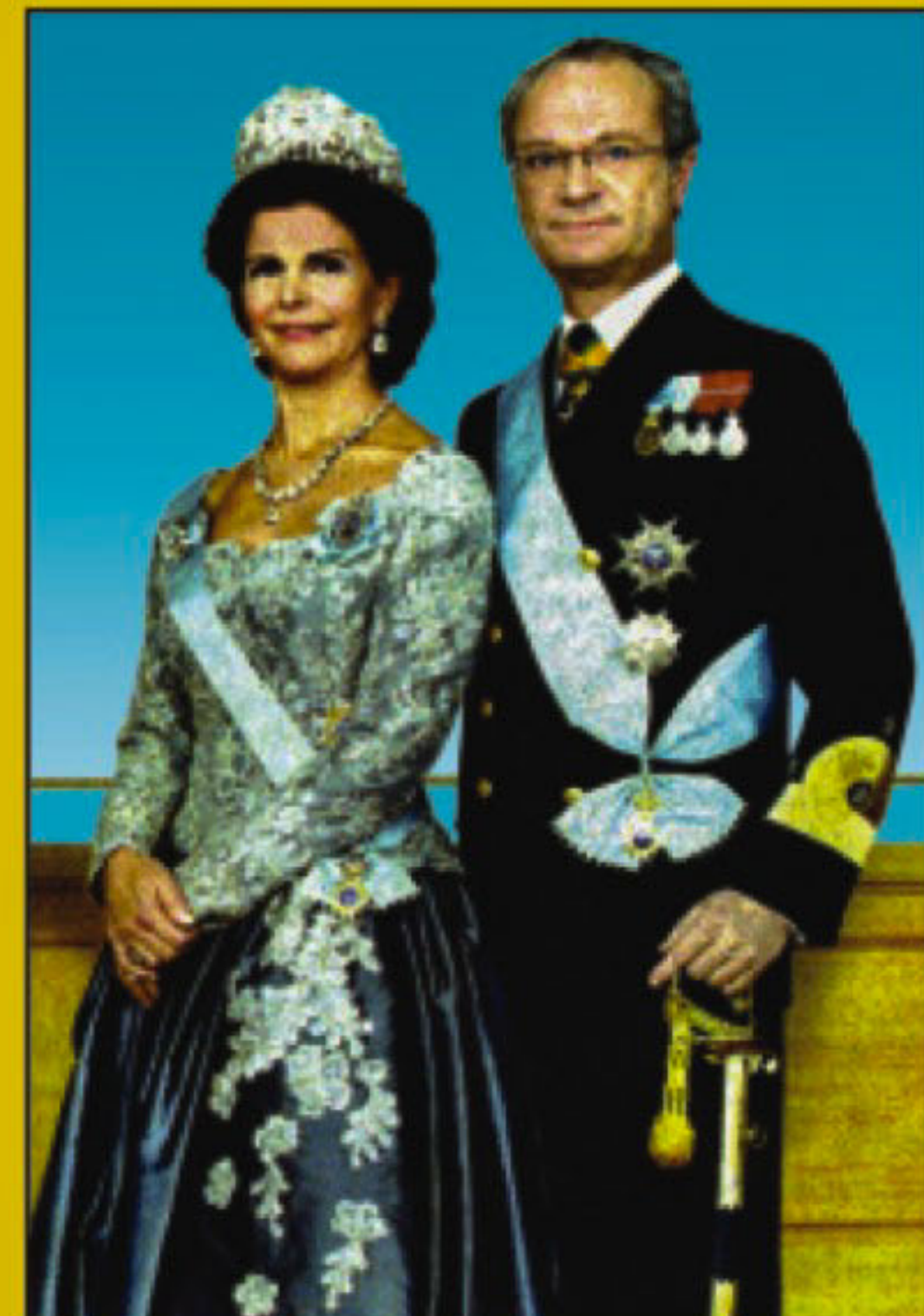
Britt F Hagstrom
Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh



His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf



"OUR BEST WISHES AND HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN"



King His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf & Queen Her Majesty Silvia Sommerlath

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A modern monarchy

The Swedish monarchy, regarded as the world's most modern, has become increasingly popular in recent years. One of the reasons for this may be that Crown Princess Victoria, who has become one of her country's most important ambassadors, will be getting married on June 19.



Crown Princess Victoria and Daniel Westling

CROWN Princess Victoria and her fiancé, Daniel Westling, announced their engagement on February 24, 2009. The couple met in 2002. The wedding will be held in the ancient Storkyrkan or Great Church in Stockholm, and the festivities will last for three days. On the first day, younger members of the world's royal families will gather for the celebration. On day two, the Swedish Parliament and Government will host the revelry and on day three, the actual ceremony will take place. In conjunction with the wedding,

Mr Westling will be invested with the title Prince Daniel, Duke of Västergötland. The wedding will be held on Saturday, June 19 this year, the same date that Sweden's reigning king, Carl XVI Gustaf, married Queen Silvia in 1976.

Carl XVI Gustaf and his family

The king, Carl XVI Gustaf, is the seventh monarch of the House of Bernadotte. He was born on April 30, 1946, the fifth child and only son of Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and Princess Sibylla of Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha. The crown prince died in an air crash in

Denmark the following year.

At the age of four, Carl Gustaf became crown prince of Sweden when his great-grandfather Gustaf V died and was succeeded by the then 68-year-old Gustaf VI Adolf, the crown prince's grandfather. Gustaf Adolf died after serving as monarch for 23 years, and the 27-year-old crown prince became King Carl XVI Gustaf in 1973. His motto is "For Sweden -- with the times."

It went click

In 1972, the crown prince met his German-Brazilian future wife, Silvia Sommerlath, who was born in 1943 in Germany. They met in Munich during the Olympic Games, where Silvia was chief hostess. It "just went click," the royal couple noted in an interview after their engagement in 1976.

A queen in step with the times

Queen Silvia is a trained interpreter without either royal or noble origins, and is the first Swedish queen to have had a professional career. She has modernised the position of queen so that it is in step with the times and has pursued a strong commitment to social issues.

The king and queen have three children: Crown Princess Victoria Ingrid Alice Désirée, Duchess of Västergötland, born on July 14, 1977; Prince Carl Philip

Edmund, Duke of Värmland, born on May 13, 1979; and Princess Madeleine Thérèse Amélie Josephine, Duchess of Hälsingland and Gästrikland, born on June 10, 1982.

The royal family has lived at Drottningholm Palace, outside Stockholm, since 1981. Today only the royal couple and the crown princess live there.

On Swedish National Day, Tetra Pak wishes everyone health and happiness.

Tetra Pak, founded in Sweden in 1951, is today world's leading food processing and packaging solutions company. As Sweden celebrates its National Day, Tetra Pak wishes you well in keeping with our vision of 'Making Food Safe and Available, Everywhere!'

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