Develop, Determine, Distribute, Promote

Philip Kotler is S C Johnson and Son Distinguished Professor of International Marketing at Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, USA. Hailed as one of the world's foremost experts on the strategic practice of marketing, Kotler is the author of the most authoritative textbooks on marketing. He has visited Bangladesh several times in the recent past and laid out a number of recommendations to achieve faster growth. In an email message, Kotler says the following.

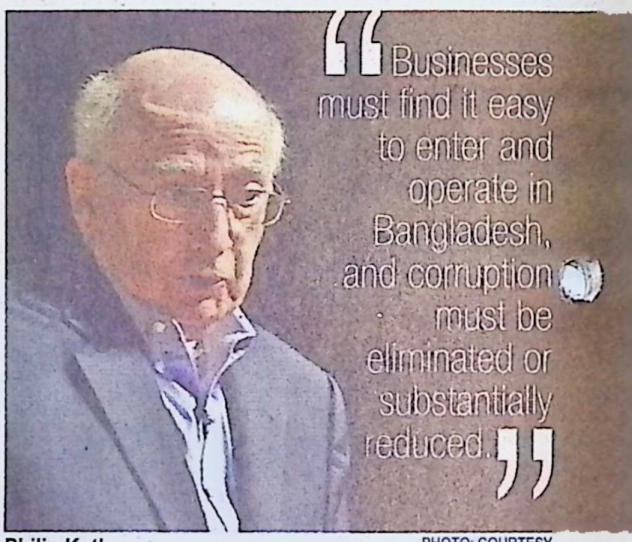
As a country of 150 million people, Bangladesh certainly deserves more of the world's attention.

The task for Bangladesh is better marketing of its assets and culture. Its assets have to be identified and promoted using modern marketing and branding tools. Bangladesh got bad press with the Rana Plaza disaster and has to prevent calamities from happening again.

Ultimately Bangladesh must determine what industries to build into its future. It must determine which multinationals to attract to help implement these industries. Multinationals will take Bangladesh seriously because of its huge population. You need top professionals running a well-financed business attraction system.

Businesses must find it easy to enter and operate in Bangladesh, and corruption must be eliminated or substantially reduced.

There is so much more that can be said but I have to stop here.



Philip Kotler PHOTO: COURTESY

Made in Bangladesh

Iraj Islam is a Bangladeshi serial entrepreneur, software engineer and product designer. Raised in Sweden, Iraj ventured back to Bangladesh where he co-founded NewsCred in 2007. Between 2007 and 2014 NewsCred raised more than USD 40 million from top-tier Silicon Valley venture capitalists and is today the world's leading content marketing platform. He was named one of Sweden's top 3 entrepreneurs by Swedish magazine InternetWorld in 2006. He was also named in the Silicon Alley 100 2012 by US publication Business Insider. *The Star* asks him how to encourage entrepreneurship in Bangladesh.

To encourage entrepreneurship we need to evangelise the importance of entrepreneurs in our society. Entrepreneurs are the creative fabric of Bangladesh. They create the artifacts and products that shape the world around us. In that process they also create millions of jobs and ultimately social welfare that our country can build upon. We need to build a culture of encouraging our youth to become entrepreneurs just like we encourage them to become doctors, lawyers and engineers.

Second, to encourage creative entrepreneurship that we see in places like Silicon Valley we need a change in mindset from cheap labour and cost-effectiveness to innovation and invention. The time has come for our nation to challenge and change the meaning of "Made in Bangladesh".



Iraj Islam

Today, most of our industries such as agriculture, garment, manpower and IT are based around the unique selling proposition of cost-effective labour. In stark contrast, our history as Bangladeshis is not one of cheap labour. Instead, our History and cultural heritage, technology, literature, arts or music is one that is rich and filled with imagination, creativity and innovation. This is who we are. The question that we need to ask ourselves is: Why is the world's leading clothing brand not Bangladeshi when we own and control all the