



## Ambassador's Message



Hanne Fugl Eskjær

IT is an honour to address you, the people of Bangladesh, on this important date in the history of Denmark. The 5th of June marks the historic day in 1849 when King Frederik VII signed Denmark's first constitution. Since then all amendment to the constitution, for instance women's right to vote back in 1915, have entered into force on the 5th of June.

The 5th of June is the day we celebrate our democracy – not only as a political system but as a way of life. Democracy is at the core of Danish society and the Constitution is the bedrock. International comparative surveys have ranked Denmark in the top on indicators such as transparency in the political system, freedom of speech and freedom of press. Most Danes will agree that these virtues can be attributed to our robust democratic system.

Denmark was among the first countries to recognise Bangladesh as an independent nation. It is inspiring to see how far Bangladesh has come; from a new nation born out of the Liberation War in 1971 to a country with impressive growth rates, remarkable social progress and the prospect of becoming a middle-income country in the near future. This is the result of the hard work and dedication of the people of Bangladesh and an achievement to be proud of.

Our strong partnership is the result of a close collaboration between Denmark and Bangladesh for more than four decades. Denmark and Bangladesh have much to gain from continuing and further strengthening this strong partnership in areas such as development, climate resilience, business, research and culture.

It's a partnership that continues to evolve with the new challenges and opportunities that emerge and during the last year many interesting initiatives have been taken. One - the 3E Energy Efficiency Project implemented by The Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh (NCCI) – is described in the article "Denmark and Bangladesh – a strong partnership". Another important initiative is related to the positive developments in the RMG sector. This year, on 19 March, the Governments of Denmark and Bangladesh launched a new joint Strategic Sector Cooperation aimed at building the capacity of Ministry of Labour and Employment, and other stakeholders involved in safeguarding occupational safety and health in Bangladesh. Denmark has a long tradition of technical cooperation in the field of occupational safety and health in other countries, and we are happy to continue this tradition in Bangladesh.

The Strategic Sector Cooperation will initially focus on the RMG sector, but the expectation is that, over time, all industrial sectors will be able to benefit from an improved capacity – including important sectors such as construction, ship building and leather.

Several initiatives have successfully addressed issues such as building-, fire- and electrical safety in Bangladesh's RMG factories over the past two years. The new joint strategic sector cooperation between Denmark and Bangladesh aims at broadening the overall inspection focus to cater for all aspects of occupational safety and health. Together, our aim is to also address workplace perils such as, for instance, chemical hazards, accidents at construction sites.

In Denmark, it is our experience that a credible and professional authority in charge of occupational safety and health benefits both workers and employers. We look forward to sharing our experiences and expertise with our Bangladeshi colleagues and counterparts.

I am convinced that the warm relations between Denmark and Bangladesh will become even stronger over the coming years. Together we have already come a long way, and we still have many things to learn from each other.

If you want to learn more about Denmark in Bangladesh, please join the more than 223,000 likes on our Facebook site [www.facebook.com/AmbDhaka](http://www.facebook.com/AmbDhaka). We would be happy to hear your thoughts and comments on our work in Bangladesh.

## Denmark and Bangladesh – a strong partnership

DENMARK was among the first countries to officially recognise Bangladesh following Independence in 1971. Bangladesh was then one of the poorest nations in the world and on the verge of humanitarian disaster. Today, a little more than 40 years later, Bangladesh has emerged as a country that enjoys impressive economic growth and remarkable social progress.

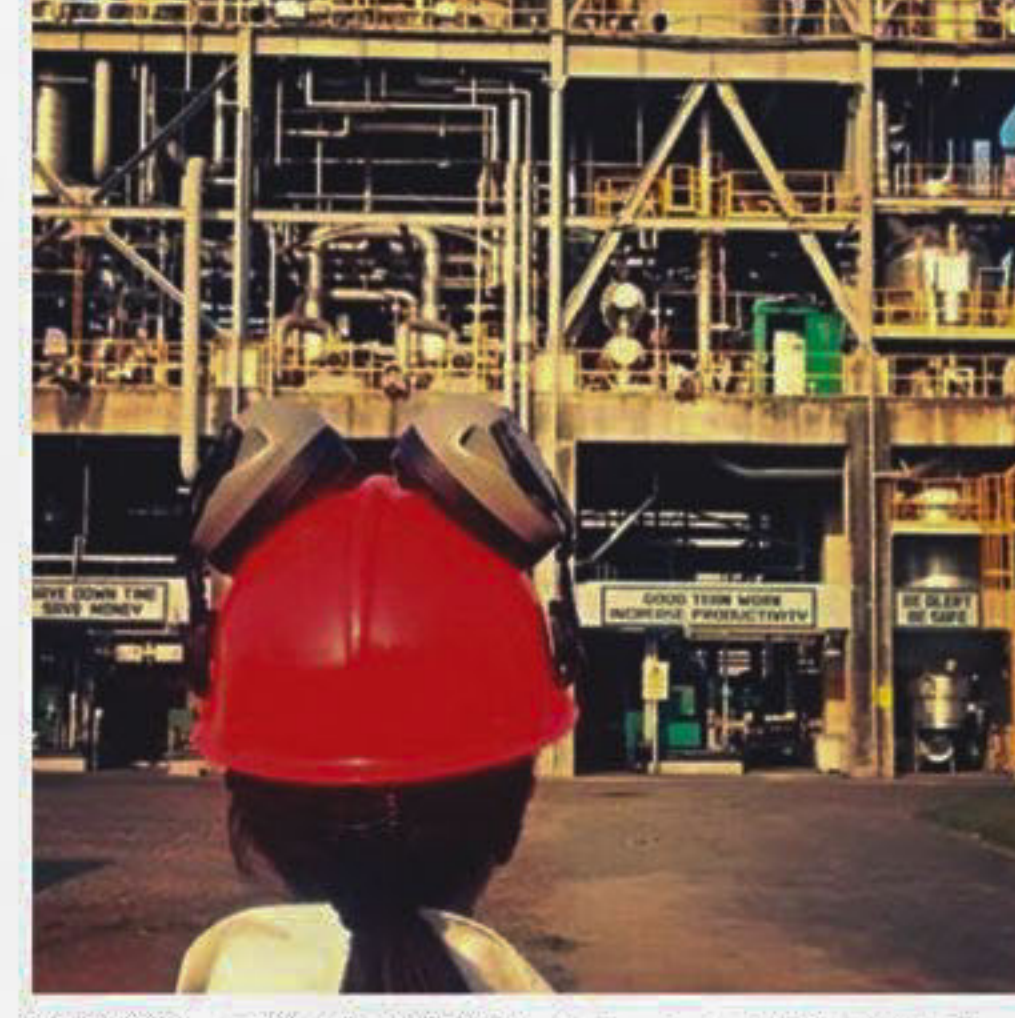
Bangladesh has been a chief recipient of Danish development assistance since the Independence. Together Denmark and Bangladesh have come a long way over those years, moving from a more traditional donor-recipient relationship to a strong partnership based on mutual interests. Poverty reduction and promotion of human rights and democracy have always been – and will remain – the overriding principles of our long-standing cooperation.

The partnership between Denmark and Bangladesh has expanded over the years to also include a strong focus on commercial cooperation. Denmark has for many years been active in promoting growth and development in Bangladesh through trade and business. Denmark has a number of business instruments at hand that bring together Bangladeshi and Danish private companies. More than 100 different partnerships have been established, creating jobs and prosperity in Bangladesh through transfer of knowledge and technology from Danish to local companies. Denmark is also putting more and more emphasis on integrating private sector into development programmes, using the know-how of Danish companies to address key challenges in Bangladesh in areas as renewable energy and water resource management.

The span of Denmark's cooperation with Bangladesh is extensive, ranging from innovative business partnerships that bring new solutions in the private sector to farmer field schools that benefit millions of people in rural Bangladesh.

### 3E - Save Energy, Be Efficient, Save Environment

Danida is supporting the 3E Energy Efficiency project implemented by The Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh (NCCI). This is a unique collaboration with a business chamber to promote energy efficient practices and technology in Bangladeshi industries. To achieve the goal, an Energy Efficiency Secretariat has been established in NCCI. The secretariat offers advisory services to Bangladeshi industries on how being more energy efficient make good



KAFCO - a Danish joint venture and the most energy efficient fertilizer factory in Bangladesh

sense in terms of profitability and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Bangladesh has impressive high growth rates in several industries, including key sectors like Ready Made Garments, Shipbuilding and Pharmaceuticals. However, unstable energy supply has led these and other industries to rely heavily on diesel powered generators. This approach is unsustainable as it increases the cost of production, put pressure on natural resources and results in higher greenhouse gas emissions.

The Government of Bangladesh is through its policies advocating for energy efficiency practices in industries. In June 2014 a study by the Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources found that 35 percent – i.e. around 2,640 Megawatt of electricity - can be saved by installing more efficient equipment. This enormous savings potential is equivalent to the capacity of 2.8 Ghorashal Power Stations - the largest power plant in terms of capacity in Bangladesh.

The 3E Secretariat offers 50 walkthrough and 5 follow-up investment grade energy audits to companies, who want to assess the energy consumption in their production facilities. The energy audits will illustrate energy savings potential and estimate profitability of energy efficiency measures. These audits will be carried out by certified consultants in collaboration with Nordic experts. Furthermore, the secretariat will host a knowledge hub on green technologies and showcase best practices and case studies within the spheres of energy efficiency. The energy audits and information from the knowledge hub is offered free of charge, to industries and individuals interested.

The 3E official launch on 5 March 2015 was a great success with 85 high-level participants from various stakeholder groups including government institutions, embassies, academia and private sector as well media. The Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr. Atiur Rahman spoke on the necessity of more energy efficiency in the industry.

Only two months after the successful launch, 24 companies have already asked for an energy audit, and the first assessment has already been performed at a major Home Textiles producer. These are good early signs that businesses are realizing that investing in energy efficiency technologies not only contribute towards reducing dependency on fossil fuels, but that it also constitutes a strong business case. Saving energy is not only good for the environment – it is also good for business and for the economy. It pays off to go green!

## Who are the Danes?



LIKE the other Nordic countries, Denmark is characterised by universal welfare services such as free healthcare and free education. The Danes also get lots of fresh air by being one of the most bicycle-friendly populations on the planet. Modern design and architecture are part of their daily lives, they consume a greater proportion of organic produce than any other people and their interest in sustainability, nature and food has resulted in the New Nordic food movement.

### The Nordic model

The small Nordic country has one of the world's most flexible labourmarkets as it is based on a 'flexicurity' system where the employers with relative ease can dismiss the workers. Workers in turn are secured by unemployment benefits, a result of decades of cooperation between employers and unions. An active labourmarket policy is another important aspect in the model. The Danish workforce is characterised by having one of the world's highest levels of education and by being very mobile. There is also a great deal of equality in the Danish job market and society as a whole, as 78 per cent of Danish women work outside the home, and in total men and women work almost the same number of hours. Combined with virtually non-existent corruption, a strong focus on innovation and one of the world's best business climates, this provides reasons why many companies decide to invest in and establish themselves in Denmark.

### A green nation

Denmark has a long tradition of ambitious and active energy and climate policies based on broad consensus in the Danish Parliament, e.g. energy and environment play a key role when new buildings and urban districts are planned, designed and built. The energy policy objectives of Denmark are to create security of supply, to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollution and ensure energy efficiency while creating a basis for commercial development both at home and abroad. The ambition is to significantly increase the harnessing of sustainable energy sources. As the first country in the world, Denmark is leading the transition to a green growth economy by introducing a clear vision of becoming independent of fossil fuels by 2050. That's why Denmark calls itself State of Green. But as global resources are scarce, reaching this goal requires a broad range of innovative technologies and an ambitious policy framework to support them. Denmark tirelessly works with other states, in the EU and through development assistance to push for the transition towards a global green economy.

## Novo Nordisk in Bangladesh

### Changing Diabetes®

over 50 years with pride through sustainable partnership with Diabetic Association of Bangladesh

Novo Nordisk, the world's leader in diabetes care, is committed for changing diabetes® in Bangladesh. We are working to improve access to care and empower patients to take a more active role in managing diabetes. Changing diabetes® begins with seeking improvement with a view to making better life for people who have diabetes and those at risk of being diabetic. We are not simply treating diabetes. We are helping people to live better. This understanding fuels our passion to change the treatment, perception and future of diabetes. We are implementing Changing Diabetes® Barometer, Changing Diabetes® in Children and Cities Changing Diabetes® to strengthen our fight against diabetes.

Wish the people of Denmark the very best on Celebrating Constitution Day



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