

Editorial Regulatory Predictability- Still a Major Issue in Bangladesh

Progression of business environment, consistency and its sustainability depends on the regulatory predictability of a country. Unfortunately, regulatory unpredictability has been identified as a major issue that comes in the way of private sector development in Bangladesh. Regulatory unpredictability is one of the obstacles in doing business, reduce productivity, discourage private investment (domestic and foreign investment), uncertainty with regard to economic/business/investment decision.

BUILD and IFC have taken an initiative to discover the view on the regulatory unpredictability of the private sector. In this continuation, IFC, in collaboration with BUILD, conducted a survey to collect stakeholders' perceptions about the regulatory predictability in Bangladesh. Respondents for the survey were selected from 10 sectors titled Ready Made Garments, Retail and Wholesale, Cyber and Telecommunication, Real Estate, Food, Leather, Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Electronics, Light Engineering, Transport and Communication and Hotel and Restaurants to collect data.

Most of the respondents said that the Government neither provides prior notice, nor makes any consultation and conducts impact assessment before implementing laws/rules/regulations. 62% of the respondents thought that the business community has affected directly in the area of VAT, income tax, export policy, import policy and land act when the Government implements laws and rules without prior notice, consultation and impact assessment.

64.04% of the respondents think that prior notice, consultation and impact assessment would improve the predictability of business regulations for the private sector. Most of the respondents think that there is serious problem regarding the environmental clearance certificate, VAT inspection, tax inspection, VAT refunds, work permit for foreign nationals.

64.86% of the respondents think that the private sector would benefit from effective grievance mechanism. 62.16% of the respondents think that lack of effective grievance mechanisms is a major obstacle for doing business and current grievance redress system is inadequate to business needs. 60.71% of the respondents voiced an opinion that there is a lack of inconsistency and existence of conflict between the laws and administrative process to implement the laws in Bangladesh. 58.62% of the respondents said that they are aware of BUILD. 34.21% of the respondents have used BUILD to give comments. 64.86% of the respondents think that Private sector would benefit from effective grievance mechanism. It is seen that, the respondents are not satisfied on the present scenario of regulatory predictability in Bangladesh.

Some operational interventions may be taken to enhance regulatory predictability in Bangladesh like laws requiring advance notice and consultation on proposed regulation, implementation of regulatory impact assessment (RIA), periodic review of regulations, comments system on proposed regulation, e-portal of laws and regulations, database on policy support, system to measure and reduce disparity in regulatory treatment, law to mandate grievance mechanism, regulatory frameworks that ensure equal rights and protection for all investors etc.

There is a number of policies to boost the private sector and attract the domestic and foreign investment. The Government of Bangladesh is highly willing towards the industrial diversification, but the regulatory unpredictability creates hindrance to the business environment of Bangladesh. The Government should take initiatives to resolve the problems on regulatory unpredictability to facilitate the business of Bangladesh.

Ferdous Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD

CCCI gets the Chairmanship of BUILD by Rotation



Mahbubul Alam, President of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) has taken over as the Chairman of the Trustee Board of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) for the year 2018-19. Mr. Alam succeeds Nihad Kabir, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI). MCCI held the Chairmanship of BUILD in 2016 & 2017 after taking over the responsibility from Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) on a rotational basis.

Mahbubul Alam is the Consul General (Designated) of The Republic of Mali and Vice-President of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce & Industry. He is also the Vice-Chairman of Confederation of Eastern Chambers of Commerce & Industries (comprising provincial Chambers of India, Bhutan, Myanmar & Kunming of China). He is also a Director of The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FBCCI) and International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB).

BUILD is a public private dialogue platform and a private sector think tank sponsored by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

BUILD Trustee Board comprises of Abul Kasem Khan, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), Nihad Kabir, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Mahbubul Alam, President of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), Asif Ibrahim, Founder Chairman and Adviser to the Trustee Board, Farooq Ahmed, Secretary General of MCCI, A.H.M Reazul Kabir, Secretary General of DCCI and Engr. Mohammad Farque, Secretary In-charge of CCCI. Ferdous Ara Begum, CEO BUILD is the Member Secretary to the Trustee Board. BUILD is registered as a Trust and is overseen by its Board of Trustees, comprising nominees of the three Chambers.

BUILD features public-private dialogue between Government on the one hand and trade and industry on the other, based on research-backed inputs, to facilitate ease of business through relevant regulatory and policy reforms in Bangladesh. It also works as the bridge that connects the public and private sectors for better communication, coordination and collaboration in bringing reforms in business policies and procedures to improve the country's investment climate in Bangladesh.

BUILD works on five thematic areas – Tax, SMEs, Financial Sector Reforms, Trade and Investment and Sustainability and Green Growth. It undertakes much of the analysis and advocacy to support the dialogue process, and assists in ensuring preparing specific, measurable and results-based recommendations for the Government.

BUILD provides secretarial services to the Private Sector Development Policy Coordination Committee established at PMO chaired by the Principal Secretary and comprising of 13 Secretaries and 5 private sector business leaders. BUILD reports regularly to the committee.

BUILD CONNECT is sponsored by



BUILD and Business New Zealand set Formal Links to Improve in Doing Business Ranking



Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) and Business New Zealand (BusinessNZ) set formal links on November 10, 2017 by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the assistance of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE): Government to Government (G2G) Partnership Office in a bid to improving the ease of doing business indicators of Bangladesh and thus contributing for enabling business environment and investment.

This link opens up new doors for identifying regulatory barriers to private sector investment in the country and striving to eliminate such barriers finding out simplified and transparent business processes and practices. BusinessNZ will provide inputs to Bangladesh Government and private sector through BUILD in regard to steps for automation, trade facilitation, alignment with SDG goals and required regulatory reform needed for this purpose that can contribute to improving Doing Business Ranking of Bangladesh.

Under this MOU, BusinessNZ and BUILD will prepare the stage for productive public private dialogue and meaningful dialogues to share and raise voice of the private sector to the concerned for ease of doing business and eventually improve ranking of Bangladesh in this respect.

The Chief Executive Officer of BusinessNZ Kirk Hope and BUILD Chairman Nihad Kabir signed the MOU on each behalf. BusinessNZ is the New Zealand's largest business advocacy body committed to New Zealand's success – sustainable growth through free enterprise and advocates for enterprise and promoting the voice of thousands of businesses across New Zealand, and works for positive change through new thinking, productivity and innovation.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to establish a professional network, strengthen cooperation and enable exchange of information and conduct research and policy advocacy between the two organizations with a view to developing a strategic collaboration.

Under this MOU, BusinessNZ will support Bangladesh to improve Development of Performance Manufacturing Index (PMI) and Performance Survey Index (PSI) to increase credibility and investment towards the industry while BUILD as a private sector partner will accumulate private sector inputs. Besides, BusinessNZ will extend technical and expertise support for skill development by delivering value to members and sponsors by courses, professional trainings, sponsorship etc.

As a means for business to provide feedback to Government, both organizations will work together for the Development of Compliance Cost Survey and assist each other in holding dialogues, seminars, investment expositions, symposia, business conferences regarding the said issue.

The key work areas of collaboration under the MoU include capacity building/services to the chambers' members, effective public-private dialogue, compliance cost survey development and Performance of Services Index (PSI) survey development.

Asif Ibrahim, Advisor to BUILD said that this relationship will be fruitful in improving our rankings in the Doing Business Index as New Zealand is number one country in the index and we are delighted our counterparts in New Zealand also see collaboration as valuable to the future of the private sectors in our countries.

Dialogue | Advance Ruling - Process for Simplifying Import & Export Trade Procedures



BUILD CEO speaks at the Workshop at MCCI in presence of other speakers

To enlighten the private sector about "Advance Ruling System (ARS)" and its proper procedural way of use, Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) and USAID organized a dialogue workshop on "Advanced Rulings for Simplifying Export and Import Trade" on November 15, 2017 at the conference room of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The workshop underscored awareness about the ARS and made policy suggestion to the NBR to make it more business friendly.

Having welcomed the stakeholders, BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum said that the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) was adopted at the World Trade Organization's 9th Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2013 as the first major agreement to have reached by WTO Member States since the conclusion of the Uruguay Round 20 years ago.

Under the newly introduced Advanced Ruling system, the Advance Ruling Unit (ARU) will issue ruling with details information of specific items which will help the importer to be more specific and to escape the unnecessary delay of import, she said.

Advance ruling will facilitate importer and exporter through a written and binding decision issued by the Customs Advance Ruling Unit of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) upon a written request from an applicant. The ruling provides binding advice on the classification that Customs shall be applied into a particular good, before its importation.

M S Siddiqui, Former President, BIAA said the classification of product HS Codes should be included extensively in the advance ruling. He suggested for more engagement of experts and skilled human resources for manning the unit already established in the NBR.

Dr. Md. Khairuzzaman Mazumder, COP, BTFA said, in different customs houses different kinds of tariff implementation on different HS codes create severe problems for the business persons in Bangladesh. So, the implementation of the advance ruling is mandatory. Moreover, generating awareness regarding the advance ruling among the business persons is highly required at this moment.

Fakhrul Islam, First Secretary of NBR highlighted the details of the policy announced by the NBR in June 2016. He said, the HS code switching can pose a serious threat on the survival of the honest business persons. This HS code switching facilitates the dishonest business persons to evade tax. The consumer rights cannot be protected for this HS code switching. That is why the customs advance ruling has been implemented in the budget of the Government of Bangladesh.

Dr. Mohammad Abu Yusuf, Customs Specialist of USAID-BTFA, Farooq Ahmed, Secretary General of MCCI, M.S. Siddiqui, BIAA Former President, Mohammed Shahidul Islam of Rahim Afroz, Abdul Khalek, CFO of Berger Paints also spoke at the meeting. Past Presidents of BIAA were present, among them KMH Shahidul Hoque also spoke.

DCCI Former Presidents Made Courtesy Visit to BUILD



A group of Past Presidents of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by Mahbubur Rahman paid a courtesy visit to BUILD on 8th November 2017. The Presidents include (R-L) Asif Ibrahim, Matiur Rahman, Benajir Ahmed, M.H. Rahman, R. Maksud Khan, Mahbubur Rahman, Aftab-ul Islam, M A Momen, Fazle R.M. Hasan and Mohammad Shahjahan Khan.

BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum warmly received them at BUILD and shortly briefed the Presidents about BUILD's activities and achievements in respect of regulatory reform. Having appreciated the activities of BUILD, they made some suggestions in regard to sustainability and expressed their utmost commitment to supporting BUILD.

Trustee Board Members Met Chairman, New AGE Group



The Trustees of BUILD met Abu Sayeed Mohammad Quasem, Chairman of New Age Group at New Age Head Office, 42/1, Indira Road, New Age Garments Conference Room (8th Floor), Farmgate, Dhaka on 26 December, 2017 after the 14th Trustee Board Meeting took place at the same place.

Having the Board Members, Nihad Kabir, Chairman of Trustee Board and President, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry met Chairman, New Age Group. As well as the Chairman, other Trustees include Abul Kasem Khan, President, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mahbubul Alam, President, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Asif Ibrahim, founder Chairman and Adviser, BUILD were present in the meeting.

They exchanged greetings and thanked Nihad Kabir for working for BUILD and ensuring sustainability and for managing an endowment fund for BUILD. Earlier in the Board Meeting all other Trustee Board members were present and had taken a number of effective decisions to run the day to day activities of BUILD.

They also put forward their opinions on the projects implemented by BUILD and suggested for presenting a bit details of the projects.

It was decided that the next 15th Trustee Board Meeting will be held in Chittagong at the office of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Asif Ibrahim Received CIP Award



On behalf of the CIP card recipients, Asif Ibrahim speaks at the occasion.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed handed the CIP cards at a ceremony held at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka. The awards were given in 22 export sectors.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said although the export volume from Bangladesh has increased, the value has not gone up much. The Government gives 3 percent cash incentive on exports to new markets and urged exporters to explore potential in those destinations, he added.

Adviser and Trustee Board Member of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) Asif Ibrahim highlighted the need for policies and support schemes for the Bangladesh export sector which are being offered by competing countries to their exporting companies. He was addressing the CIP Card Distribution Ceremony organized by the Ministry of Commerce.

On behalf of the CIP card recipients, Asif Ibrahim said Bangladesh's exporters are facing tough competition due to the devaluation of the currencies of countries such as Vietnam and Turkey. He urged the Government to take special measures to boost exports to countries such as Brazil, Mexico and Russia.

Ibrahim called for clearing of congestion in the Chittagong port and improving the infrastructure at the land ports for smooth release and transportation of export and import goods.

Ibrahim said that Bangladeshi exporters are finding it difficult to remain competitive and maintain the same rate of impressive growth. He emphasised on the need for an export monetary policy, immediate emergency attention to improve trade facilitation infrastructure in sea and land ports, waiver of tax at source for at least two years, provide 5% export performance benefit for 2 years, strengthened effort of EPB to expand into non traditional markets so that the export sector can make a rebound.

The Government would formulate a policy for the jewellery sector so that its exporters receive the cards in future, said Shubhashish Bose, Commerce Secretary.

Bijoy Bhattachariya, vice-president of the EPB, and Sheikh Fazle Fahim, acting president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, also spoke.

Articles

Growth beyond RMG

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/views/growth-beyond-rmg-1511277825>

Making sample import hassle-free to increase export competitiveness

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/views/making-sample-import-hassle-free-to-increase-export-competitiveness-1514390137>

Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh Held



Asif Ibrahim speaks at the Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh.

Speakers at the "Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh" have urged the Government to ensure its partnership with private sector, civil society and NGOs to implement programmes to achieve the sustainable development goals, set by the United Nations.

"Setting specific goals, identifying groups and actions through a collaboration between the Government, civil society, private sector and NGOs will be the biggest challenge for SDG implementations," said Prof Rehman Sobhan, eminent economist and chairman of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), while addressing the conference at the auditorium of Krishibid Institute, Bangladesh (KIB) in the city.

Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman, Executive Director of Ain o Salish Kendra Sultana Kamal, former advisor of caretaker Government Rasheda K Chowdhury, CPD executive director Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Narayanganj City Corporation Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy, BUILD Adviser Asif Ibrahim and UNDP acting country director Kyoko Yokosuka also spoke on the occasion.

Asif Ibrahim said we have organised the conference being inspired by the UN commitment to 'Leave no one behind', to create mass awareness about the SDGs in Bangladesh, develop more clarity and cohesion among the NGOs in its implementation process and explore further opportunities for Government.



BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum speaks as a panelist at the Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh 2017 Government. She demonstrated the total landscape of SDGs highlighting the role of the Government, donors and private sectors. She also said that Bangladesh needs \$929 bn additional funding from 2017-2030 to fully implement SDGs and annual average cost will be \$66.26 bn. She also noted that 42.09% of the funding will come from the private sector.

In order to give the private sector enough space to contribute, the regulatory framework should be favourable and we need to improve our position in doing business index, she said.

Consultation with the Private Sector for Policy Reform Sought



BUILD CEO Speaks at the meeting in presence of BIDA Chairman.

Chief Executive Officer of Business Initiative Leading Development, a public private dialogue platform, Ferdaus Ara Begum, said leather and leather goods, light engineering and plastic sectors combined are contributing about \$3 billion in export and creating about 2.3 million jobs, of which about 50 percent is for women.

"If some policy support is given, there is every possibility to increase sectoral export to \$10-\$12 billion within the next five years," she said.

She identified some key constraints including lack of skilled workforce, cold storage, access to proper roads, difficulties in getting electricity, awareness of social and environmental compliance, and weak integration of local industries with global value chain etc.

Ferdaus Ara said their survey found that Government usually prepares policies without proper consultation with the private sector and thus increases the cost of doing business. "There are conflicting laws, rules and regulations", she added.

Private Sector Specialist of the World Bank Hosna Ferdous Sumi said promoting investment requires "holistic approach" to support priority areas. She also cited global evidence of how countries could diversify their export products.

While chairing the meeting on "Sectoral Diversification in Bangladesh - Combined Efforts to Achieve Goal", Executive Chairman of BIDA Kazi M Aminul Islam said that we face barriers in many places due to the Companies Act, which needs to be updated soon.

He said almost a decade has been lost to make "the best" Companies Act, for which efforts are still remains continuing.

Bangladesh is currently ranked 177th among 190 countries in the World Bank's ease of doing business ranking. BIDA, which was formed by merging the Board of Investment and Privatization Commission in October last year, set an ambitious target of securing a place below 100 by 2021, which means at least 15 notches improvement would be required a year.

It has also taken steps to take investments across Bangladesh, apart from traditional places of Dhaka and Chittagong zones. A number of Chamber and Associations leaders joined the meeting for exchanging views on their respective sectors.

Diversification of export products is another area of its focus as Bangladesh's export basket is dominated by only ready-made clothes.

Simultaneous Publication of Bangla and English Version of Bangladesh Economic Review



Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of BUILD received publications from Md. Safiul Alam Hamidi, Economic Adviser, Economic Adviser's Wing, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance.

In the 3rd meeting of "Improvement of Investment Climate Working Group" at PMO on 12 September, 2017, JETRO requested the PMO to take initiatives to publish Bangla and English Version of Bangladesh Economic Review at the same time. The Bangladesh Economic Review is published by Economic Adviser's Wing, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, GoB. To know the view/comments/recommendations on "Timely Publication of Bangladesh Economic Review", a team of BUILD led by Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD met Md. Safiul Alam Hamidi, Economic Adviser, Economic Adviser's Wing, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance on 5th November, 2017 at the Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.

Bangla version contains economic data from July-February of a fiscal year. If Bangla and English versions of Bangladesh Economic Review are published at the same time (during the announcement of National Budget) then the complete data of a fiscal year (FY) will not be reflected in any of the version which will limit the use and effectiveness of Economic Review. It will also create a huge data gap of 4 months. BUILD requested Economic Adviser's Wing to publish the English version of economic review as quickly as possible after the end of the fiscal year.

Meeting between BUILD Team and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) Officials

Having requested by the foreign investors and the PMO to reduce the publication time lag of Foreign Trade Statistics (FTS), Labour Force Survey (LFS), Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), BUILD conducted a study. A team of BUILD led by Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD met Abul Kalam Azad, Director, National Accounting Wing, BBS; Kabir Uddin Ahmed, Director, Industry and Labour Wing, BBS and Dr. Dipankar Roy, Project Director, HIES Project, BBS on 9th November, 2017 at Parishankhan Bhaban, Agargaon. In the meeting the officials of BBS said:

(1) There is no integrated online linkage between BBS and NBR to share economic data. For that reason BBS has to collect data from NBR manually. To collect, compile, analyze and publish "FTS (Volume I and II)" it creates this time lag.

(2) From the running year there is no time lag in publication of the annual Labour Force Survey. BBS has decided to publish the Labour Force Survey report annually instead of in every 5 years.

(3) HIES is a round the year survey, which was technically supported by the World Bank. HIES requires 1 year to take preparation for the survey, 1 year to conduct survey and 1 year for analysis, preparation and publication. Short lived (1 year) HIES will not fill the objectives of the survey which are to determine income distribution, consumption pattern, poverty line, poverty rate etc. of Bangladesh, they opined.

Meeting with PROKAS, British Council



The meeting was held at Promoting Knowledge for Accountable System (PROKAS) on 5 December 2017. Md. Shawkat Ali Waresi, Khaled Mustafa and AmanUllah from British Council and Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of BUILD along with two research associates were present in the meeting.

The project 'Action Research on Enforcing Contracts for Improving Trade Barriers' under the Promoting Knowledge for Accountable System was the main point of discussion in the meeting. Four main objectives were set for the action research. They were to identify gaps and problems in the existing system of enforcing contracts, especially related to time and cost efficiency, effectiveness, fairness, transparency and accountability, and so on; to make a few feasible recommendations for implementation in the short and long-term; to assess feasibility of recommendations and interest and influence of relevant stakeholders for improving Enforcing Contract through organizing dialogue; develop an advocacy strategy for engaging relevant stakeholders to implement the relevant recommendations through various existing platforms of BUILD.

In order to attain the project objectives a brief analysis of the target audience, including the relevant Government decision makers was planned to be conducted. A brief report on the impact of the strategy on the target audience, including the relevant Government decision makers was also planned to be conducted. Moreover, multiple types of case studies were planned to be conducted to describe the organization, the problem faced, the root causes of the problem, and insights offered by the case regarding potential solutions.

Meeting with Doulah and Doulah Law Firm



The meeting with Doulah and Doulah Law Firm was held on 2 January 2018. Advocate Rajin Ahmed and Advocate A.B.M. Shamsud Doulah discussed issues on enforcing contracts with Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of BUILD in the meeting. In the meeting the problem regarding the trademark infringement and lack of intellectual property protection have been discussed. A detailed discussion regarding some examples on passing off and infringement in Bangladesh was conducted. The lengthy judicial procedure has been highlighted as one of the major obstacles of Enforcing Contracts in Bangladesh.

BUILD Reform

Process of the Repatriation of Payment has been Simplified

Policy contradiction and absence of clear direction to repatriate the royalty, fees for technical knowledge or technical assistance and franchise fees, private sector organizations and investors have been facing some problems from long. BIDA Act 2016, section 18 and FEG Guideline 2009, Chapter 10 paragraph 25 and 26 of BB have a separate provision regarding repatriation of payment of those fees. BUILD took up the case for study in May 2016.

BUILD prepared a Reform Policy Paper (RPP) on Simplification of Policies for Repatriation where BUILD proposed some recommendations regarding the simplification of the Repatriation process for Technical Know-How, Royalties, Technical Assistance Fees and Other Fees (e.g., Training, Consultancies etc.). One of the key proposals of BUILD was to harmonize the policy and align the provision of BIDA Act 2016 and Bangladesh Bank Foreign Exchange Guideline, and the role of the Authorized Dealers (AD).

To advocate these issues, BUILD placed those recommendations through its 6th Financial Sector Development Working Committee (FSDWC) meeting on June 4, 2017 at Bangladesh Bank which is co-chaired by Deputy Governor, BB and President DCCI and then was discussed at the 9th meeting of Private Sector Development Policy Co-ordination Committee (PSDPCC) at PMO on 28 August 2017 which was co-chaired by the Principal Secretary, PMO.

Bangladesh Bank issued an FE Circular No. 42 on November 29, 2017 where they declared to follow the section 18 of BIDA Act 2016 regarding outward remittances of such fees whereas paragraph 25 and 26 of Chapter 10 and App-5/59 of GFET'2009, Vol-1 shall stand repealed and also give some clear instructions to the ADs. Other changes are as follows:

- ADs shall be ensured that they are nominated for the remittances as per approval letter issued by BIDA.
- ADs shall be satisfied that applicable taxes payable on remittable amounts have duly been deducted and paid.
- ADs shall satisfy themselves about the genuineness of the relevant documents. They will immediately contact with BIDA in case of any doubt.
- As usual, ADs shall preserve customer-wise documents for eventual examination by Bangladesh Bank inspection team and shall report the transactions to Bangladesh Bank.

Simplification of the Policies for Repatriation

At the 9th meeting of Private Sector Development Policy Co-ordination Committee (PSDPCC) at PMO on 28 August 2017 co-chaired by the Principal Secretary, PMO, BUILD presented a reform policy paper on "Simplification of the Policies for Repatriation". In the meeting BUILD proposed for a specific definition of "domicile" that is, the word "domicile" would need to be rephrased as per need of the day and accordingly a circular has to be issued.

Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank issued a circular (FE Circular No. 40) on November 15, 2017. As per the issued circular – (1) foreign nationals who are resident in and have income in Bangladesh are permitted to make monthly remittances to the country of their domicile out of their current savings up to 75% of their net income to cover their commitments abroad and (2) it has now been decided that besides their country of domicile, such monthly remittances may be sent to other countries where family members of them live in as declared by them in the prescribed application form.

BUILD Scope

Scope 1: Action Research on Enforcing Contracts for Improving Trade Barriers

Bangladesh has been ranked 177th among 190 economies across the world in the World Bank Group flagship report titled "Ease of Doing Business 2018", prepared by the World Bank. Bangladesh was on 176th position in the last year. 10 indicators are used to determine the rank of a country in the ease of doing business, enforcing contract is one of them. Enforcing contracts measures the time and cost to resolve a commercial dispute and the quality of judicial processes. BD has been ranked 189th among 190 economies in enforcing contracts indicator. BUILD and Promoting Knowledge for Accountable System (PROKAS) have taken the initiative to conduct an action research on enforcing contracts for improving trade barriers in Bangladesh. It takes 1442 days to resolve a commercial contract related disputes, cost to resolve the dispute is 66.6% of the total claim value and quality of judicial index is 7.5 in 0-18 scale in Bangladesh. On the other hand, South Korea has been ranked 1st in enforcing contracts index. The research aims to find out the reasons behind this delay and to find the ways to improve trade barriers by resolve this problem.

Scope 2: Regulatory Unpredictability in Bangladesh

Progression of business environment, consistency and its sustainability depends on the regulatory predictability of a country. Unfortunately, regulatory unpredictability has been identified as a major issue that comes in the way of private sector development in Bangladesh. Regulatory unpredictability causes the increase in cost of doing business, reduce productivity, discourage private investment (domestic and foreign investment) and raises uncertainty with regard to economic/business/investment decision. BUILD and IFC had taken an initiative to discover the view on the regulatory unpredictability of the private sector. In this continuation, IFC, in collaboration with BUILD, conducted a survey to collect stakeholders' perceptions about the regulatory predictability in Bangladesh. Respondents for the survey were selected from 10 sectors. The survey aims to identify the views of the respondents on the regulatory unpredictability. Most of the respondents are not satisfied with the present regulatory predictability environment of Bangladesh. BUILD is going to conduct further studies to find out the ways to reduce the regulatory unpredictability in the business.

Scope 3: Procedural Simplification of Utilization Declaration (UD) for Bonded Warehouse License

BUILD and World Bank Group have aimed to provide policy advocacy support through structured public private dialogue (SPPD). WBG along with the Ministry of Commerce have initiated an specific project and commissioned some research to identify the constraints of selected priority sectors like Leather and Leather Goods, Footwear, Light Engineering (Including Electronics and machinery) and Plastic. The key factors are concentrated on four specific issues, these are; Environment and Social Compliance, Market Information and Branding; Productivity and Product Quality and Price Competitiveness and Supportive Infrastructure. In this continuation, BUILD has been assigned to organize PPDs on some selective issues based on the sectoral notes prepared under the project on Export Competitiveness for Jobs (EC4J). In this continuation, BUILD is going to conduct a research on procedural simplification of UD for bonded warehouse license.

BGMEA and BKMEA issue UD for their members. In this reference, other associations demand the right to issue UD for their members itself instead of Bangladesh Customs. The aim of the study is to determine whether the leather, plastic and light engineering associations are capable to issue UD for their members.

Partner's Corner



Nihad Kabir Re-elected MCCI President



President of MCCI speaks at the meeting at MCCI

Nihad Kabir, Barrister-at-Law, Senior Partner, Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and Associates has been re-elected as the President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) for 2018. Members of the Chamber's new Committee unanimously re-elected her as the President at its first meeting held on 12 December, 2017, which was confirmed at the 113th Annual General Meeting of the MCCI held on 20 December, 2017.

Nihad Kabir is an advocate of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. She is a Director and Shareholder of Kedarpur Tea Co. Ltd., a leading tea company of the country, as well as of the Daily Sangbad, the oldest Bangla daily newspaper published in the country. She is also a Director of Brac Bank Limited, Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), bKash, and Independent Director of Square Pharmaceuticals Limited and Apex Footwear Limited as well as Chairperson of BRAC EPL Investments Limited and BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited.

Golam Mainuddin, Chairman, British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company Limited has been elected as the Vice-President of MCCI for 2018. He was also Vice-President of Bangladesh Employers' Federation and a Director of Apex Footwear Limited. He is a Director of The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Advanced Chemical Industries Limited (ACI Limited) and Infrastructure Investment Facilitation Company (IIFC).

Abul Kasem Khan Re-elected President of DCCI



President of DCCI speaks at the meeting at DCCI at the AGM

Abul Kasem Khan and Kamrul Islam, FCA have been re-elected as President and Senior Vice President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) respectively for the year 2018. Riyadh Hossain has been elected as Vice President of DCCI for the term 2018. The new Board of Directors took over charge at the 56th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of DCCI held at its Auditorium on December 23, 2017. The newly elected Directors are Andaleeb Hasan, Engr. Md. Al Amin, Mohammad Bashiruddin, Nuher L. Khan, S. M. Zillur Rahman and Waqar Ahmad Choudhury.

Re-elected President of DCCI Abul Kasem Khan was born in a respected Muslim family in Chittagong in 1968. He completed his higher education in Business Administration (BBA) in 1992. He briefly worked in the banking sector from 1992 to 1996 and later joined his family business in 1996.

Abul Kasem Khan is currently a Director of A.K. Khan and Co. Ltd (AKK), which is one of the oldest private sector business conglomerates in Bangladesh established in 1945. The areas of operations of the company are in textiles, telecom distribution, ISP/ASP, deep sea-fishing and processing, plantation and retail. The company is also investing in SEZ, private port, ICD and various other service and manufacturing industries. He is also the Managing Director of AK Khan Telecom Ltd. which is involved in various telecom operations. He is also the Director in AKPEN LTD and Akceycom Ltd. (AKNET). Abul Kasem Khan is the eldest son of AM Zahiruddin Khan, who was the President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (1974-76), President of FBCCI (1977) and Minister for Planning and Industries, Government of Bangladesh. Abul Kasem Khan during his tenure as President DCCI in 2010 - DCCI initiated the vision Bangladesh 2030-Strategy for Growth which was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Re-elected Senior Vice President Kamrul Islam, FCA is the Chairman of Mashnoons Limited and Partner of Islam Aftab Kamrul and Co. Chartered Accountants. He was born in 1959 in a respected Muslim family.

CCCI Holds AGM 2017



President of CCCI speaks at the meeting at CCCI at the AGM

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) was held at Bangabandhu Conference Hall of World Trade Centre (WTC) in the port city.

CCCI activities of 2016-2017 fiscal year (FY), audited accounts of income and expenditure of 2016-2017 fiscal year (FY) and first four months of 2017-2018 FY were approved at the meeting presided over by CCCI President Mahbubul Alam.

Mahbubul Alam, in his speech, put up views of meetings CCCI held with different ministers, Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (BEZA) chairman, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), trade associations, presidents of International Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bangladesh- Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Port Users Forum, Economic Reporters Forum, leaders of Chittagong Aluminum Industry Owners Association, utility service providers, law enforcers and other concerned authorities as a part of continued efforts for removing the trade barriers.

Meeting with Dignitaries



CEO, BUILD meets Kabir Uddin Ahmed, Director, Industry & Labour Wing, BBS to know the publication status of Labour Force Survey at Parishankhan Bhaban, Agargaon 9th November, 2017. BUILD CEO received QLFs from Kabir Uddin Ahmed of BBS.



A Team led by Golam Rabbani, Fellow of the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) met BUILD CEO and exchanged the present and future scopes of private sector in climate finance and underscored research and activities to build strong connections and knowledge sharing among researchers and practitioners in this field.



For the JICA Study Towards Quality Industrial Growth and Economic Development, Mehmet Energin, McKinsey & Company | Tokyo, Japan met BUILD CEO on 17 November 2017 at BUILD who received publications from BUILD CEO.



Meeting between CEO, BUILD and Abul Kalam Azad, Director, National Accounting Wing, BBS at Parishankhan Bhaban, Agargaon regarding the timely publication of Bangladesh Foreign Trade Statistics 9th November, 2017. BUILD CEO received Bangladesh Foreign Trade Statistics (Volume I & II) from Abul Kalam Azad.

Publications

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Upcoming



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