**Press Release**

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Attn: News Editor/ Chief Reporter/ Assignment Editor /Business Page-in-Charge:

**BUILD for full-scale automation of the company registration process**

Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) Chairperson Nihad Kabir paid a courtesy call on Tipu Munshi, Minister of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh, on 26 January 2023 at the Ministry of Commerce.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said his ministry would continue its advocacy with other ministries to simplify the process of obtaining certificates and registration, including five-year trade licences to ensure ease of doing business.

As part of it, the Ministry issued a notice in November 2022 to provide Import Registration Certificate (IRC) and Export Registration Certificate (ERC) for five years rather than one.

Referring to the BUILD request for complete automation of RJSC services, he said, “We will go for full-scale automation, and we will be going through some internal proceedings while we aspire to be a paperless office in delivering faster business registration services online.”

Calling the need for full scale automation of company registration process, BUILD Chair Nihad Kabir expressed concern over the high paid-up capital requirement for one-person companies (OPC). As a result of the enforcement of high paid-up capital, the nation has yet to see the predicted rise in OPC. The existing paid-up capital of BDT 2.5 million should follow the example of private limited companies.

She urged the commerce minister to consider eliminating the BDT 25 lakh minimum paid-up capital requirement for one-person companies while there could be maximum limit. She also advocated for eliminating the necessity for a commercial address when applying for a trade licence to facilitate company operations throughout the country.

“The government has extended the validity of all trade licences by five years to reduce the hardships faced during the annual renewal of these certifications, which involves considerable time and effort that, in turn, affects the ease of doing business, and we appreciate it,” said MCCI President Md Saiful Islam. “Following the examples of IRC and ERC of five-year terms, other agencies can issue licences and relevant certificates,” he commented.

Having stressed on the need to simplify obtaining a trade licence, he advised that the government could digitalise the trade licence process collecting all relevant fees and transfer the revenue under the head to pertinent agencies that earn income for providing the licences.

BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum said that the notification for five years terms trade licence by LGRD is a great move, but the notification was not meant for the municipalities and union parishad, which opens the concerns of the private sectors as they issue trade licences for thousands of small businesses regularly. The commerce minister endorsed it.

She further said that BUILD and the Ministry of Commerce prepared export roadmaps on plastic, leather and light engineering sectors targeting the export of USD 22 billion, USD 12.9 billion, and USD 12.56 billion by 2030, respectively.

Underscoring the need to implement the roadmap’s action plans, she said that the Ministry of Commerce could take the lead and contribute to the country’s export basket. During her presentation, she appraised some research and survey-related activities and assured more collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce while the country is transitioning to a developing country.

DCCI President Sameer Sattar also attended the meeting.

Sincerely

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**Ferdaus Ara Begum**∣ CEO ∣ BUILD ∣ Mob: 01714102994∣ Email: ceo@buildbd.org∣www.buildbd.org