Press Release

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

**Title: Tannery Solid Waste Management and By-Products can SMEs to Create Employment**

Importance of Tannery Solid Management(TSWM) issues was discussed in the 9th SME Development Working Committee (SMEDWC) Meeting, organized jointly by the Ministry of Industries (MoI) and BUILDon October 23, 2024, in the MoI conference room, chaired by Zakia Sultana, Senior Secretary of the MoI, where presentation of two critical policy papers: "Tannery Solid Waste Management: Bi-Products Development & Opportunities for SMEs" and "Revisiting the Potentials of Logistics Sub-sectors in the IP 2022 were presented to gather feed backs from the public and private sector.

While informing the implementation of the last meeting, Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD informed that Bangladesh Bank has introduced a Refinancing Scheme for Environment Friendly products/projects/initiatives for environmentally projects in the fields including Light Engineering, amount of which has been increased from Taka 400 crore to Tk 1000 crore and about 650 projects of 12 sectors for about 70 products have been implemented. Taking cue about the implementation of the last meeting Mr Salimullah, Additional Secretary, MoI informed that through BITAC some skill development programmes for light engineering(LE) sector have been initiated. President BEIOA requested for the Sub-contracting Act.

Sr. Secretary, MoI informed about several steps for supporting LE sector and in regard to Common Facility Centre (CFC) she informed that six more BITAC centres is going to be established in several parts of the country and then CFC support will be strengthened. In regard to the study for SMEs to cope with the new situation arising out of LDC Graduation, Sr Secretary informed that BIDS has already conducted a study in that respect under SSGP through ERD.

In the presentation on Tannery Solid Waste Management, CEO, BUILD briefed about the impacts of tannery relocations without ensuring compliance in TIED specially CETP, including export losses and unemployment . She outlined the types of solid waste generated and proposed management strategies to foster socio-economic benefits for SMEs in TIED. Emphasized the importance of integrating TSWM into policy and financing frameworks, highlighting various regulatory challenges. The policy paper recommended for formal recognition of By-products of TSW in the Industrial and SME Policies and provide financial and tax incentives for encouraging businesses in these fields, a modern and scientific TSW Dumping Yard with a strong demarcation of waste to be dumped in the Yard, expediting LWG certification and business cases for environment friendly production of TSW by-products such as; gelatin, glue, cloth and painting, shoe sole making, cement ash, mosquito coil, split leather based products, safety items, poultry feed , fish feed, Rexene, plastic and leather shoes, cobbler, washer, cloth label masks etc.

Md. Golam Shahnewaz, MD of Dhaka Tannery Industrial Waste Treatment Plant Company Ltd., informed that 80% of the TSW is non-Chrome so the waste primarily composed of fleshing, raw trimming, split leather, shavings & buffing dust, crust and finished trimming can be used for producing a number of by- products, however all the SMEs would need to come under a single umbrella. Recalling the 3R issue he mentioned that entrepreneurs should take the recycling initiative in their own premises so that the wastage can be minimized.. He also informed that despite significant opportunities in tannery solid waste management, foreign companies, including those from China, are increasingly involved in the sector and making glue, Gelatin. Capsule foil, animal fat, biogas, animal feed, tallow, protein, particle board and some other leather products etc.

Representatives from The Asia Foundation reported that achieving Leather Working Group (LWG) certification requires an investment period of 2.5 years, during this time they can generate value for money they invested as a compliant industry and can export a product three times higher value. However, challenges such as the need for 300 marks on the Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) and solid waste management pose significant obstacles to obtaining LWG certification. As a solution, the foundation suggests considering individual Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) to facilitate compliance and enhance certification prospects.

Taslima Miji from LFMEBA urged the BSCIC to prioritize plot allocations for women entrepreneurs. Mr Nurul Islam, Secretary, BTA suggested that allocation of business among different ministries and divisions would need some reforms as there are a number of new activities are now required for accomplishment such as recycling activities, instead of direct disposal proper solid waste management etc.

Sr. Secretary, MoI informed that individual ETP has already been agreed and entrepreneurs can take benefit out of it. She further confirmed that the second phase of TIED will prioritize plots for those who were overlooked in the first phase. She emphasized on the segregation of chrome and non-chrome-based wastage so that the environment and animal feed can free from chromium. She also informed that for improvement of CETP operation in Savar tannery estate they are having weekly meeting now and expecting development in this area, meanwhile other social audits can support exporters.

The second presentation addressed the logistics sub-sectors under the Industrial Policy 2022, identifying policy gaps and key considerations. Recommended actions including the development of a temperature control policy, truck fare policy, driver recruitment policy, simplified freight forwarding licensing rules, and enhanced human resource development.

Taking cue from the presentation of BUILD, Customs and Regulatory Affairs Manager at DHL, pointed out the lack of specific regulations governing air express in Bangladesh and noted that the local model is not aligned with global standards.

GM of SMEF, President BEIOA and representatives from DCCI, CCCI, BTA, LFMEAB, BTMA, Cold Storage Association, SME by-Products producing association representatives among others spoke in the meeting.

Sincerely,

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**Ferdaus Ara Begum** ∣ CEO ∣ BUILD ∣ Mobile: 01714102994 ∣ Email: [ceo@buildbd.org](mailto:ceo@buildbd.org) ∣ [www.buildbd.org](http://www.buildbd.org)