

NEWS BULLETIN

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**Journey to ease
traffic congestion**

Speaking about ICC Bangladesh

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) - *The world business organization* was founded by a few visionary business leaders of Europe immediately after the First World War (1919) having its HQs. in Paris. Over the decades, ICC extended its network outside Europe and now having its presence in 127 countries around the world.

Its mission was to formulate rules for cross-border Business transaction, multi-modal transportation, Arbitral Rules, model contracts and others; to promote free trade and free market economy; at a time when fortress like protectionism was the order of the global trade regime.

Bangladesh National Committee of ICC, established in 1994, is comprised of major Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Business Associations, Stock Exchange, Banks, Non-banking Financial Institutions, Insurance Companies, Trans-national companies, Law & Accounting Firms and large Corporate Houses having significant interest in international trade.

The national activities of ICCB include promotion of foreign trade and investment, trade policy reviews, business dialogues, seminars & workshops on related policy issues, harmonization of trade law & rules, legal reforms, updating businesses with the ICC rules & standards for cross border business transactions.

As a part of its regional & international activities, it has organized four regional & international conferences during the year 2000, 2004, 2005 & 2010.

In 2000 a 2-day ICC Asia Conference on "Investment in Developing Countries : Increasing Opportunities" organized by the National Committee was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, M.P. and also attended by a number of high profile dignitaries including the Thai Deputy Prime Minister & Director General Designate of WTO Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, ADB President Tadao Chino, Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of UN-ESCAP Dr. Kim Hak-Su and Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Trade & Economic Cooperation Sun Zhengyu. More than 250 participants from 24 countries participated in this event.

Again, in 2004, ICC Bangladesh organized a 2-day International Business Conference on "Global Economic Governance and Challenges of Multilateralism" which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, M.P. and the Prime Minister of Thailand Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra was the Keynote Speaker. A galaxy of global leaders including Director General of WTO Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, EU Commissioner for Trade Pascal Lamy, Ministers from Sri Lanka, Turkey, Zimbabwe, Sweden and Vietnam, Governor of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), Executive Secretary of UN-ESCAP, Executive Director UN ITC, ICC Chairman Jean-Rene Fourtou, Vice-Chairman Y. S. Park, Secretary General Maria Livanos Cattai, former ICC Chairman Rahmi M. Koc were present among others. More than 500 participants from 38 countries (3 continents) participated in this event.

In 2005, ICC Bangladesh organized a Regional Seminar on "Capital Market Development: Asian Experience". The Regional Seminar inaugurated by the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Professor Dr. Iyajuddin Ahmed were attended by Chairmen/CEOs of securities & exchange commissions, stock exchanges, capital market operators, financial institutions and investors from 15 Asian countries.

In 2010, the National Committee (NC) organized a Conference on "Energy for Growth" coinciding with the 15 years of ICC's presence in Bangladesh. The Conference was inaugurated by the Finance Minister Mr. A.M.A. Muhith, M.P. It was attended by ICC Global Chairman & Adviser to the Hong Kong Govt. on Strategic Development Dr. Victor K. Fung, Commerce Minister Mohammad Faruk Khan, M.P., Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark Soren Pind, Adviser to the Prime Minister for Energy & Mineral Resources Dr. Tawfiq-e-Elahi, BB and participated by energy experts, power developers, gas exploiters, coal miners, international financiers from Australia, China, Denmark, India, Germany, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, UK and USA to address on Bangladesh energy crisis.

ICC Bangladesh participates in most of the World Chambers Congress & ICC World Congresses and WTO Ministerial Meetings; every 2 years as well as ICC Regional Consultative group Meetings.

During 2012, ICC Bangladesh organized two workshops on Credit Risk Management in Dhaka & Chittagong in March with support from HSBC; National Seminar on the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) - Business Implications of the for Bangladesh in collaboration with the Ministry of commerce & UNESCAP in Dhaka in June; Sub-Regional Seminar on Enabling Environment for Integration of SMEs in Global Value Chain jointly with UNESCAP in Dhaka in July; two Workshops on Treasury Management in Dhaka & Chittagong in July with support from Standard Chartered Bank; two workshops on Financing SMEs: Demystifying Myths and Realities in Dhaka & Chittagong in October and ICC Seminar on Trade Fraud in Bangladesh: Challenges and Remedies in Dhaka in December.

ICC Bangladesh organizes every year 3 training programme for bankers & other professionals, such as i) e-learning programme on 'FIT Initiative' (Finance of International Trade) supported by ICC HQs. Paris, eBSI (eBusiness School International, Ireland), International Finance Corporation (IFC) & Institute of Export, UK ii) Certified Documentary Credit Specialist (CDCS) Examination and iii) CITF Examination (Certificate in International Trade and Finance) conducted worldwide by the ifs School of Finance, UK incorporated by Royal Charter and supported & endorsed by ICC Paris.



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The world business organization

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Editor's Note

Enabling environment is imperative to maintain growth momentum

The continued economic growth and the impressive gains in several social indicators over the past decades point enormous potential of Bangladesh. These achievements were made despite poor governance, adverse political environment and lack of appropriate infrastructure including energy. The resilience of the economy in the face of global downturn points to the ingenuity of the private sector, farmers, common people and their ability to contribute to socio-economic wellbeing.

“Economic growth since the 1970s has been poor; the country’s politics have been unremittingly wretched. Yet over the past 20 years, Bangladesh has made some of the biggest gains in the basic condition of people’s lives ever seen anywhere,” the popular British magazine *The Economist* wrote in two reports published in its November 1 issue.

Bertelsmann Stiftung’s Transformation Index (BTI), which conducts global assessment of transition processes where the state of democracy and market economy as well as the quality of political management in 128 transformation and developing countries are evaluated in its 2012 biennial report also cautioned that these accomplishments cannot be sustained for long without addressing some deep-seated problems. Some issues warrant attention and actions. Firstly, a qualitative change in the political culture is needed. Secondly, the government must be applauded for its success in containing militancy, but there is no scope for complacency. The sources of extremism need to be identified and addressed as much as militants need to be confronted. Thirdly, rule of law is a prerequisite for a sustainable democracy. The politicization of the administration and lack of true independence of the judiciary has hindered democratic practices, the report added.

However, despite a challenging global environment, Bangladesh continues to remain a development paradox as it has achieved considerable social gains and a fairly impressive economic performance in the past decade.

At this time, when Bangladesh is showing the favorable signs of sustained economic growth, the stable political environment is of crucial importance to achieve our higher socio-economic objectives as a nation. Unfortunately, the recent deteriorating and confrontational political situation do not warrant the continuation of business activities to go unobstructed. Because of continuous destabilizing political environment the economic cost to the nation is enormous.

According to experts, excluding the agriculture sector and other sub-sectors which are only partially affected by national work stoppages and prevention of movement of goods and services, one day hartal costs the nation a loss of around US\$200 million. In other words, if the nation were to experience 15 days of hartal in this fiscal year - a modest assumption perhaps - it could cost the economy the equivalent of US\$3 billion, which could finance the Padma Bridge; leaving aside brutal killing of innocent and damage of properties. Its really alarming.

We have also observed that the present parliament, like in the past, has been in-effective due to frequent boycotts by the opposition party and the ruling party’s unwillingness to accommodate opposition views. Since all power belongs to the government, they have to come forward to solve the problem. Uncompromising attitude will not be helpful. If the stalwarts of the two major parties fail to resolve the disputes across the table, worse days are ahead.

What our nation needs most at this time is commitment from our political leadership to the cause of the common people and their pledge to make the nation free from poverty and create employment opportunity for all. We believe there is no alternative to keeping the democratic process alive and making the democratic institutions stronger as the key factor for inclusive socio-economic growth. In a functioning democracy, differences of opinion may always be there and to resolve such differences there is no alternative but to resort to dialogue and negotiations instead of confrontation. This was reiterated by the business leaders time and again in the best interest of the economy and the country.

ICC Bangladesh News

Access to capital and high interest rate retards SMEs growth : ICCB President

The key factors that constrain the growth of SMEs in Bangladesh are access to capital, high interest rate, weak marketing and lack of diversified products for export etc. It is vital to strengthen SMEs for overall economic development of

funded by Bangladesh Bank, IDA and ADB has been facilitating for the development of SMEs, he added. Besides, to ensure institutional financing facilities under easy conditions, Bangladesh Bank has also taken various steps.

and medium enterprises (SMEs) are considered to be the engine for economic growth and job creation. Also SMEs are important sources of export revenue in almost every developing economy. In Bangladesh, these enterprises are the largest employers said Mahbubur Rahman.



ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman delivering inaugural address at the ICC Workshop on Financing SMEs : Demystifying Myths and Realities. Also seen in the picture from left to right are : Workshop Resource Person Dr. Sailendra Narain, Chairman ICCB Standing Committee on Banking Technique and Practice Prof. Mamun Rashid and ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman.

Bangladesh said ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman while inaugurating the ICC Workshop on Financing SMEs: Demystifying Myths and Realities organized by ICCB at a local hotel in Dhaka on October 11.

Mr. Rahman praised the Bangladesh Bank for introduction of several schemes and programme to flourish and expand SMEs. Refinance scheme

The SME sector is gradually being recognized as a major thrust sector for industrial growth of our economy. Yet, given their potential, much more can and should be done in areas such as credit facilities, infrastructure, market access, quality and standards as well as training etc. mentioned ICCB President.

It may be mentioned that not only in Asia but across the globe, small

Prof. Mamun Rashid, Chairman, ICCB Standing Committee on Banking, Technique and Practice & Dean, BRAC University expressed his hope that after completion of the workshop the participants will feel that SME financing is possible, rewarding and also will be aware that SMEs plays a significant role for development of our economic growth. ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman also spoke at the workshop.

Dr. Sailendra Narain, Chairman of the Centre for SME Growth and Development Finance (CESMED) in USA & India, the resource person of the workshop, also spoke during the inauguration.

A total of 41 participants attended the workshop, Another workshop on same topic held in Chittagong on October 10 was attended by 26 participants.

UNESCAP Business Advisory Council Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur ICCB President and Vice President attend as EBAC Members

The Fourth Session of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC) was held on 14 October in Kuala Lumpur. The Meeting was attended by business leaders and industrial experts from Asia and the Pacific and co-chaired by Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther, EBAC Chair and Mr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director, Trade and Investment Division, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

EBAC was attended by 20 members including ICCB President Mahbubur

Rahman, ICCB Vice President Rokia Afzal Rahman and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) President Asif Ibrahim. The other EBAC members who attended include: Mr. Peter Charlton, Chairman, First Charlton Communications, Australia; Mr. George (Kam Ho) Yuen, Independent Non-Executive Director, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) (ICBC), Hong Kong China; Dr. Sailendra Narain, Chairman, Centre for SME Growth & Development Finance (CESMED),

India, Mr. Mohan Suresh, Managing Director, Technospark Industries India (P) Ltd. India; Mr. Oudet Souvannavong, Secretary-General, GMS Business Forum, Lao PDR; Mr. Mirzan bin Mahathir, Chairman and CEO, Crecent Capital Sdn Bhd, Malaysia; Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther, Group Executive Director, Falim Group, Malaysia; Mr. Tariq M. Rangoonwala, Chairman, Rangoonwala Group of Companies, Pakistan; Mr. John T. Cann, Director, International Organizations Asia Public Sector, Microsoft Operations

Pte Ltd, Singapore; Ambassador Teng Theng Dar, Advisory Counsel, Bryan Cave International Consulting (Asia Pacific) Pte Ltd, Singapore; Mr. Thomas Thomas, CEO, ASEAN CSR Network, Singapore; Mr. Kosala Wickramanayake, Board Member, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka; Mr. Chote Sophonpanich, Executive Chairman, Krungdhep Sophon Public Company Ltd., Thailand; Ms. Barbara Meynert, Senior Advisor, Li & Fung Group, Hong Kong, China; Ms. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Chairperson, Toshiba Thailand Co. Ltd. Thailand; Mr. Tak Sriratanobhas, Vice President on behalf of Mr. Isara Vongkusolkrit, Chairman, Mitr Phol Sugar Corp. Ltd. Thailand; and Mr. Phairush Burapachaisri, Chairman & CEO, PINS' Group of companies, Thailand on behalf of Dr Jingjai Hanchanlash, Executive Vice President, Loxley Public Co. Ltd.

UNESCAP Executive Secretary Ms. Noeleen Heyzer thanked all EBAC members. She stressed that the objectives set forth at Rio+20 had to be followed and taken care of in order to achieve sustainable development and set new standards for businesses. Dr. Ravi Ratnayake reflected on the good progress made and praised the substantive discussion and outcomes of the Meeting. He thanked the EBAC members for attending and welcomed further views and inputs to be submitted to ESCAP Secretariat.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman reported on the joint workshops with ESCAP on trade liberalization and SME development held on 3 July and 13 July respectively in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Many high level officials were present at these workshops including Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Minister of Commerce, the Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, Ambassadors of China and the Philippines, the President of the American Chamber of Commerce, bankers and many others. Mr. Mahbubur Rahman also reported that the subregional discussion on trade and investment on 13 July was

covered by television and newspapers in Bangladesh. He expressed gratitude to Dr. Noeleen Heyzer for her support and Dr. Ravi Ratnayake and Dr. Masato Abe for helping to organize and supporting these events. Dr. Ratnayake highlighted these events as perfect examples of how capacity development organized by EBAC members should take shape.

Mr. Marc Proksch, Chief, Private Sector and Development Section, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP briefly presented an update on the capacity development event in Yangon proposed to be held around January – March 2013. He explained that more time than anticipated was needed to organize the workshop as the country was overwhelmed with requests for visits and assistance at the moment.

Mr. Peter Charlton, Chairman, First Charlton Communications, made a presentation about the tenth Asia-Pacific Business Forum scheduled to be held in Sydney in 2013. The

special dinner with VIPs. The venue would be the Intercontinental Hotel who was offering great deals on rooms. APBF 2013 would be a great opportunity to include more Pacific island nations which unfortunately have been largely absent at previous APBFs due to the large costs involved. Also, invitations could be extended to the main business associations to have discussions on Rio+20. The overarching theme was yet to be decided and it was recommended to wait until after the elections in the United States. Furthermore, APBF 2014 was planned to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Mr. Kosala Wickramanayake would take the lead with the organization.

Mr. John T. Cann, Director, International Organizations Asia Public Sector, Microsoft Operations Pte. Ltd, in interest of time recommended that EBAC members look at the presentation by Mr. Paul Hengeveld, Senior Director International Organizations, Microsoft.



Group picture of the Members of UNESCAP Business Advisory Council with UNESCAP Executive Secretary Ms. Noeleen Heyzer (3rd from left) during EBAC meeting held in Kuala Lumpur on October 14. ICC Bangladesh Vice President Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman (2nd from right) and DCCI President Asif Ibrahim (extreme left in the last row) are also seen among others.

proposed dates are 24 November 2013 for the EBAC meeting and 25-26 November 2013 for APBF. The Prime Minister of Australia would be targeted as the keynote speaker. Other eminent speakers to be invited included Ratan Tata, Narayana Murthy and Victor Fung. A couple of new elements could be a speed dating session to attract more delegates and also a large,

Ms. Barbara Meynert made a presentation about the 'lighting a million lives' programme. She advocated for the establishment of a business network for selling solar lightbulbs in areas of the world still lacking adequate access to electricity. She emphasized the importance of not simply handing out the lightbulbs to communities but to

jumpstart microbusinesses with the help of microfinance. The meeting agreed that this was a very good idea and suggested that maybe banks with local networks in these areas could sponsor the programme.

Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, reiterated that the role of business in sustainable development was essential. The notion of growth first then clean up act later should be something of the past. She called for a new mode of development; a paradigm shift to take place. It was important to find new generators of wealth and growth to help developing and developed countries in the new century of doing business in the world. She shared with EBAC members some key campaign points that the Secretary-General of the UN was pursuing: (a) sustainable energy for all; (b) education; (c) every woman, every child campaign and (d) sustainable transportation and urbanization.

She also mentioned that there would be a conference in Tehran on public-private partnerships in transport infrastructure from 11 to 14 November 2012. Furthermore, there would be meetings of the Special Programme for Central Asia (SPECA) in Bangkok in November. Mr. Rangoonwala stressed that cooperation between UN Commissions in these areas was very important.

EBAC agreed in principle to establish a regional Sustainable Business Network within EBAC consisting of the following two task forces for the time being with the following Chairs and core EBAC members: Green Business – Chair: Mr. John Cann. Members: Mr. George Yuen, Ms. Barbara Meynert, Ms. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Mr. Tak and Sriratanobhas; Social Enterprises and MSMEs – Chair: Dr. Sailandra Narain. Members: Ms. Rokia Afzal

Rahman, Mr. Mohan Suresh, Mr. Kosala Wickramanayake. In addition, the following two task forces were established: Inclusive trends in trade, investments and finance – Chair: Mr. Peter Charlton. Members: Mr. Tariq M. Rangoonwala, Mr. Asif Ibrahim and Interregional connectivity – Chair: Dr. Jingjai Hanchanlash (upon his consent). Members: Mr. Tariq M. Rangoonwala, Mr. Oudet Souvannavong.

Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther concluded that it had been one of the best EBAC sessions not just in terms of presence but also because of the result driven approach. He also called on members to start thinking ahead about the Sustainable Business Network and APBF 2013. Dato Mohamed Iqbal Rawther proposed that the fifth session of EBAC be held between 25 April and 1 May 2013 concurrently with the 69th session of the Commission in Bangkok.

ICCB Vice President and DCCI President attend UNESCAP Asia-Pacific Business Forum in Kuala Lumpur

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF) held its ninth session in Kuala Lumpur on 15 and 16 October. The Forum was co-organized by UNESCAP, the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (ASLI), the Organization for Economic

of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) of the Government of Malaysia were strategic partners. The Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI),

Mekong Institute (MI), the ASEAN CSR Network and the SS-GATE also provide support to the Forum.

Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP delivered his welcoming remarks. Datuk Seri Mohamed Iqbal Rawther, Chairperson of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC) delivered his introductory address. Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered her welcoming address. Ambassador Richard A. Boucher, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD delivered his opening address. Datuk Dr. Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria, Secretary-General of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Government of Malaysia delivered her keynote address on “Transforming Countries – the Malaysian Experience”. Tan Sri Dato’ Dr. Michael O.K. Yeoh, CEO/Director, ASLI and co-organizers



ICCB Vice President Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman (centre) moderating a session on Skills Development for Productive Business during the Asia Pacific Business Forum (APBF) 2012 held in Kuala Lumpur on 15-16 October.

Cooperation (OECD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Ministry

the SIRIM Berhad, the SME Corp, the Greater Mekong Subregion Business Forum (GMS-BF), the

of the APBF 2012 made his vote of thanks. Mr. Larry C. Farrell, Chairman and Founder of the Farrell Company delivered a special address from business on “The Role and Power of Entrepreneurship in Promoting Prosperity”.

The overarching theme of APBF 2012, “Advancing Regional Economic Integration: Connecting Business, Strengthening Partnerships” was discussed in two plenary sessions, four parallel sessions and three side-events in two days. Specific topics of APBF 2012 included: economic integration and its impact on business; enhancing business competition through trade and investment liberalization; challenges and opportunities arising from the ASEAN Economic Community 2015; responsible and sustainable business; non-traditional opportunities for business and investment; trade facilitation measures for

enhancing competitiveness and skills development for productive business. The Forum also officially launched the ESCAP Policy Guidebook for Small and Medium Enterprise Development in Asia and the Pacific.

APBF 2012 also included the second OECD/ESCAP regional conference on International Corporate Responsibility (CR) Instruments. Three sessions were held over one and a half days covering the following topics: the new landscape of international CR instruments; tools for integrating international CR instruments in company management and implementing social dialogue and problem-solving in Asia and the Pacific.

In the concluding session, session moderators summarized the outcomes of the sessions, presenting recommendations to both public and private sectors.

The Forum was attended by approximately 200 people from various industries (24% from government, 22% from business, 12% from academia, 8% from international organizations, 9% from non-governmental organizations, 4% individuals and 21% were others). Almost 40 per cent of participants came from outside the host country, Malaysia. ICC Bangladesh Vice President Rokia Afzal Rahman and DCCI President Asif Ibrahim attended the Forum.

Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman moderated a session on Skills development for productive business and was a panelist at Plenary 1: United Asia –Pacific :Enhancing Business Competitiveness Through Trade and Investment Liberalization (Business Perspective). DCCI President Asif Ibrahim was a speaker at a session on Non-Traditional Opportunities for Business and Investment.

ICCB President leads a three member delegation to ICC Regional Consultative Group Meeting in Jakarta

The Fifth Meeting of the ICC Asia Pacific Regional Consultative Group (ICC RCG) Meeting and G-20 Advisory Meeting were held in Jakarta on 15-16 October. Delegates attending the ICC RCG Meeting were also invited to attend the opening of the World Export Development Forum (WEDF) which was inaugurated by HE. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia. The Forum, jointly organized by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Ministry of Trade of The Republic of Indonesia was attended by participants from some 50 countries.

The ICC RCG Meeting resolved the following:

ICC sanction a fee equivalent to 10% of arbitrator’s fee to be allotted to the National Committee (NC) proposing the arbitrator. ICC should re-introduce the arbitration incentive scheme that was withdrawn some years ago. The incentive scheme should be re-introduced as it is not

only a source of revenue for the NCs but more importantly, it encourages NCs to work closely with the Court and ICC.

project on the World Trade Agenda and/or newly set up ICC Group on Economic Policy. The meeting agreed that unbridled currency and



Group picture of the delegates at the ICC RCG Meeting held in Jakarta on 15 October. ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (4th from left), ICC Bangladesh Executive Board Members Barrister Rafique-ul Huq (extreme left) and Mahbub Jamil (2nd from left) and ICC RCG Coordinator Dato Mustafa Mansur (5th from right) are also seen among others.

ICC should examine the dangers of unbridled currency and commodities speculation on real trade and commerce and propose mechanisms to monitor and control it. The issue should be considered a new ICC

commodities speculation would impact financial remarkets and real trade that would in turn adversely affect output, trade and jobs.

The 6th ICC RCG Meeting, the First ICC Asia Pacific CEOs Forum

and ICC G-20 regional meetings will be held in New Delhi on 7-8 March, 2013. The CEOs Forum aims to bring together senior business leaders from the region and to create an opportunity for networking and exploring business opportunities. The theme of the forum is “Asia Pacific – A Key to Rebalance Global Economy”.

ICC India requested NCs to support by sending at least 4 CEOs. ICC India would prefer the format of the forum to be a gathering of a small and manageable number of CEOs so as to have quality time and more opportunities for the networking

amongst CEOs. ICC India would invite NC Chairs to be panel speakers. Also, ICC India would invite ICC China to elaborate on China’s import expansion policy.

The ICC RCG and G 20 Meetings were attended by ICC Asia Pacific Regional Group Meeting Coordinator Dato Mustafa Mansur; Mr. Philip Kucharski, Director, Business Development, ICC; Mr. Francois-Gabriel Ceyrac, Director, NCs & Membership, ICC; Mr. Carlos Busquets, Deputy Director, Policy & Business, ICC; Mr. Bryan Clark, ICC Australia – CEO; ICCB President Mr. Mahbubur Rahman

and ICCB Executive Board Members Mr. Mahbub Jamil and Barrister Rafique-ul Huq; Mr. Harsh Pati Singhanian ICC India –President; Mr. Ashok Ummat ICC India – Executive Director; Mr. Sugihono Kadarisman ICC Indonesia – Vice Chairman and seven ICC Indonesia members; Mr. Kiyoshi Yamada ICC Japan – Secretary General; Mr. Yong Poh Kon ICC Malaysia – Chairman, Mr. Lee Cheng Suan ICC Malaysia – Executive Director and Ms. Esther Boey ICC Malaysia – Senior Manager; Mr. Gamini Peiris ICC Sri Lanka – CEO and Mr. Chainant Ukosakul, ICC Thailand – Vice Chairman.

UNESCAP-ADB Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum, Colombo

Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012 was jointly organized by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Colombo on October 30-31. The Forum concluded with the call for the countries of the region to reduce non-tariff trade barriers as well as emphasized on strengthening regional connectivity for increased trade within the region.

in view of the continuous economic slowdown in Europe and the USA. The opening ceremony was also addressed by H. E. Mr. Abdul Rishad Bathiudeen, Minister, Industry and Commerce of Sri Lanka; Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP and Ms. Rita A. O’Sullivan, Country Director, ADB Sri Lanka. The Senior Minister also launched the Publication on “Capacity Building Kit for Single

The objective of the Forum was to share experiences and knowledge on trade facilitation between countries of the greater Asia and Pacific region including LDCs and LLDCs, fostering increased understanding and exchange of views between public and private stakeholders along with trade facilitation standards developers and technical assistance providers, learning about and drawing lessons from on-going implementation of national and regional trade facilitation measures and introducing relevant international tools, instruments and facilities aimed at increasing the efficiency of regional and global cross-border trade using the latest tools invented by UNNExT.



H.E. Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister, International Monetary Cooperation of Sri Lanka delivering his inaugural address at UNESCAP-ADB Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum held in Colombo on 30-31 October. Also seen in the picture are : H. E. Mr. Abdul Rishad Bathiudeen, Minister, Industry and Commerce of Sri Lanka (2nd from right), Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP (2nd from left), Ms. Rita A. O’Sullivan, Country Director, ADB Sri Lanka (extreme right) and Mr. Susantha Ratnayake, Chairman of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (extreme left)

H.E. Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister, International Monetary Cooperation of Sri Lanka in his inaugural address suggested the need for developing and expanding the regional connectivity for increased trade within the Asia Pacific Region

Window Implementation” jointly published by UNNExT (United Nations Network of Exporters for Paperless Trade in Asia and Pacific), UNESCAP and UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe).

The Forum was attended by more than 200 government officials, traders, public and private service providers, Chamber Leaders from Central Asia, South and South-East and East Asia as well as the South Pacific.

As a panelist at the High-Level Panel Discussion on “Enhancing Public-Private Collaboration for Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade”, ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman mentioned about the various steps taken by the government of Bangladesh for simplifying the trade as well as reducing various steps

to cut down the time required for export and import clearance. He said that Bangladesh is also considering the ways and means for reducing various trade barriers to improve its present ranking of 122nd out of

Earlier on October 29 UNESCAP and ADB jointly arranged a SASEC (South Asia Sub-region Economic Cooperation) Stakeholders Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Collaboration. Business

for trade facilitation, digitalization of trade documentation and reducing the existing huge trade gap between India and rest of SASEC countries under Trade Facilitation reforms and initiatives, skill development of customs officials as well as developing a Single National Window in each country for removing various barriers both at borders and at origin. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman, Dr. Md. Shahidul Islam Director General (CC), Duty Exemption and Drawback Office, NBR and Mr. Mohammad Yunus, Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies attended the workshop and the Forum.



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (extreme left) attended as a panelist at High-level Panel Discussion: Enhancing Public-Private Collaboration for Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade held in Colombo on 30 October which was moderated by Mr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy (centre). The other panelists are: H. E. Senator Vasant Bharath, Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago (3rd from left), Mr. Ramesh Natrajan, Head of DHL Express, Rest of South Asia, DHL (2nd from right), Ms. Anne Miroux, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD (3rd from right), Mr. Kim Seong In, Director General, Multilateral Trade Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea (2nd from left) and Mr. T A Khan, Controller of Certifying Authorities, India and Member, UNNEXt Advisory Committee (extreme right).

183 economies in the World Bank indicators on “Doing Business”.

ICC Bangladesh President, who attended the Forum at the invitation of UNESCAP and ADB, chaired a session on E-Trade for SME Integration in Regional or Global Value Chains. In his remarks he appreciated the efforts of UNESCAP and ADB for promotion of paperless trade for the potential SMEs using IT and other electronic devices. Many of these however seldom keep records, transact business informally, and are not mainstream users of IT. ICCB President observed that promoting paperless trade for these (micro enterprises) would not be easy or even sensible at this stage – what may be needed is to improve their environments so that they can graduate to being SMEs with formal records, systems, and IT facilities. He further observed that when US Defense webpage could be hacked and penetrated one has to be extra cautious and ensure security in paperless trading as it involved trillions of Dollars of business transactions.

Process Analysis, which is a practical study, commissioned by UNESCAP and ADB to identify various steps involved in trade between Bhutan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal and ways of reducing the impediments for cutting down both time and costs. The participants suggested various steps including simplification and harmonization of trade procedures, more particularly at border, development of modern corridor management techniques in selected corridors, facilitate regional transit (overland), development of regional institution (public-private interface)

ADB, UNESCAP and the World Bank also arranged a number of events related to trade facilitation on the sideline of the two-day Forum. The events included SASEC (South Asia Sub-region Economic Cooperation) Stakeholders Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Collaboration, Annual Meeting of Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade, World Bank Global Facilitation Partnership for Transportation and Trade (GFP) Meeting :“Transit Facilitation for Regional Connectivity: Enhancing Corridor Performance”, Workshop on WCO Economic Competitiveness and Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT).



Dr. Ravi Ratnayake, Director, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP delivering his opening remarks at SASEC Stakeholders Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Collaboration jointly organized by UNESCAP and ADB in Colombo on 29 October. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman (5th from right) is seen among other participants.

French Ambassador visits ICC Bangladesh

Ambassador of France to Bangladesh H. E. Mr. Michel Trinquier called on ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman at the National Secretariat on 26 November. The Ambassador was briefed by ICCB President about

the activities of ICC Bangladesh as well as ICC, Paris. The main activities of ICC are formulation of rules for international trade and arbitration. ICC has also formed a G-20 advisory group to represent views of the world

businesses to G-20 nations, said ICCB President. The Ambassador praised the achievements of Bangladesh in various areas of development on a continuing basis over the last decade despite the on-going world economic slowdown. He assured full cooperation of his government as well as the private sector for increased trade between the two countries. It may be mentioned that bilateral trade between the two countries is about US\$1.6, out of which export from Bangladesh to France is around US\$1.5 billion. The Ambassador suggested for more imports from his country to reduce the trade gap. ICC Bangladesh President thanked the Ambassador and suggested for investment in energy and infrastructures in Bangladesh by French companies.



Ambassador of France to Bangladesh H. E. Mr. Michel Trinquier is seen with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman and ICCB Secretary General Aatur Rahman during his visit to the National Secretariat.

Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry honours ICCB Vice President Latifur Rahman with honorary Membership

The Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh (NCCI) and the Norwegian Embassy arranged a Panel Debate on the challenges to effective and transparent business practices and the experiences of the two top Business Leaders of Bangladesh; ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman and ICCB Vice President Latifur Rahman. The other members of the panel debate held in Dhaka on 3 October were Advisor to Bangladesh Bank and former Deputy Governor A. M. Kazemi and Ms. Jahrat Adit Chowdhury, Head of Corporate Affairs GPIT. The event was attended by the Ambassadors of Denmark, Norway, Republic of Korea and Sweden as well as NCCI member companies operating in Bangladesh.

The Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry awarded an Honorary Membership to Mr. Latifur Rahman, ICC Bangladesh Vice President and Chairman of Transcom Group. Mr.

Latifur Rahman was awarded with the Oslo Business for Peace Award 2012 for his contributions towards the development of Bangladeshi businesses in the global arena.



President of Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh Arild Klokkerhaug presenting a crest to Mr. Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group and ICC Bangladesh Vice-President. The chamber awarded Mr. Rahman honorary membership in recognition of his contributions to the development of Bangladeshi businesses.

Ambassador of Turkey discusses with ICCB President on trade promotion

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman discussed with the Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Mr. M. Vakur Erkul on areas of cooperation during the latter's visit to the National Secretariat on 2 December. The Ambassador said that

Turkey has gradually opened up its markets through economic reforms by reducing government controls on foreign trade and investment and the privatization of publicly owned industries, and the liberalization of many sectors to private and foreign

participation has continued amid political debate. The public debt to GDP ratio, while well below its levels during the recession of 2001, reached 46% in 2010. The GDP growth rate from 2002 to 2007 averaged 7%. Turkey has the world's 15th largest



Ambassador of Turkey to Bangladesh H.E. Mr. M. Vakur Erkul poses for photograph with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman and Secretary General Ataur Rahman.

GDP-PPP and 17th largest nominal GDP. The country is among the founding members of the OECD and the G-20 major economies, the Ambassador said.

Turkey is keen to have increased trade and investment with Bangladesh. It may be mentioned that the bilateral trade relations between Turkey and Bangladesh have increased 15 times since 2004 and it exceeded 1 billion

US Dollar in 2010. This bilateral trade volume is expected to pass 3 billion US Dollars in 2015.

It may be mentioned that during the official visit of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh H. E. Sheikh Hasina, M.P. to Turkey during 11-13 April, 2012 seven agreements and protocols starting with the Agreement on the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments were

signed and the two sides decided to further improve and to deepen the bilateral relations between Turkey and Bangladesh on every field.

The Ambassador invited ICCB President to lead a trade delegation to Turkey for furtherance of businesses among the two countries. ICCB President thanked the Ambassador for the kind invitation and recalled about his visit to Istanbul in July, 2007 for attending the World Chambers Congress of ICC which was jointly organized by ICC and Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). He explained to the Ambassador about the role of ICC worldwide and in Bangladesh for promotion of trade and investment. He also mentioned about the visit of former ICC Chairman Mr. Rahmi M. Koc to Dhaka in 2004 at the invitation of ICC Bangladesh for attending International Business Conference on “Global Economic Governance and Challenges of Multilateralism” organized by ICCB.

ICCB at DCCI International Conference on Positioning Bangladesh: Branding for Business

A two-day International Conference on Positioning Bangladesh: Branding for Business was organized in Dhaka on 5-6 December by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI), in association with BUILD, Katalyst and BASIS. H.E. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Conference. In her address, the Prime Minister said that the image of a country in the global arena is extremely important for its prosperity, which has strong correlation with its ties, trade and other engagements with the rest of the world. The Conference was divided into six sessions and there were 23 foreign speakers and nearly 60 resource persons who addressed the event.

ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman chaired a session on “Testimonials of In-country & Ex-country Experiences”. The Chief Guest of the session was Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, MP, Hon’ble Minister for Information. The Key-note speaker

was Mr. Sajeeb Wazed, IT Consultant and Policy Expert, President, Wazed consulting Inc. and Mr. Anders Aeroe, Director, Division of Market Development, ITC.

The other speakers at the session were Mr. Kihak Sung, Chairman, Youngone Corporation, Bangladesh; Dr. Richard Sykes, Trustee & Acting Chairman,

Cubitt Artists (UK); H.E. Mr. Gerben Sjoerd de Jong, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Bangladesh; Mr. David Souter, Associate, International Institute of Sustainable Development; Mr. Johan Gott, Consulting Manager, A.T. Kearney USA; Mr. Kjetil J. Olsen Vice President, Europe, Elance & Mr. David Savman, Country Manager (H&M).



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (4th from right) delivering his concluding remarks as Chairman of the session on Testimonials of In-country & Ex-country Experiences held in Dhaka on 5 December, first day of the 2-day International Conference on Positioning Bangladesh: Branding for Business organized by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) in association with BUILD. H. E. Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, MP, Minister for Information (4th from left) was the Chief Guest and Mr. Sajeeb Wazed, IT Consultant and Policy Expert & President, Wazed Consulting Inc. (3rd from right) was the Key-note speaker of the Session.

Ambassador of Republic of Korea visits ICC Bangladesh

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea H.E. Mr. Lee Yun-Young made a courtesy call on ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman on 12 December. They discussed about the possible areas of cooperation

for increasing trade and investment. Ambassador Lee informed the ICCB President about Korea's achievements since early 70s. He mentioned that Korea is now capable of producing almost everything. The

trade between the two countries is around US\$1.2 billion, out of which Bangladesh's export is only about US\$165,000. The Ambassador offered all out support for increasing more export from Bangladesh to reduce the trade gap.



Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Bangladesh H.E. Mr. Lee Yun-Young (right) exchanging views with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (center). ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman also attended.

ICC Bangladesh President suggested for more duty free access to Bangladeshi products and relocation of Korean companies in Bangladesh to reduce the trade gap. Bangladesh can export pharmaceuticals, plastic products, jute goods, readymade garments etc. He also requested for investment in infrastructure including energy. The Ambassador assured his full cooperation for furtherance of export from Bangladesh and investment by Korea in Bangladesh.

ICC Seminar on Trade Fraud in Bangladesh: Challenges and Remedies siphoning depositors money through fraud scam

Companies engaged in international trade are facing growing threat from fraud and forgery. The recent scam in some of the state-owned banks have shaken the private commercial banks and have created a threat for the genuine companies to have financing from the banks for their operation. Besides, the commercial banks are also taking extra precautionary measures in opening of LCs, may be due to which we observe lesser import in the recent past. If this trend continues, the much needed development of our industrial base will be in jeopardy said ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman at the ICC Seminar on Trade Fraud in Bangladesh: Challenges and Remedies organized by the ICC Bangladesh at DCCI Auditorium on December 26.

The recent scam is nothing but a straight cheating by some so called companies in connivance with a group of bank officials and influential group. In order to prevent such scam, the Bangladesh Bank must be given full autonomy for monitoring the activities of state-owned banks as is

done in case of private commercial banks and their should not be any interference of the Banking Division of the Ministry of Finance in the operating of the state-owned banks. The Bangladesh Bank as well as all the commercial (both public and private) banks should also develop modern fraud detection mechanism and take early action, observed ICCB President.

Bangladesh has been growing fast in the international trade. Both import and export are increasing at substantial rate. Bangladesh is now considered to be an emerging trading nation with a trade volume of USD 60 billion or so. As the international trade is growing all parties involved in the trade is also getting exposed to the risk of fraud. The more the market of import-export is expanding the more we are facing the risk of unknown events including fraud, ICCB President added.

Mr. Rahman also mentioned that it is important to recognize that domestic and international financial liberalization heighten

the "risk of crisis" if not supported by prudent supervision, regulation and appropriate macroeconomic management. The global financial crisis has created an urgent need to fundamentally rethink how financial systems should function and how it should be regulated.

DCCI President Asif Ibrahim in his speech said despite high interest rate, energy crisis toppled with street agitation and frequent hartals the country has been maintaining a steady growth. This has been possible only due to the vibrant private sector who deserves the credit for being the engine of growth. He suggested to replace the age old policies with new and pro-active ones to create a more investment friendly environment for attracting both local and foreign investment. He mentioned that the investment level should be increased from present 6-8% of GDP to 25-35% over the next few years to achieve a higher GDP growth rate.

Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) Director Dr. Toufic A. Choudhury in his address said that higher rate of document

rejection has become apparent following current economic crisis and fall in commodity prices. Rejection just to delay payment or for harassing exporters are departures from the spirit of UCP framework. In the context of Bangladesh, there are instances where banks reject documents just for rejection and charges for the discrepancies as their foreign counterparts do. These are clear departures from the UCP morals. Such practices can simply make the trade costlier and burdensome to the consumers.

He also mentioned that recently, in a few instances it is found that to retain the clients in this competitive market, the banks are sometimes undertaking undue risks even bypassing the regulatory framework which may harm the banking sector, he cautioned.

Mr. Mohammad Hossain, Former Managing Director, Sonali Bank in his remarks said banking scam is not new in our country but the difference is that in the past it was limited to only four to five accounts and now a days it is 30-60 accounts. So, it may be assumed that a substantial portion of banking loan has been disbursed fraudulently which is alarming for the industrial sector.

Mr. Hossain thanked ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman for arranging the seminar to address this issue and take initiative to build partnership between Bangladesh Bank and IMB (International Maritime Bureau) for tackling such fraud.

Prof. Mamun Rashid, Chairman of the ICC Bangladesh Standing Committee on Banking Technique & Practices could not attend the Seminar due to his prior commitment abroad but his important short note was circulated among the participants.

In the open discussion many recommendations came from the bankers as to how the Central Bank and commercial banks could develop appropriate mechanism to prevent recurrence of such fraudulent practice in the future. The bankers suggested the necessity of knowing the customer (KYC) before making any transactions, issuance of inland transport certificate by appropriate authority in a prescribed form, no political or high level interference, close monitoring of the operations of the branches dealing with international trade, auditors should

also be IT experts in order to be able to conduct proper audit, verification of the credibility of foreign buyers, training of bankers on various export sectors etc.

The Seminar was attended by 94 bankers from 27 banks, including the Bangladesh Bank who deals in international trade. Among the participants there were 28 CDCS Experts, 26 bankers who have completed the IFC 'FIT Initiative' (Financing International Trade), the e-learning programme developed jointly by eBSI (eBusiness School) International, Ireland and ICC Bangladesh with support from IFC (International Finance Corporation), a private arm of the World Bank and 09 who have passed the CITF (Certificate in International Trade and Finance), conducted by *ifs* School of Finance.



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (Centre) addressing at the ICC Seminar on Trade Fraud in Bangladesh: Challenges and Remedies at DCCI Auditorium on 26 December. Also seen in the picture (from R-L) Former Managing Director of Sonali Bank, Mohammad Hossain; DCCI President Asif Ibrahim; BIBM Director General Dr. Toufic Ahmad Chowdhury and ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Ataur Rahman.

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus launches social business in Nepal ICCB President and Vice President attend as Guest of honour

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) organized a series of high-level meetings on social business and microfinance in Kathmandu on 21-22 December. Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus attended was Guest of Honour and was the Keynote Speaker at a series of meetings. On the first day Prof Yunus addressed a national-level summit of microfinance

practitioners in Nepal, attended by 300 participants and organized by the Reserve Bank of Nepal, CNI and Rural Microfinance Development Centre.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman, ICC Bangladesh Vice President Rokia Afzal Rahman and Mr. Abdul Awal Mintoo, Former President of the Federation of

Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) also attended as Special Guests of CNI.

“We are grateful to you Professor Yunus for innovating such a modern form of technology for poverty alleviation as microfinance,” said Prime Minister of Nepal H.E. Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai, who is also the vice chairperson of the Unified

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the chief guest of the summit. “It has proven to be a major tool for poverty alleviation, and has made millions of poor families to upgrade

Prime Minister Dr. Bhattarai thanked the Nobel laureate for his innovative concept of social business as an effective way to tackle social problems, and said he would like

Mrs. Hisila Yami, wife of the Prime Minister of Nepal also expressed her desire to visit Bangladesh soon to learn from Bangladeshi poor rural women.



President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal H. E. Mr. Ram Baran Yadav (centre) is seen discussing issues of common interests with Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus and ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman when they called on the Hon'ble President at Rashtrapati Bhaban in Kathmandu.

President of Nepal Ram Baran Yadav received Prof. Yunus along with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman, ICC Bangladesh Vice President Rokia Afzal Rahman and Former FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo at Rashtrapati Bhaban. The President thanked Prof. Yunus for coming to Nepal, and for sharing his experience in social business as ways to help Nepal overcome some of its difficult problems. He also thanked ICC Bangladesh President and others for coming to Nepal and hoped that businesses of both the countries will join for promotion of trade and investment.

their economic status in the society. Nepal followed this path since 1992.”, the Prime Minister said.

to come to Bangladesh as a student to learn about social business. Prof. Yunus recommended taking microcredit to the next level in Nepal by broadening the work by using social business as a tool to solve social problems. He stressed particularly the role of citizens’ especially young people in championing social business. “Making money is happiness, but making other people happy is a super happiness.” H.E.

Prof. Yunus pledged to work with the Nepalese government to change institutional designs needed to help microcredit grow faster. President Yadav also offered Prof. Yunus to be the patron for social business in Nepal and monitor its progress.

It may mentioned that there are currently 130 organizations in Nepal that are undertaking microcredit, reaching more than 1.8 million families. Most of the organizations follow the Grameen system with support from Grameen Trust.

They also made a courtesy call on Nepalese Prime Minister H. E. Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai during their stay in Kathmandu.

The Nobel Laureate on behalf of Yunus Centre and Mr. Binod K. Chaudhury, President of Chaudhury Group, announced a collaboration to create a \$1 million social business fund for Nepal to fund creative social businesses that will tackle the problems faced by Nepal in the areas of energy, healthcare, women’s empowerment and environmental protection. Ideas for social businesses will be invited from young people, and the best business plans will be financed by the fund. Chaudhury Group and other businesses will invest in the fund where Yunus Centre will provide technical support.

ICC Bangladesh President addressed as Special Guest at the 10th Annual General Meeting of CNI held on 22



Prime Minister of Nepal H.E. Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai (centre) was the Chief Guest at the inauguration of 10th Annual General Meeting of Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) held in Kathmandu on 22 December. Nobel Laureate Prof. Yunus (7th from left) was the keynote Speaker and ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (extreme right) addressed as Special Guest. CNI President Binod K. Chaudhary (5th from left) & ICC Bangladesh Vice President Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman (3rd from left) are also seen among others.

December. Prime Minister Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai was the Chief Guest and Nobel Laureate Prof. Yunus was the keynote Speaker. CNI President Binod K Chaudhury delivered the welcome address. Prof. Yunus spoke on “Social Business and Corporate World”.

ICCB President praised Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus for starting a unique concept of Social Business which within a very short span of time has been well accepted all over the world. “I am confident his efforts will definitely help in reducing world poverty like the success in Grameen Bank”, observed ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman.

He said that China, India and the rest of the developing world will eclipse the west in a dramatic shift in the balance of economic power over the next five decades. He mentioned that

according to Paris-based think-tank OECD “Looking to 2060: Long-Term Global Growth Prospects” report. The United States is likely to cede its place as the world’s largest economy to China as early as 2016 and to India by 2060. So, hopefully Asia including South Asia will be the major economic player of the world, he added.

Nepal has gone through a rapid and unprecedented transformation in its political history. For the first time, the Himalayan nation turned into a Republic from the monarchy since 1768. It is high time that both Nepal and Bangladesh work together for creating investment opportunity. For this ICCB President observed that the governments of Bangladesh and Nepal should work together to overcome problems faced for movement of goods through 22 km

corridor of India, without which it would be difficult to expand trade between the two countries. In this regard, he said that during 2010-11, the two way trade was around US\$ 62.5 million in which Bangladesh’s exports were worth US\$43.75 million and Nepal’s were US\$ 18.75 million. So there is ample scope for increased trade.

As the energy crisis in both Nepal and Bangladesh are hindering the development process, he urged upon the Prime Minister of Nepal to take the initiative on a priority basis to harness the benefit of hydropower for the development of the countries of the region. Some energy experts say a South Asian energy grid could be established with hydropower from Nepal and Bhutan (about 23,000 MW potential hydropower) in cooperation with India and Bangladesh, he mentioned.

Iranian Diplomats call on ICCB President

H.E. Mr Ahmad Sobhani, Director General (West Asia) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran along with Ambassador of Iran to Bangladesh H.E.Mr.Hossain Aminian Tousi called on ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman on December 24. They discussed about possible areas of cooperation and expansion of trade between the two countries. At present trade between the two countries is only about US\$160 million. Iran is willing to increase its import of jute from Bangladesh. The DG mentioned that his country over the years have developed internal expertise in setting up their own power plants, constructing highways, producing metro-rail and manufacturing cars etc. Iran at present produces 65,000 MW of electricity and export about 4000 MW and 1000 MW to India and Pakistan respectively.

Iran will be willing to share its experience with Bangladesh as well as supply locomotives to Bangladesh, establish power plants and construct

highways. They suggested for exchange of trade delegation between the two countries and single country trade fair in order to promote expansion of trade and investment.

ICCB Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman explained to them about the role ICC globally as well as in Bangladesh. He thanked the DG

and the Ambassador for visiting ICC Bangladesh and assured all support and cooperation for increasing trade and investment between the two countries. He also mentioned that he will suggest to the leading chambers of Bangladesh to consider sending trade delegation and also arrange for trade fair in Iran.



H.E. Mr Ahmad Sobhani, Director General (West Asia) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (2nd from right) presented a memento to ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (centre). Also seen in the picture are: Ambassador of Iran H.E.Mr.Hossain Aminian Tousi (2nd from left), ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman (extreme left) and First Secretary of the Embassy of Iran Mr. Davood Shamloufard (extreme right).

ICCB Standing Committee on Banking holds meeting

ICCB Standing Committee on Banking Technique and Practice held a meeting on 27 November. The meeting presided over by the

Bank, Mr. Md. Shoeb Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director of NRB Commercial Bank, Mr. Md. Mahbub ur Rahman, Head of

The meeting reviewed the ICCB activities during 2012 and discussed on the areas of programme to be initiated during 2013. The Committee recommended for organizing six workshops and three dialogues/ seminars besides organizing the Certified Documentary Credit Specialist (CDCS) Examination, on-line e-learning IFC 'FIT Initiative (Finance of International Trade) programme and Certificate in International Trade and Finance (CITF) Examination. The Committee also agreed to co-opt three more members as proposed by the existing members. The new members proposed are: Mr. Mahbub-ul-Alam, Deputy Managing Director, Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd.; Mr. Ahmed Shaheen, Head of Structured Finance and Relationship Unit Corporate Banking, Eastern Bank Limited and Mr. Kamal Niaz Hassan, IFC Consultant to Bangladesh Bank on SME Financing.



ICCB Bangladesh Standing Committee on Banking Technique & Practice meeting in progress.

Chairman of the Committee Prof. Mamun Rashid was attended by five members of the Committee, namely Mr. Mohammad Hossain, former Managing Director of Sonali

Corporate Banking, The HSBC; Mr. Md. Bakhteyar Hossain, Senior Vice President of Mutual Trust Bank Limited and Mr. Aatur Rahman, ICC Bangladesh Secretary General.

54th ICCB Executive Board Meeting held reviews activities and approves 2013 Plan of Action

The 54th Meeting of the ICCB Executive Board was held on 11 December. The Board reviewed the activities of ICC Bangladesh during the fourth quarter of the year (October-December) and also approved the Plan of Action of the National Committee for 2013. The Executive Board approved the co-opting of three new members by the ICC Bangladesh Committee on Banking Technique and Practice.



54th Meeting of the ICC Bangladesh Executive Board in progress.

Presided over by ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman, the Meeting held in the Board Room of Transcom was attended by ICC Bangladesh Vice Presidents

Latifur Rahman, Rokia Afzal Rahman and the following seven Board Members: Afatb-ul Islam, Mahbub Jamil, Mamun Rashid,

Md. Shafiqul Islam (Mohiuddin), Muhammad Hatem, Syed Ershad Ahmed and Waliur Rahman Bhuiyan, OBE.

ICCB Upcoming events

Certified Documentary Credit Specialist(CDCS)

Examination Date: April, 2013
Registration Closing: 20 January, 2013

Workshop on International Trade Fraud :

Prevention, Control & Remedies
Dhaka: Monday, 11 February, 2013
Chittagong: Tuesday, 12 February, 2013

For further information and registration please contact

Secretary General, ICC Bangladesh, Tel : 8621942, 9676698; E-mail: arahman@icc-bd.org, iccb@bdmail.net

ICC Bangladesh Plan of Action for 2013

Workshops

- Workshop on International Trade Fraud - Prevention, Control and Remedies
- Workshop on Basel III
- Workshop on electronic UCP 600
- Workshop on Environmental Credit Risk Management
- Workshop on Automation of International Trade Operation
- Workshop on Integration of SMEs in Global Value Chain

- Dialogue on Single National Window
- Public Private Partnership for Infrastructure Development
- Dialogue on Regional Connectivity for Trade and Investment

Business Dialogues/Seminars

Certificate Courses

- Certified Documentary Credit Specialist (CDCS) Examination
- IFC 'FIT Initiative (Finance of International Trade)
- Certificate in International Trade and Finance (CITF) Examination

- Quarterly News Bulletin
- Media Blitz
- Annual Report

Publications

News in Picture



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (right) called on H. E. Mr. Rishad Bathiudeen, MP Minister for Industry & Commerce, Government of Sri Lanka at his office during the UNESCAP ADB Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012 in Colombo on October 30.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (extreme left) delivering his concluding remarks as Chair of the Session I: E-Trade for SME Integration in Regional and Global Value Chains during the UNESCAP ADB Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012 held in Colombo on October 30. Panelists (from left to right) are: Somnuk Keretho, Director, INOVA, Kasetstart University, Thailand, Wang Jian, Expert of APEC E-Commerce Business Alliance, China International Electronic Commerce Centre and Rajasekhar, Senior Vice President, ITC.



Mr. Latifur Rahman, Chairman & CEO of Transcom Group (2nd from left) is seen speaking at the panel debate organized by Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) held in Dhaka on 3 December. The panel debate was also addressed by ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (extreme left), Mr A.M. Kazemi, Former Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank and Adviser to Bangladesh Bank (extreme right) and Ms. Jahrat Adit Chowdhury, Head of Corporate Affairs GPIT (2nd from right). Mr. Shameem Raihanuddin (centre), Managing Director of Eshna Consulting Ltd. was the moderator.

News in Picture

Visit to Nepal



President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal H. E. Mr. Ram Baran Yadav (centre) is seen with Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus (left) and ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman at Rashtrapati Bhaban, Kathmandu.

President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal H.E.Mr. Ram Baran Yadav (6th from left) is seen with Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus (5th from left) and ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (6th from right) when they called on the Hon'ble President at Rashtrapati Bhaban during their visit to Nepal on 21-22 December. Also seen in the picture are: CNI President Mr. Binod K. Chaudhury (extreme right), ICCB Vice President Rokia Afzal Rahman (4th from right) and former FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo (2nd from left) among others.



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman is seen discussing with the Prime Minister of Nepal H. E. Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai on the prospect and benefit of hydro-power generation in Nepal to meet much needed energy for the development and prosperity not only of Nepal but also for Bangladesh.

Joint Statement by Chambers Leaders

Leaders of leading chambers and trade bodies on 10 December issued a joint statement on the effect of unstable political situation.

The statement was signed by President of International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB) Mahbubur Rahman, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dhaka Maj. Gen. Amjad Khan Chowdhury (Retd.), President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry Asif Ibrahim, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry Murshed Murad Ibrahim, President of Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry Syed Ershad Ahmed, President of Bangladesh Employers' Federation Md. Fazlul Hoque.

The following is the Text of the Statement

Business leaders urged parties to avoid confrontational politics

At this time when Bangladesh is showing the favorable signs of sustained economic growth, the stable political environment is of crucial importance to achieve our higher socio-economic objectives as a nation.

The leading business Chambers and associations are gravely concerned about the confrontational politics that has become a threat to our development potentials.

Unfortunately, the recent political situation worsened by calls for hartals and blockades by different interest groups do not warrant the continuation of business activities to go unobstructed.. We still remember the bleak days in the past when frequent hartals for extended periods kept the economy stand-still. Hartals will make our economy decelerate, and our markets will shift to other countries where more stable political climate exists. We need to avoid this situation by all means.

The business community would like to urge the ruling and opposition parties to stay away from all political activities that are counter-productive. What our nation needs most at this time is commitment from our politicians to the cause of the common people, and their pledge to make the nation free from poverty and create employment opportunity for all.

The business community also acknowledges that there is no alternative to keeping the democratic process alive and making the democratic institutions stronger as the key factor for inclusive socio-economic growth in a functioning democracy, difference of opinion may exist. However, there are other means to settle the differences other than hartals and politics of damage and suppression.

In this regard, the business community feels that the current political situation can be made more people-friendly and business-friendly if the ruling and opposition parties demonstrate tolerance and are willing to settle their differences through dialogues and negotiations.

The business community has learnt from reliable sources that due to recent unfortunate development in the country, the ready-made garment buyers in North America are already diverting export orders to other countries and a consumer group movement boycotting "Made in Bangladesh" products is taking shape there.

We, therefore, appeal to the Government and the Opposition to abandon confrontation and start dialogue immediately. It would save the country's economy and people's well-being from dislocation.

We urge upon all political parties to uphold the country's interest first and refrain from such activities which seriously affect the economic growth and prospect of the country.

Bangladesh Economy

Japan to provide \$2.07 billion loan for Dhaka Metro Rail project



Japan has approved \$2.07 billion in soft loan for the \$2.7 billion in building the country's first metro rail system in Dhaka.

Subsequently, the

Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the project in a meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair on December 18. Japan will bear 76 percent US\$ 2.07 billion (Tk 16,595 crore) cost of the project of US\$ 2.7 billion (Tk. 21,985 crore) while the remaining 24 percent would come from government funds. Japan has already approved \$133 million for the project in the current fiscal year.

A 20.1 kilometre elevated railway track will be built on Uttara-Motijheel route via Pallabi and Sonargaon Hotel area under the project, which will be implemented in three phases. In the first phase, 11 km of railway track will be laid from Pallabi to Sonargaon Hotel by 2019; in the second phase, 4.4 km line will be installed from Sonargaon Hotel

to Bangladesh Bank at Motijheel by 2020; and in the third phase, 4.7 km track from Uttara to Pallabi will be set up by 2022. The project will start this year and end in fiscal year 2023-24.

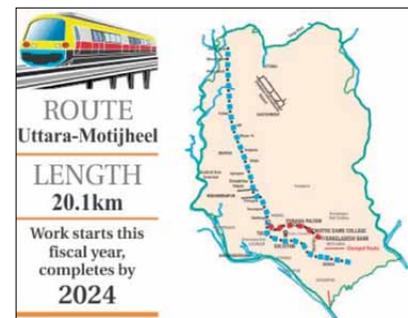


Several international companies have been short-listed for preparing detailed design and supervising the construction. They have been asked to submit technical and financial proposals to the government. The companies now await approval of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The metro rail project, the country's second largest infrastructure project after the \$2.9 billion Padma bridge project, became uncertain last year when the proposed rail route

was modified for the second time following objections from the air force. It may be mentioned that the route running across Bijoy Sarani was diverted towards Khamarbari. A change in the route was first made in 2010 to avoid overlapping with the under-construction Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover.

The project aims to reduce traffic jam through the installation of an elevated metro rail system and seeks to promote a massive socioeconomic development through the modernization of public transport system. According to an earlier study by JICA, the metro rail will operate every three minutes and carry 60,000 passengers per hour.



Reforms shore up Bangladesh's credit stability: Moody's

Bangladesh's credit stability has been shored up by the momentum in reforms agenda, global rating agency Moody's said in its report released on 14 December. However, the existing and new risks loom large over the recent garment factory fire, complexity regarding the Padma Bridge financing and the upcoming national elections. Moody's said the recent momentum in the pace of reforms as witnessed by the passage of a new value added tax law, and reforms related to fuel prices and the financial sector is credit supportive.

Higher capital flows could be bolstered by possible issuance of sovereign or quasi-sovereign bonds, the normalization of aid flows, and improvement in the foreign

investment. As a result, the reserves may go up to around \$13 billion by the end of the current fiscal year, from \$10.3 billion at end of last year, the agency said. The International Monetary Fund's \$987 million credit will help Bangladesh implement the planned structural reforms, the report said.

Moreover, the successful conclusion of an IMF review last week will likely pave the way for the disbursement of a second tranche worth \$141 million, taking the total disbursements to \$282 million, it said. This will be beneficial for the external liquidity situation, which is just beginning to recover from pressures faced last year, the rating agency said.

Moody's said Bangladesh is the only South Asian country that has consistently posted current account surpluses in the past decade though the external balance was under pressure in fiscal 2011 due to slow exports, expensive imports and falling remittances. Steady growth trends, a more positive outlook for the external sector, stabilizing exchange and interest rates, and the recent momentum in reforms are positive, Moody's said.

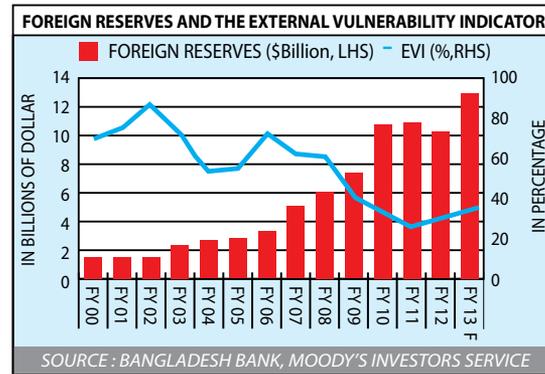
"However, recent successes could be dampened by a number of factors", Moody's mentioned. The challenges include implementation risks regarding the newly enacted measures, weaker global growth and implications for exports, the threat

of continued labour unrest, and the possibility of a messy transition to parliamentary elections in 2014. These factors could derail the smooth progress in reforms, it said. "Institutional weaknesses have been a constraint on our credit assessment of Bangladesh," the rating agency added.

Moody's also said the suspension of project aid by the World Bank and the misappropriation of loans by a state bank further underscored poor governance and transparency issues. In an effort to address these issues, the authorities are now incorporating suggestions from an external panel and are taking steps to improve supervision in the banking sector.

On the recent fire at a garment factory in Ashulia, the Moody's said it also highlights underlying tensions in the labour market, which could have negative implications on foreign aid, investment flows and exports. Easing pressures on the external

front should drive a 'virtuous' cycle with a favorable balance of payments position, more stable exchange and interest rates, and growth trending largely in line with its forecast of 6.1 percent year-on-year, Moody's said.



Domestic growth remains largely consumption-driven, which in turn is spurred by worker remittances and export earnings. Shifting to a more sustainable growth trajectory will entail a ramp up in capacity that will fuel a pick-up in investment, it said.

Faster GDP growth and sustained remittance growth needed for Bangladesh to achieve Middle Income Status by 2021 says recent World Bank report



Bangladesh needs to accelerate GDP growth to 7.5-8 percent and sustain 8 percent remittance growth to reach Middle Income Country Status by next decade, says a new World Bank report launched on November 13. According to the report, "Bangladesh: Towards Accelerated, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth-Opportunities and Challenges" both GDP growth and remittances would play an important role in attaining middle income status, the report said.

Withstanding global shocks and natural crisis, Bangladesh's economy continued to grow at a healthy six percent-plus rate, and is now among the 25 largest developing countries based on gross national income. Steady growth was possible due to a number of factors including population control, macroeconomic

stability, rapid development of the financial sector and openness in the economy. Notable success in Bangladesh's development includes achievement of nearly universal primary education.

To push up GDP growth per annum from 6 percent to around 7.5-8 percent needed to attain middle income status, the report underscores the importance of increasing investments in physical infrastructure and human development, and enhancing productivity growth and the outward orientation of the economy.

Inadequate infrastructure remains a major bottleneck to growth, which urgently needs to be addressed. To accommodate 2.7 million unemployed and 1.8 million new entrants every year, Bangladesh must create an enabling environment for expansion of labor intensive economic activities. Implementation of policy and institutional reforms to enhance labor productivity and skills is critical, the report mentioned.

Along with faster GDP growth, it is also equally important for Bangladesh to sustain 8 percent-plus remittance growth. The contribution of remittances to Gross National

Income has grown substantially in the last decade to around 10.5 percent of GDP in 2011. Currently around 14 percent of Bangladeshis work overseas. Bangladesh needs to continue to tap the global migrant market and promote safe migration in order to accelerate growth and reduce poverty at home, the report observed.

Sustaining growth is subject to handling the challenges posed by unplanned urbanization and climate change. Urbanization offers opportunities to accelerate growth, but it also comes with risks to sustainability if not managed properly. Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change. The report finds that the direct effect of climate change on growth in the near term is likely to be small. This provides Bangladesh a bit of breathing space to take proactive measures to adapt to the longer term impact of climate change which is expected to be significant.

The report further mentioned that opportunities are opening for Bangladesh to become "next China" in textile manufacturing and exports and to make it possible the country should exploit the advantage before its competitors rush to fill up the

blank. This is an opportunity which comes once in several millennia, economists say supporting the government should act quickly to cash in it. Bangladesh has the largest advantage of cheap labour and it should act quick with other support logistic such as infrastructures, gas, electricity, efficient roads and telecommunications.

If Bangladesh fails to act soon, others will take the markets China is vacating, the report added. China is switching to high tech manufacturing and its global market of textile and garment products is becoming open to low cost competitors. In the report, the lender agency said Bangladesh can become the alternative to China

with its labour-intensive exports growing at double digits if it can address infrastructure bottleneck and take advantage of its large pool of underemployed labour-force.

It said Bangladesh's competitors are becoming expensive places. In the next three to four years China's exports of labour-intensive manufactures is projected to decline. It will no longer have one-third of the world market in areas such as garments, textiles, shoes, furniture, toys, electrical goods, car parts, plastic and kitchen wares. Capturing just 1 per cent of China's manufacturing export markets would almost double Bangladesh's

manufactured exports, WB report said. The WB has also stressed expanding the manufacturing activities for exportable products outside Dhaka and Chittagong.

Analysts say, surely Bangladesh has the potentiality to become the next China, but we have to discipline politics, leaders must understand that capturing state power is not the end in itself. They must root out corruption first; go into capacity building especially the power generation and distribution and transport and telecommunication. The country's infrastructure surely needs to be expanded before there can be an economic boom.

Bangladesh-India ties below potential: WB

Economic ties between Bangladesh and India are far below potential, said a World Bank study. Greater access to each other's markets, improvements in physical connectivity and transit, and energy trade between the countries can help unlock this trade potential, according to the report released in New Delhi on December 17.

The study unlocking Bangladesh-India trade: emerging potential and the way forward -- said greater engagement in these areas can also stimulate employment and other economic and social activities. A wider integration will also help reduce poverty, particularly in the border areas, enhance foreign direct investment flows, and generate new business opportunities for the private sector, it said.

India is one of Bangladesh's primary trading partners. While Bangladesh

has a high trade deficit more than \$3.5 billion with India, its imports from Bangladesh have grown more than sevenfold between fiscal 2001 and fiscal 2012 to reach around \$500 million. India's exports to Bangladesh rose fourfold to \$4 billion.

Bangladesh accounts for less than one percent of India's total imports with a small range of items, mostly fertilisers and jute products. Though readymade garments constitute Bangladesh's major global export, their share in exports to India is very small. Simulations in the World Bank study indicate that a bilateral free trade agreement between the two countries could increase Bangladesh's exports to India by 182 percent, and that of India to Bangladesh by 126 percent.

"For India, closer economic cooperation with Bangladesh can

be an important stepping-stone to reduce the economic isolation of its northeastern states," said the report. To realise this potential, both the countries need to further liberalise trade, reduce tariffs (largely in the case of imports into Bangladesh), reduce and remove non-tariff barriers, and cut trade costs by improving trade facilitation both at borders and inland, according to the study.

The study suggested the two countries should go beyond trade in goods to deepen cooperation and improve Bangladesh's export capability. The study observed that foreign direct investment would also help grow bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh. Inflow of direct investment from India would stimulate Bangladesh's exports, facilitate technology transfer, and generate employment.

Bangladesh rated high : The Guardian



Bangladesh is among a number of emerging countries that could overtake the west by 2050, as they are growing fast, according to The Guardian newspaper.

"As the west remains mired in gloom and even the BRICS start to plateau, attention is turning to this group of countries, many of which not so long ago were rudely dismissed as basket cases," said Larry Elliott, economics editor of the London-based newspaper, in a write-up on December 18. As even BRICS [Brazil,

Russia, India, China and South Africa] plateau, other countries, from Bangladesh to Mexico, are coming up fast and could overtake the west by 2050, he said.

"They are big. They have young and growing populations. They have invested in infrastructure and

education. And they are growing at the sort of rates that make them the envy of the recession-hobbled west.”

While some emerging countries, such as Vietnam, have been hit hard

by falling western demand for their exports since the financial crisis of 2007-08, others have been sustaining strong growth rates, he wrote. “Bangladesh and the Philippines

have been helped by remittances sent home from expatriates working overseas. Mexico and Indonesia have generated strong domestic demand from their large populations.”

Extreme poverty to go by 2015: ADB study



Bangladesh is projected to meet the United Nations’ millennium development goal of eradicating extreme hunger and poverty by 2015, according to a survey of the Asian Development Bank. Though poverty has declined remarkably, the prevalence of malnourishment in 25 million or 16.8 percent of its population is still a major concern, the country being in the third position among its South Asian neighbours.

The study, which was released on December 10, went into each value chain segment of two main food and vegetable rice and potato. It looked at these chains linking Naogaon and Bogra districts, the rural centers that are major producers and suppliers of these food commodities to the megacity Dhaka.

The study *The Quiet Revolution in Staple Food Value Chains: Enter the Dragon, the Elephant and the Tiger* was produced by the ADB and the International Food Policy Research Institute in response to the 2008 spike in food prices. It analysed domestic rice and potato supply chains in Bangladesh, India and China.

“Asia faces a formidable challenge of feeding five billion people by 2030,” said Bindu Lohani, ADB’s

vice president for knowledge management and sustainable development. “Rising populations and incomes, resource degradation and climate change will keep putting upward pressure on food prices, requiring vast improvements to ensure adequate, affordable food supplies.” The study said achieving food security is one of the priority agendas of the government in Bangladesh, with modernising the food staples value chains being one of its action agendas.

A structural transformation is occurring and changing the conduct, performance and structure of the rice and potato value chain segments quite rapidly. Village traders are playing a greatly diminished role in sourcing rice and potatoes. In rice, village traders garnered only 7 percent share of farms and sales in the upstream segment. In potatoes, the village traders were the source of only 16 percent of the Bogra-Dhaka chain, it said. Two thirds of the rice farmers interviewed were bypassing middlemen and were selling their rice directly to wholesalers or mills.

Around 90 percent of small-scale potato farmers are storing their potatoes in cold storage facilities, and they use the facilities as intermediary venues for selling their produce to local traders, found the study. It said Bangladesh is just starting its transformation to modern retailing. Rural wholesale markets displaced village traders, buying direct from farmers and selling direct to mills, who sell their produce to Dhaka’s retailers.

The number of supermarkets in Dhaka was about 80 in 2009, from

4 in 2001, and they are catering to the middle to upper-income clients. Small-scale rice and potato farmers producing for the Dhaka market are run as commercial businesses, responsive to technology and prices. Helped by national agriculture research centres, farmers shifted from coarse to quality rice production, faster than their Indian and Chinese counterparts. About 25 percent of seeds were also subsidised and sold by Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation.

More than 80 percent of the rice and potato farmers having mobile phones negotiate prices for their produce and obtain other information about the market, said the study. More integrated rice and potato chains benefited urban consumers with affordable price for quality rice, and year-round supply of potatoes. Farmers’ incomes have also increased. Farmer’s share of the retail price of rice is roughly 60 percent, while for potatoes their share is 50 percent.

The study said affordable and stable domestic prices for rice and potatoes can be achieved not just at improvements at the farm production level, which is often the focus on interventions, but more importantly, at the post harvest levels through more private sector engagement.

The ADB study also indicated that agriculture’s share to gross domestic product has declined through the years, down to 20 percent in 2011, next to services and industry sectors. The sector still employs about 47 percent of the country’s labour force.

Bangladesh : Out of the basket

The Economist examines one of the most intriguing puzzles in development

The Economist

Between 1990 and 2010, Bangladesh has made extraordinary improvements in almost every indicator of human welfare, The Economist reported. “Economic growth since the 1970s has been poor; the country’s politics have been unremittingly wretched. Yet over the past 20 years, Bangladesh has made some of the biggest gains in the basic condition of people’s lives ever seen anywhere,” the popular British magazine The Economist wrote in two reports published in its November 1 issue.

In the 20 years, life expectancy rose by 10 years, from 59 to 69. Bangladeshis now have a life expectancy four years longer than Indians, despite the Indians being, on average, twice as rich, the reports said. It further said Bangladesh has also made huge gains in education and health.

The report mentioned Bangladesh was the original development “basket case”, the demeaning term used in Henry Kissinger’s state department for countries that would always depend on aid. Its people are crammed onto a flood plain swept by cyclones and without big mineral and other natural resources. It suffered famines in 1943 and 1974 and military coups in 1975, 1982 and 2007. When it split from Pakistan in 1971 many observers doubted that it could survive as an independent state.

The report mentioned Bangladesh remains a poor country, with a GDP per head of \$1,900 at purchasing-power parity. For the first decades of its independent history Bangladesh’s economy grew by a paltry 2% a year.

Since 1990 its GDP has been rising at a more respectable 5% a year, in real terms. That has helped reduce the percentage of people below the poverty line from 49% in 2000 to 32% in 2010.

Still, Bangladeshi growth has been slower than India’s, which for most of the past 20 years grew at around 8% a year. Nevertheless the gains in its development have been greater. The belief that growth brings development with it—the “Washington consensus”—is often criticised on the basis that some countries have had good growth but little poverty reduction. Bangladesh embodies the inverse of that: it has had disproportionate poverty reduction for its amount of growth, the report added.

Bangladesh has done better than most countries at improving the basic standard of living of its people, according to the report. So that is the puzzle: Bangladesh combines economic disappointment with social progress. The Economist suggests four factors to explain why.

First, Bangladesh has done more than most countries to improve the status of women. This was partly deliberate policy (the country invented microcredit and these tiny loans were targeted at women). And it was partly an unintended consequence of other things. Because the country was so crowded and poor, its founders decided after independence to embark on a big family-planning programme. This reduced fertility but also raised the status of women within the household since it was they who now controlled the size of the family. The textile industry later took off in Bangladesh, and 80% of the workers are women. So women’s status and income both improved. Women are much more likely than men to spend money on their

family’s health, education and meals, so child welfare rose.

Second, Bangladesh has been unusually good at boosting incomes in the country—and since the deepest poverty in developing countries tends to be rural, this has helped the very poorest. The mechanisms here were the Green Revolution, which meant the country could grow two crops a year, and remittances (around 6m Bangladeshis work abroad, mostly in the Gulf).

Third, the government deserves credit for maintaining basic social spending. Indeed, it has kept up a consensus in favour of this despite several military coups and bitter political infighting between the two main parties.

But public spending would probably have been wasted and frittered away (as it has happened so often elsewhere) were it not for the fourth factor, which The Economist calls the magic ingredient in the mix: large non-government organisations which have managed to scale up their programmes to work nationwide without losing the idealism of their early days, when they were small and beautiful.

The briefing goes into a lot more details on each of these. The accompanying editorial tackles a question naturally raised by the story: if Bangladesh’s social achievements have been greater than its economic ones, does that mean economic growth is pointless? The editorial says no. True, Bangladesh shows you do not need to wait for lots of growth. But it might have done even better had its economy grown faster. Growth either made only a modest contribution to the factors that mattered most (such as the internal workings of NGOs or the family-planning programme, which people wanted anyway).

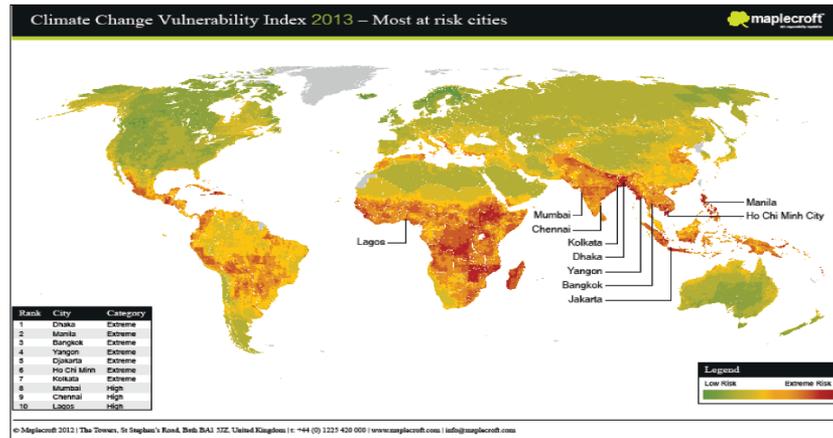
Dhaka tops global climate change risks list

Dhaka has been ranked the top city in the world to face the highest climate change risks in the coming years. The Bangladesh capital came top in the ranking of 50 cities by Maplecroft, a British firm specialising in risk analysis, as the changing temperatures and weather systems are forecast to take hold in the country in the coming decades. Maplecroft's Climate Change Vulnerability Index (CCVI) classifies seven cities as "extreme risk," out of a list of 50 that were chosen for their current and future importance in global business.

Manila was ranked second in the firm's fifth annual "Climate Change and Environmental Risk Atlas 2013", while Bangkok, Yangon, Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City and Kolkata came third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh respectively. The CCVI looks at exposure to extreme weather events such as drought, cyclones, wildfires and storm surges, which translate into water stress, loss of crops and land lost to the sea.

With a strong economic growth of above 5 percent forecast for countries such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia and India in the next few years, the relevance of

A further 19 cities are classed as "high risk" in the CCVI, including the important commercial centres of Mumbai (8) and Delhi (20) in India; Lagos, Nigeria (10); Johannesburg,



climate change to populations and business in the major commercial centres should not be underplayed, according to Maplecroft.

The firm said extreme risk cities may see an increase in frequency and severity of key hydrological and meteorological events.

South Africa (13); Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (21); and Hong Kong (14), Guangzhou (18), Shenzhen (19), Wuhan (23) and Shanghai in China (24).

New York, which took the full brunt of Super storm Sandy, is ranked 41 of the 50 cities. Maplecroft is a global risk and strategy consulting firm based in Bath, the UK.

Sea level to rise 3 feet by 2100 : WB report states

As a consequence of climate change, the sea level will rise by up to 3 feet in Bangladesh, where water scarcity and falling crop yields exacerbate hunger and poverty, says a recent report by the World Bank published on November 18.



The report says all nations will suffer the effects of a warmer world, but it is the world's poorest countries that will be hit hardest by food shortages, rising sea levels, cyclones and drought. The study says sea level-rise by 3 feet by 2100 is likely, with higher

levels also possible. Some of the most highly vulnerable cities are located in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mexico and Venezuela.

The report, titled "Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4 degrees Celsius Warmer World Must be Avoided", urges "further mitigation action as the best insurance against an uncertain future". It highlights the devastating impact of a world hotter by 4 degrees Celsius (7.2 Fahrenheit) by the end of the century, a likely scenario under current policies.

The study findings come as almost 200 nations meet in Doha, Qatar, from November 26 to December 7 to try to extend the Kyoto Protocol, the existing plan for curbing greenhouse gas emissions by developed nations that runs to the end of the year. The Germany-based organisations

Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and Climate Analytics prepared the report for the World Bank.

Under the new World Bank president, Jim Yong Kim, the global development lender says it has launched a more aggressive stance to integrate climate change into development. Climate change is already having an effect. Arctic sea ice reached a record minimum in September, and extreme heat waves and drought in the last decade have hit places like the United States and Russia more often than would be expected from historical records, says the report. Such extreme weather is likely to become the "new normal" if the temperature rises by 4 degrees.

This is likely to happen if not all countries comply with pledges they

have made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Even assuming full compliance, the world will warm by more than 3 degrees by 2100. Extreme heat waves would devastate broad swaths of the earth's land, from the Middle East to the United States, the report says.

The warmest July in the Mediterranean could be 9 degrees hotter than it is today akin to temperatures seen in the Libyan deserts. The combined effect of all these changes could be even worse, with unpredictable effects that people may not be able to adapt to, said John Schellnhuber, director of

the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

Rachel Kyte, the World Bank's vice-president for sustainable development, said, "This report reinforces the reality that today's climate volatility affects everything we do."

Dhaka-Ctg river cargo route opens in March

A new river route opening in March to carry goods between Dhaka and Chittagong will reduce pressure on highways and minimize costs and time for businesses. Once the route is launched, a container-laden vessel

Tk. 1 for carrying a tonne of goods per kilometre, which is Tk 5 now on roads. The shuttle route will connect Chittagong Port with Pangaon Inland Container Terminal at Keraniganj near Dhaka. The river route is part of

the necessary dredging work would be complete within the next two months beginning in December. The construction work of the container terminal began in July 2005 under the supervision of the shipping ministry.



a Tk 177-crore project that the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority took in July 2000 to build the inland container

From Dhaka-Chittagong river cargo the businesses will be benefitted in three ways: it'll save time, minimize costs and reduce pressure on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway. Presently, it takes 18-20 days to carry their containers from Dhaka to Chittagong Port.

from Dhaka will reach Chittagong Port within a day, from seven days to one month needed now.

terminal in Pangaon. The project was aimed at easing traffic congestion on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

According to a report of the Asian Development Bank, Bangladesh can raise its gross domestic product by 1 percent and foreign trade by 20 percent by making its inland water transport systems efficient and competitive.

Costs will also come down significantly businesses will spend

The route will formally be opened by the last week of March 2013 and

Bangladesh's Furniture exports rise by 27pc

Furniture exports grew by 27.09 percent to around Tk 520 million in the first quarter of the current fiscal year due to an increase in demand in the US, Japan and Europe, according to industry people. The figure comes on the back of impressive performances in recent years by the sector in the export markets.

has been the aggressive marketing campaign, according to the sector.

households across the country, with annual growth in terms of turnover being around 19 percent a year. At present, the size of local furniture market stands at Tk 110,000 million a year. The industry currently employs about 3,000,000 people directly. Moreover, it is one of the most labour-intensive industries in Bangladesh, and hence can absorb even unskilled labourers.

In fiscal 2011-12, the sector raked in around Tk 2200 million from exports, up by 26 percent from previous year's Tk 1740 million, according to data from Export Promotion Bureau. The sector's product quality and designs have improved significantly for adopting of latest machineries and technologies, which has been attracting foreign buyers. Another reason behind the export growth

It may be mentioned that furniture makers are regularly participating in the international fairs to explore new markets and organising shows locally to attract international buyers. There is an increasing demand for wooden furniture in the US, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Furniture is one of the rapidly growing sectors in Bangladesh, constituting of around 85,000 enterprises and carpentry



Previously, Bangladesh only exported wooden furniture to neighbouring countries such as India and Nepal and volumes to those destinations, too, increased notably in the last three years. Industry experts said the furniture market can expand

further, both at home and abroad, by blending technology, skilled manpower, quality raw materials and designs.

At present, 17 members of BFEA (Bangladesh Furniture Exporters Association) are involved in

furniture export, with Otobi, Akhtar, Hatil, Brothers, Partex, Navana and Furnitec being the major players. Apart from these member companies, other companies, too, export furniture to the neighbouring countries.

Trade to grow 19pc a year: HSBC



Bangladesh's trade is expected to grow 19 percent a year between 2013 and 2015, driven by a rise in trade with the neighbouring India, HSBC said in a report, Global Connections. The bank also forecasted the country's annual trade growth to be in the region of 14 percent from 2016 to 2020. Although the Asian export growth is expected to be lower in 2016-20 than in the near-term, some countries, namely Bangladesh, Malaysia and Singapore, are exempt from it, according to the report released recently.

HSBC's Global Connections report combines HSBC's bi-annual Trade Confidence Index with a 5-, 10- and 15-year trade forecast. Although

trade growth in Asia has slowed over the past 12 months, the HSBC Trade Forecast says trade will pick up in 2013 and Asia will continue to power the world economy, with China and India leading the way, said Noel Quinn, head of HSBC's commercial banking in the Asia-Pacific region.

Trade prospects for all Asian countries, however, will depend crucially on what happens in China, and to a lesser extent, in India, according to Quinn. Our forecasts for these two countries show strong growth continuing after the current slow patch, leading to a recovery of the world economy, he added.

He said both China and India will continue to expand strongly in terms of world GDP, leading to emerging Asian countries becoming an increasingly important influence on world growth and trade. This, in turn, would have a pivotal impact on flows of foreign investment between

the developed and developing economies.

The HSBC report said merchandising exports from all countries in the region would remain robust, led by China, India, and Vietnam, all of whom are expected to post double-digit annual increases until 2020. Indonesia and Hong Kong are also expected to record double-digit growth in 2013-2015 before slowing down to 7-8 percent in 2016-2020. Bilateral trade between China and India is set to increase significantly, with India becoming the fastest expanding market for Chinese products.

Meanwhile, India's exports to China are set to grow 23 percent during 2013-15 and 19 percent in 2016-20. The HSBC report also projects a growth in South-South trade, with Brazil and Mexico becoming important trading partners for India, Malaysia, Vietnam and China.

Bangladesh Bank approves Grameenphone and three other companies to borrow US\$ 363.28 million from overseas

Bangladesh Bank (BB) on November 13 gave approval to four private sector companies to take loans from foreign sources, with Grameenphone Ltd being one of the companies. The country's largest mobile phone operator will borrow \$355 million, which, according to a senior official of the company, will be used to upgrade the network for the rollout of 3G services.

Mundipharma (Bangladesh) Ltd., Dada (Dhaka) Ltd and Tamisha Synthetic Ltd. are the other companies to get the green signal from BB to borrow - \$0.61

million, \$4 million and \$3.67 million respectively -- from sources overseas. The highest interest rate of the approved proposals is 3-month LIBOR+4 percent per annum, with the effective interest rate being within 4.32 percent per annum, said a BB statement.

This type of foreign financing will be helpful to keep the dollar price stable. The balance of payment deficit will decrease and it will create more job opportunity for the country, added the statement. Earlier last month, Grameenphone borrowed Tk 846 crore from 15 banks and

financial institutions in Bangladesh as syndicated term loan for network expansion.

The nod to borrow comes at a time when the government is working to fix the base price for the 3G auction to disburse licences, to four private mobile operators, by early next year. The telecom ministry has proposed \$20 million for per Megahertz (MHz) of spectrum as the base price, with the licensees having the opportunity to purchase between 5 and 15 MHz of spectrum.

The borrowing approvals came at the 70th meeting of the Board of

Investment Scrutiny Committee of the BB at its headquarters in Dhaka.

The meeting was presided over by the BB governor Dr Atiur Rahman,

who is also the convener of the committee.

New markets brighten hope for RMG

The first quarter of fiscal 2012-13 saw a rise in garment exports to non-traditional markets, an encouraging sign for the sector hurt by economic crises at its traditional markets. Exports to 11 new destinations stood at \$527.61 million in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, up 28.6 percent from the last fiscal year's \$410.12 million, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau.

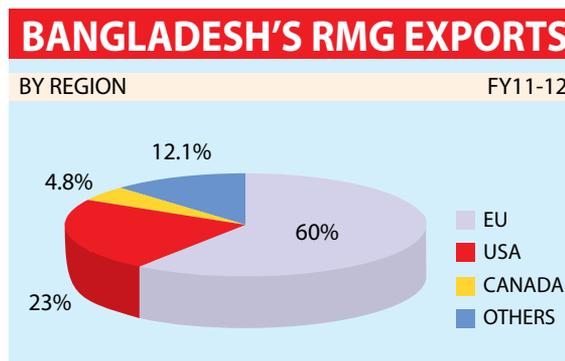
Following the onset of financial crisis in 2007, Bangladesh started looking for new destinations to offset the fall in exports to the traditional markets in the US, European Union and Canada. Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, South Africa and Turkey are looking to be the more promising markets, followed by Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia and Thailand.

Of the total export to the new markets, woven items registered a 30.76 percent rise to \$280.61 million, while knitwear, at \$247 million, was 26.32 percent higher than last year.

The Russian market, which raked in \$16.26 million of exports during the quarter, showed the highest growth.

Turkey, on the other hand, registered a negative growth of 9.21 percent on the back of the 17.5 percent

Dialogue, said besides the ongoing financial crisis in the EU, the declining price of cotton and the shortening of the winter period are also responsible for the slowdown of exports to the region. The worrying matter is that, Rahman said, exports



to the four main markets of the EU Germany, UK, France and Italy have also been affected this time.

“Any slowdown in the EU will have a negative impact on all exports of the country,” the trade

duty imposed by the Turkish government this year on imports from Bangladesh. Exports to the EU, Bangladesh's largest garment export destination, fell 0.38 percent year-on-year to \$2.89 billion in the three months to September.

Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director of Centre for Policy

analyst said, adding the current export condition brings into focus the need for continued exploration of new destinations. Additionally, Bangladesh must increase its competitiveness via increased productivity to grab a bigger pie of the Eurozone market from China, who is on the back foot due to rising costs of production, he said.

ADB lends \$25.1m to Pran for food manufacturing plants

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement on November 14 to lend \$25.1 million to Pran Group to build three food manufacturing plants. The new plants will source as much raw material as possible from the local farmers, and this will help boost agricultural growth, said Martin Lemoine, investment specialist in ADB's private sector operations department.

The majority of Bangladesh's poor still live in the rural areas, and agriculture remains their main source of employment and income, he added. The plants, to be set up under Sylvan Agriculture Ltd, will

produce liquid glucose, frozen food processing and fortified flour, and are scheduled to be complete by 2015. The three plants will cost \$35.8 million to build, with Pran's controlling shareholders providing the remaining \$10.7 million.

The plants will directly employ around 1,000 workers, and provide indirect employment for about 50,000 farmers under a contract farming model; at least 30 percent of the workforce will be female. The estimated annual production capacity from the plants will be: 45,000 tons of liquid glucose, 90,000 tons of flour and 180 million units of flour-based frozen foods. The annual

sales are expected to exceed \$50 million by 2016, the ADB said.

The investment, ADB's first private sector agri business loan since 1985 and first private sector loan in Bangladesh since 2004, is part of ADB's efforts to promote productivity and competitiveness in Bangladesh's agriculture and food processing sectors. The project will help push the country's agribusiness sector up the food value chain, increase food exports and improve food security and nutrition in Bangladesh. Pran is the country's leading food and agribusiness company, with sales of \$450 million that includes \$70 million from exports.

Regional News

D-8 Industry Ministers' Meeting in Dhaka adopts proposals for areas of collaboration

The Third Ministerial Meeting on Industry was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, during 8-10 October with the aim of strengthening the multilateral industrial relations amongst the D-8 countries. The 3-day meeting, hosted by the Ministry of Industries of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was attended by Industry Ministers and other high officials, and experts from the member countries, as well by representatives from private sector and local/international NGOs.

and other regional and international organisations that can promote the interests of the D-8 members.

During the first two days of the meeting, the representatives of the member countries, including from the private sector, participated in the meetings of the 12 Task Forces in charge of pursuing industrial cooperation in the following areas: automotive, energy, food industry, technology cooperation, petrochemicals, cement, iron/steel, textile, standardization and

on diversification of mutual trade relations, enhanced participation in decision-making at the international and regional level, and providing better standards of living to the common people are the main thrust of D-8. He said the collective economy of D-8 members is integrating rapidly with the global economy. Volumes of export and import, which constitute a significant percent of the world trade, have been on the rise. The GDP growth rate has centred at more than 6 percent on an average among the member states.



In her inaugural statement opening the Ministerial Segment, H.E. Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, called on the D-8 member countries to strengthen mutual cooperation on trade, culture and human resources development to deal with unprecedented challenges emerging from globalization. The Prime Minister also criticized the multilateral organisations for their traditional focus with the interests of the developed countries and general neglect of the interests of the least developed countries and developing states, and emphasized the imperative of expansion and strengthening of relations between the D-8 and OIC member states to help offset this negative trend. She also encouraged the D-8 to establish formal engagement with the ASEAN

accreditation, SMEs, electronics and ICT, machinery. The outcome of the work of these Task Forces was reviewed and approved by the Senior Officials Meetings at the end of the 2nd day.

The private sector also had organized three seminars on the sidelines of the Dhaka meeting – geared to exploring the existing and potential opportunities for cooperation among the member-countries. The emphasis in the seminars was to explore practical ways and means to augment investment, promote trade, expand technology transfer, enhance collaborative efforts, including in the area of R&D activities, towards unlocking such potentials.

Minister of Industries of Bangladesh, Dilip Barua, said collective efforts

D-8 Secretary-General, Widi Pratikto, stated at the inauguration ceremony of the meeting that he was quite optimistic about the prospects of actual cooperation in this field. However, he emphasized the importance and necessity of pursuing by each and every country of a pragmatic approach towards cooperation in industrial sector within the bloc – including through improvement of linkages and efficient networking among the entrepreneurs and industrialists. He underlined the necessity of an objective review and assessment of the existing mechanisms for cooperation in the field, in particular as relates to the work and performance of the Task Forces under the Working Group on Industrial Cooperation (WGIC).

SMEs, an area that appears to have received growing attention and significance in recent years, figured prominently among the sideline activities, in which the D-8 Secretary-General, a number of ministers and high officials and other representatives of the member countries participated. They also participated at a press briefing after the end of the seminar and expressed shared conviction of the importance of SME activities as a critical vehicle to increase the capacity of domestic

production in D-8 countries - which would as well help increase D-8 intra-trade and D-8 total trade.

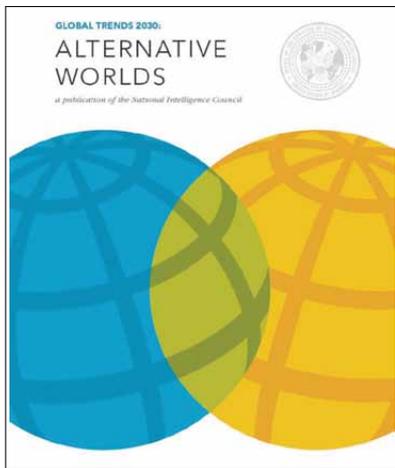
The Dhaka Declaration, adopted at the end of the meeting, encompasses a number of practical proposals and suggestions on a wide array of areas of collaboration, focussing on transfer of technology, institutional capacity building, investment flows, research & development (R&D) activities, and promotion of linkages and networking among entrepreneurs.

The Declaration also emphasized the imperative of further collective collaboration on joint research and development activities in the energy sector, exploring business opportunities in the international markets, reducing technical barriers on trade among the D-8 and expanding the position of the D-8 member-countries in the international markets, developing a process of MRA and harmonisation in the fields of metrology, standardisation, conformity assessment

and accreditation among the D-8 member countries.

The Declaration further drew attention to the widely shared view among the participants at the Meeting that D-8 Secretariat needs to be strengthened in terms of both financial and human resources to be able to effectively pursue, follow up and coordinate implementation of the decisions made by the Organization, at different levels, whether in the field of industrial cooperation or in other areas

Asia 'to eclipse' US and Europe by 2030: Predicts US NIC



Overtuning more than two centuries of Western global dominance, the U.S. and European nations will no longer maintain a monopoly of power, according to the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC) latest report released on December 10, "Global trends 2030 : Alternative World." Instead, they will likely share it with dynamic emerging economies in a multipolar world. "Asia will have surpassed North America and Europe combined in terms of global power, based upon gross domestic product (GDP), population size, military spending, and technological investment," the report said.

Also, while the U.S. will likely remain "first among equals" amid the new global power architecture, the Council believes China's economy will likely overshadow the U.S.'s in size a few years before 2030. The Council had previously predicted China's rise in stature, but hadn't predicted it would become the No. 1 economy.

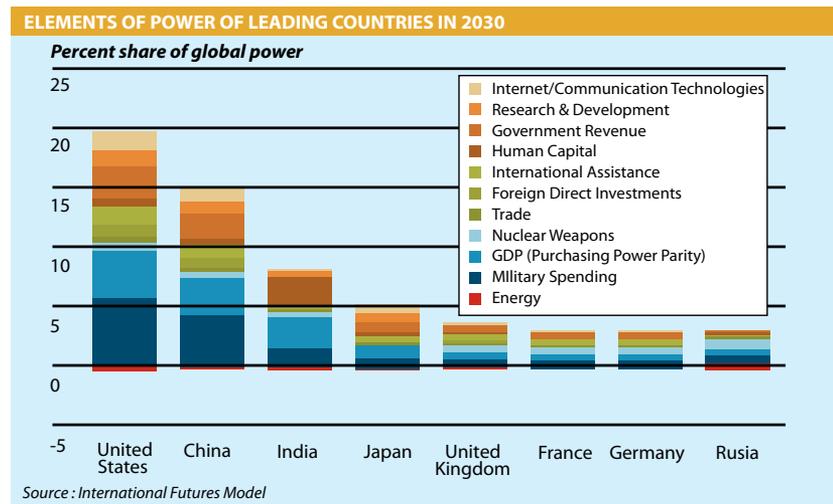
The 2007-2008 financial crisis accelerated a tectonic shift in power from the U.S. and Europe to emerging economies, stumping U.S. growth and sparking a series of sovereign-debt emergencies in the euro zone that officials have yet to tame. Some economists, including at the International Monetary Fund, warn that Europe potentially faces a decade of anemic growth if it doesn't quickly fix its evolving crises.

In the meanwhile, emerging markets such as China, India and Brazil have amassed greater punching power in international institutions such as the IMF, the Group of 20 developed and developing nations and the United Nations. Although not without their own problems, major emerging economies have expanded at near breakneck speeds over the past decade and are expected to be the primary drivers of growth in the coming years.

Over the next two decades, the intelligence report said, European, Japanese and Russian economies are likely to continue in relative declines while China, India, Brazil and regional players such as Colombia, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa and Turkey become especially important to the global economy.

In what the Council called its most plausible worst-case scenario, the risk of interstate conflict increases while the U.S. draws inward and globalization stalls.

The Council said global power will likely continue to be disbursed among the expanding cast of world actors. That will be accompanied by the growing empowerment of individuals, fueled by a middle-class expansion that makes the poor a minority in the world population for the first time. While that will likely mean individuals and small groups



will play a key role in solving global challenges, it also gives them greater access to deadly and disruptive technologies such as cyber crime and bioterrorism, the Council warned.

Furthermore, rapidly aging populations and growing food, energy and water demands could lead to resource scarcities. Global demand for energy is seen growing by 50% as populations expand, even as the U.S. could become energy independent by 2030 as it taps new-found natural-gas resources.

While U.S. analysts say they see those dynamics virtually certain to change the world, they believe a number of game-changing factors could reshape the future in radically different ways.

The Council said the U.S. is at a critical juncture amid the rapid and vast geopolitical changes. It likened the current historical coordinates to the years preceding the first and second world wars and the fall of the

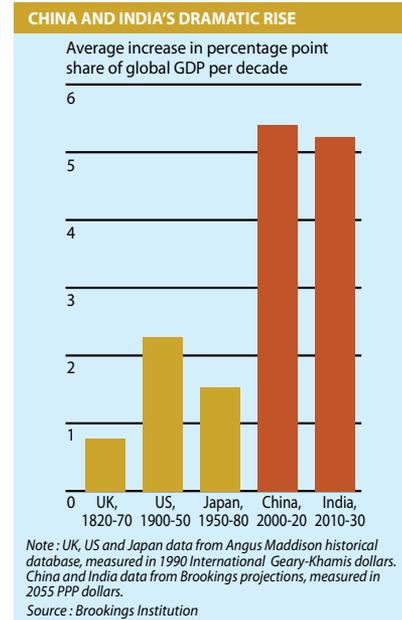
Soviet Union. The extent to which the U.S. injects itself in international affairs--withdrawing or decisive reassertion--is key to the council's alternative possible futures.

Its best-case scenario sees the U.S. engaging with a politically reformed China as part of a coalition that acts to intervene in South Asian conflicts. "This scenario relies on political leadership with each side overruling its more cautious domestic constituencies to forge a partnership," the council said.

Last month, a congressional advisory panel said China is the greatest threat to U.S. cyber security and an expected surge in Chinese investment requires greater government oversight to better protect national security and domestic economic interests.

The Council's most plausible worst-case simulation details a potential rise in conflict throughout Asia--including the Middle East--as Europe

and the U.S. turn inward. In this case, the euro zone quickly unravels, a U.S. energy revolution fails to materialize and global economic growth falters.



The study is the fifth in a series. The last edition was published in 2008.

Looking to 2060: Long-term world growth prospects developing economies to eclipse west observes OECD



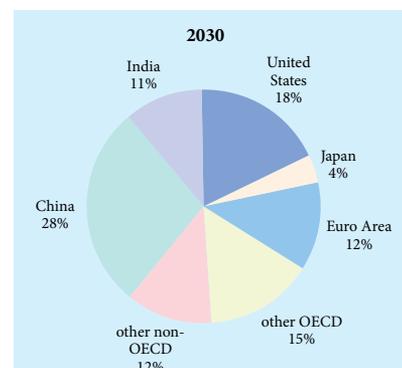
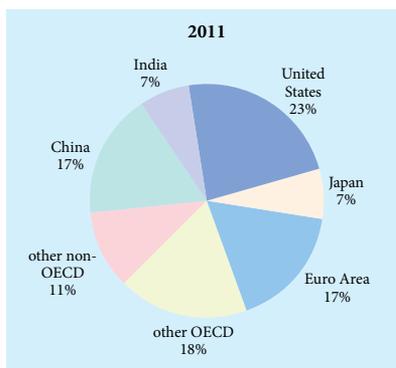
China, India and the rest of the developing world will eclipse the west in a dramatic shift in the balance of economic power over the next five decades, according to a report of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The United States is likely to cede its place as the world's largest economy to China as

early as 2016 and to India by 2060, said the Paris-based think-tank in its "Looking to 2060: Long-Term Global Growth Prospects" report issued on November 9.

The report, which uses a new economic model, forecasts China will overtake the crisis-hit eurozone this year and the US within the next four years to become the largest economy in the world. Combined, China and India will soon surpass the collective economy of the G7 nations. Fast-ageing economic heavyweights, such as Japan and the euro area, will gradually lose ground on the global GDP (gross domestic product) table to countries with a younger population, like Indonesia and Brazil.

The report clearly indicates that the balance of economic power will shift over the next half century. After recovery from the current crisis, global GDP could grow around 3

percent a year on average in the next half a century. Growth in the 34-nation OECD area is projected at about 2 percent annually to 2060, with declining rates in many high-income countries.

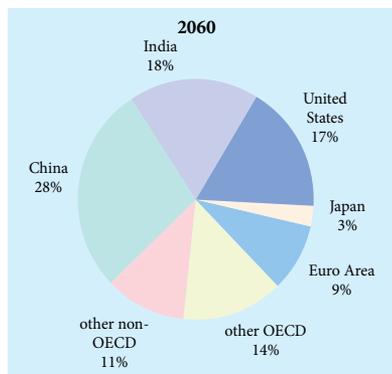


On the basis of 2005 purchasing power parities (PPPs), the US is the largest economy at present, accounting for around 23 percent of global output, but it will be exceeded by China, perhaps as soon as 2016. The combined GDP of

China and India will soon surpass that of the G-7 economies, and will exceed that of the entire current OECD membership by 2060. India is projected to surpass Japan in the next year or two and the Euro area in about 20 years, says the report.

China and India will experience more than a seven-fold increase in their income per capita by 2060. The extent of the catch-up is more pronounced in China reflecting the momentum of particularly strong productivity growth and rising capital intensity over the last decade. This will bring China 25 percent above the current

(2011) income level of the United States, while income per capita in India will reach only around half the current US level.



Additionally, in a few European OECD countries and some emerging economies differences in labour input will also continue to explain a sizeable share of the remaining income gaps. Indeed, for some European countries, where ageing is more pronounced and/or older-age participation rates are low, these factors are enough to cause a widening in the income gap with the United States, despite continued convergence in productivity and skills levels.

9th ASEM Summit concludes in Vientiane : strengthening partnership for peace and development



The 9th ASEM Summit was held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) on 5-6 November and attended by the Heads of State and Government of forty nine Asian and European countries, the President of the

European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary-General of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Leaders warmly welcomed new ASEM partners, namely Bangladesh, Norway and Switzerland, who attended ASEM Summit for the first time. Under the overarching theme of the 9th ASEM Summit "*Friends for Peace, Partners for Prosperity*", Leaders of ASEM partners held a candid and in-depth discussion, exchanged views on important regional and international issues



of common interest and concern, reviewed cooperation between Asia and Europe in the three pillars of political, economic and socio-cultural fields, and set out future direction of ASEM.

Declaration of the 9th ASEM Summit

We, Heads of State/Government from twenty Asian countries, twenty-nine European countries, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic on 5 and 6 November for the 9th ASEM Summit;

Stressing that ASEM has witnessed remarkable development since the forging of a new comprehensive Asia-Europe Partnership for Greater Growth in 1996;

Acknowledging that there are great opportunities for enhancing cooperation between Asia and

Europe, at the same time, the two regions are facing multifaceted challenges, which are transnational in nature and have an impact on peace and development of our two regions;

Expressing our strong desire and collective will to foster an environment of lasting peace, security, stability, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which will contribute to sustainable economic and social development;

Emphasising that strengthening cooperation between regional organisations and fora through establishing partnership links will contribute to better interaction,

aimed at creation of the atmosphere of peace and stability in Asia and Europe;

Recognising that the security environment in Asia and Europe are closely linked and the interdependence of global economy is increasingly deepening, and also that there is great potential for synergy between Asia and Europe as a strong partnership for peace and development in both regions and in the world;

Recalling the Helsinki Declaration adopted in 2006 on the Future of ASEM to continuously "improve working methods and institutional mechanisms in order to steer the process into its second decade".

US President Obama makes historical trip to Myanmar and Cambodia calls for an end to communal violence

US President Barack Obama on November 19 paid the first visit by an American leader to Myanmar and Cambodia, two Asian countries with troubled histories, one on the mend and the other still a cause of concern.

Obama's fast-paced, pre-Thanksgiving trip vividly illustrated the different paths the regional neighbors are taking to overcome legacies of violence, poverty and repression. Cheered by massive flag-waving crowds, Obama offered long-isolated Myanmar a "hand of friendship" as it rapidly embraces democratic reforms. Hours later, he arrived in Cambodia to little fanfare, then pointedly criticized the country's strongman leader on the issue of human rights during a tense meeting.

Obama was an early champion of Myanmar's sudden transformation to civilian rule following a half-century of military dictatorship. He's rewarded the country, also known as Burma, with eased economic penalties, increased U.S. investment and now a presidential visit, in part to show other nations the benefits of pursuing similar reforms. Barack Obama in his speech in Myanmar urged an end to sectarian unrest in the western state of Rakhine, saying there was "no excuse for violence against innocent people and the Rohingya hold within themselves the same dignity as you do, and I do". "National reconciliation will take time, but for the sake of our common

humanity, and for the sake of this country's future, it is necessary to stop the incitement and to stop violence," he added. He called for an end to communal violence between Muslims and Buddhists in the western state of Rakhine.

"Today, we look at the recent violence in Rakhine state that has caused so much suffering, and we see the danger of continued tensions there," Obama said in his address at Yangon University. "You are taking a journey that has the potential to inspire so many people" he added.

Unlike the arrangement after Obama's meetings with Myanmar's President Thein Sein and democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the U.S. and Cambodian leaders did not speak to the press following their one-on-one talks. They did step before cameras briefly before their meeting to greet each other with a brisk handshake and little warmth.

In private, U.S. officials said, Obama pressed Hun Sen to release political prisoners, stop land seizures and hold free and fair elections. Aides acknowledged the meeting was tense, with the Cambodian leader defending

his practices, even as he professed to seek a deeper relationship with the U.S. Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser, said the



president told Hun Sen that without reforms, Cambodia's human rights woes would continue to be "an impediment" to that effort.

Winding down his trip, Obama talked on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda. Briefly addressing reporters before the private meeting began, Obama called the relationship between the U.S. and Japan a "cornerstone of prosperity and security in the region." The two leaders discussed jobs, trade and the economy.

Obama has added the Asia summit to his annual list of high-priority international meetings as he seeks to expand U.S. influence in the region. A welcome sign did greet Obama upon his arrival — but it heralded Wen, not the American president.

Microfinance should reach more of the poor, in a sustainable way: ADB



Microfinance needs to reach more of the poor in Asia and the Pacific,

but do so in a financially sustainable way, said a new study from the independent evaluation department at the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The study, *Microfinance Development Strategy 2000: Sector Performance and Client Welfare*, emphasises the twin goals of microfinance: reaching the poor and being financially sustainable, said the lender on October 17 in a statement.

With microfinance becoming increasingly commercialised in the region, the study stresses the role of government and agencies such as ADB in addressing the financial needs of the poor, while at the same time ensuring the institutional sustainability of microfinance providers.

The study found that the penetration of microfinance among the poor in Asia and the Pacific remains low.

As of 2010, some 20 percent of the population living below the poverty level of \$1.25 per day had direct access to microfinance services in 21 developing countries receiving ADB microfinance support.

Microfinance is seen in the region as an important means to helping low-income households take advantage of economic opportunities and improve living standards. But the degree to which it actually reaches the poor and improves their welfare is under public scrutiny.

A review of two programmes in Pakistan and Vietnam points to an apparent trade-off between targeting and effectiveness of microfinance. Smaller loans were better at targeting

the poor, but less effective than larger loans in producing welfare benefits.

In the Pakistan programme, the average loan was \$195 but reached substantially more borrowers living below the national poverty line than in the Vietnam programme, where the average loan was \$1,972.

The study found more positive direct and indirect welfare benefits in the Vietnam programme than in the Pakistan programme.

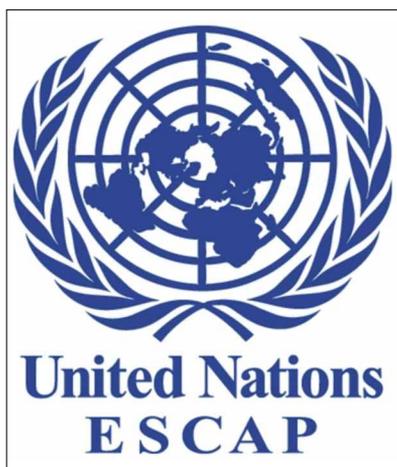
Microfinance needs to better target the poor and focus more on educating them in using basic financial services, as well as more effectively link microfinance services to complementary pro-

poor interventions to have a greater impact on reducing poverty in the region, according to the study.

ADB is one of the largest providers of microfinance support in the region. Between 2000, when the Manila-based development bank launched its microfinance development strategy, and 2010, it approved nearly \$2.8 billion through 88 loans, grants, technical assistance operations, and private sector investments.

Technology-based solutions such as mobile phone and internet banking, payment cards, and electronic money can help microfinance institutions reduce operating costs and expand the reach of their services.

Economic integration to fuel growth in South Asian nations: UN ESCAP political will is key to economic integration



Economic integration among states in South and South West Asia offers a huge potential for sustainable development in the region, said a report of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) launched in Dhaka on November 24. But analysts said political will is pivotal to make economic integration successful as a lack of trust and confidence among the SAARC states still holds the region back from reaping its full potential.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) in association with several national, regional and international organisations arranged the dialogue

at BRAC Centre Inn. CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan chaired the session. The sub-region, which includes Iran, Turkey and eight SAARC states, can become a \$30-trillion market for the middle class by 2040-2050, said Nagesh Kumar, director for SSWA office of UN ESCAP, presenting the report.

The report said 57 percent of intra-regional trade potential remains unexploited in the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). It said countries in the sub-region can benefit from cooperation by facilitating regional investments and cross-border banking and raising capital. The countries will also benefit from cooperation in transport connectivity, food and energy security, agriculture and natural disasters.

The UN ESCAP argues that sub-regional economic cooperation can become a shield for the countries to withstand the global economic turmoil and slowdown. "The report presents a very strong case if the region wants to re-emerge as a hub," said Saman Kelegama, executive director of Institute of Policy Studies,

Sri Lanka. "The region shows enormous potential to take off. But what is needed is implementation. In this area, the Saarc has been lagging behind," he said.

Citing strategic concerns of power outside the region to isolate Iran, CPD Chairman Rehman Sobhan said countries want to recognise Iran as a legitimate partner, and the issue of political economy should be addressed. He also cited the domestic markets of the countries in the region and said raising the purchasing capacity of the working class can help create big domestic markets.

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud said the rebalancing of economies will require for taking the advantage of domestic and regional markets. He also said economic integration affects some industries in one country and another. So in order to have beneficial trade creation, there will be some resistance, said Mahmud. CPD Distinguished Fellow Debapriya Bhattacharya said regional cooperation can help the countries rebalance the source of growth.

ICC HQs News

ICC grants first Merchants of Peace Awards

ICC has bestowed its inaugural ICC Merchant of Peace Award to Rona Yircali, ICC World Chambers Federation Chair, and Martin Granholm, former member of the ICC Executive Board, in recognition of their contribution to the promotion of peace and prosperity through international trade and investment. The award has been established to recognize members of the business community who embody the core mission of ICC through their work.

Since 2006, Mr Yircali has been at the helm of the ICC World Chambers Federation (WCF), the backbone of the chamber community uniting a global network of 12,000 chambers and their business members. Mr Yircali has continued to oversee the improvement of WCF services to ensure that chambers of commerce worldwide have the best tools to remain relevant in the global economy.

Mr Yircali has advanced ICC's mission by improving these services to better facilitate the free flow of trade and by strengthening the global network of chambers through the biennial ICC WCF World Chambers Congress.

Some of these services include the ATA Carnet system, which allows for the duty-free and tax-free temporary import of goods, and the World Chamber Network (WCN)

Directory. The Congress not only helps individual chambers to become more productive, but also reinforces links among them.

Mr Granholm, Deputy President and CEO of Finnish pulp, paper and timber manufacturer UPM-Kymmene Corporation, served on the ICC Executive Board

represent business everywhere and called it the International Chamber of Commerce.

At that time, the world had few working international structures and no world system of rules to govern trade, investment, finance or commercial relations. That the private sector should fill the gap



from January 2007 to June 2012. As a member of the Board he participated in the development and implementation of ICC's strategy and policy-making procedures, and oversaw the financial affairs of the world business organization.

Members of ICC continue to draw inspiration from its founders, the "merchants of peace", who believed that trade and investment foster peace and prosperity in the world. In 1919, these entrepreneurs decided to create an organization that would

without waiting for government was an idea of breath-taking originality.

The recipients of the ICC Merchants of Peace Award are chosen by the ICC Chairmanship, comprising the Chairman, Vice-Chair and Honorary Chairman. The nominations of candidates to be honoured by the Merchant of Peace Award are encouraged from the ICC global network of national committees, the World Chambers Federation, individual companies and the ICC Secretariat.

Business leaders deliver private sector trade priorities to WTO



Business leaders presented to World Trade Organization (WTO)

permanent ambassadors and representatives, at WTO headquarters in Geneva on December 6, their initial recommendations for driving international trade negotiations out of an 11-year deadlock and boosting the global economy.

Executives from the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and Qatar Chamber of Commerce

and Industry updated WTO representatives on progress from the ICC World Trade Agenda. This initiative was established in 2011 with the aim of defining a practical and forward-looking trade policy agenda that will contribute to economic growth and job creation, moving WTO trade talks "Beyond Doha".

International Chamber of Commerce and Qatar Chamber are gathering input from business globally in order to compile a final

set of recommendations that will be presented at the International Chamber of Commerce World Trade Agenda Summit on 22 April 2013 in

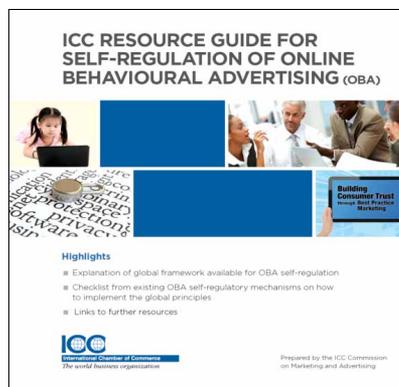
Doha, with a view to presenting them to governments in the lead up to the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia in December 2013.

ICC issues new how-to guide for self-regulation of online behavioural advertising

ICC has produced a tool to help companies and trade associations self-regulate online

in the Consolidated ICC Code of Advertising and Marketing Communications Practice in 2011.

The guide assists industry and policymakers, in markets where OBA self-regulation has not yet been established, to identify the key steps and considerations required to successfully apply the principles in a manner that is consistent across markets. The checklist maps out a step-by-step process covering all the bases for consideration including feasibility research, stakeholder outreach, programme development to implement agreed-upon principles, as well as accountability measures. Useful links and additional resources are provided for existing self-regulatory and accountability programmes.



The ICC Resource Guide for Online Behavioral Advertising (OBA), developed by the ICC Commission on Marketing and Advertising, outlines practical ways in which the ICC global principles can be effectively implemented through self-regulation. It gives an overview of the OBA provisions set out in the Digital Chapter of the ICC Code and provides useful insight, in the form of a checklist, from the experience of organizations implementing comparable rules through OBA self-regulatory programmes.

behavioural advertising (OBA) using global principles published

World economic climate continues to decline, according to latest ICC/Ifo survey

The health of the world's economy continues to deteriorate as insufficient demand, unemployment and the on-going debt crisis in Europe undermine recovery efforts, results of the ICC-Ifo World Economic Survey (WES), released on November 15, revealed.

The results of the survey, conducted by the Munich-based Ifo Institute for Economic Research and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), show the World Economic Climate Indicator in Q4 2012 as standing well below the long term average of 96.7 (1996 – 2011). This latest fall in the World Economic Climate Indicator is due to WES experts' less favourable assessments of the current state of the economy and lower expectations for the six-month economic outlook.

economic difficulties. With WES experts lowering their economic expectations for the next six months they suggest there is no sign of any light at the end of the tunnel for the Euro area.



Europe hampered by public debt

The global economy continues to be affected by the struggling economies in the Euro area where the WES survey showed the economic climate indicator fell from 88.9 to 81.7 in Q4. With the debt crisis continuing to blight the economies of member states like Greece, Portugal and Spain, the indicator for the Euro area currently stands well below the long term average of 109.0 (1996 – 2011).

In North America, the fall in the economic climate indicator was less marked than in Europe, owing largely to more positive expectations for the US economy. According to the survey, Asia's economy also continued a downward trend seen in Q3, though at a slower rate, with the economic climate indicator falling from 83.3 to 81.6.

Based on the findings from the survey, which assessed the views of 1,156 experts in 124 countries across the globe, the World Economic Climate Indicator fell for the second consecutive quarter, dropping from 85.1 to 82.4 in Q4. Although the dip is less pronounced than in the previous quarter, it nonetheless reveals that the hopes of an economic recovery seen in Q2, when the climate indicator stood at 95, have suffered a further setback.

WES experts pointed to public deficits, insufficient demand and unemployment as the chief causes of the Euro area's on-going

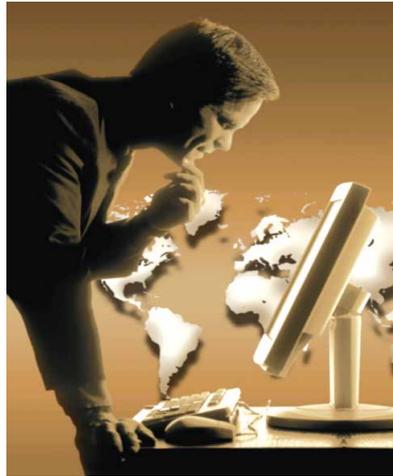
Latin America was the only major continent to go against the trend, with the economic climate indicator rising in the fourth quarter of 2012 due to WES experts' improved expectations for the economy for the next six months.

Gernot Nerb, Ifo Director of Business Surveys, said the strength of the indicator in Latin America can partly be put down to the increased competitiveness of the region's currencies.

Partnership with ICANN to strengthen business engagement

ICC has announced a new working partnership with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). The partnership aims to raise broader business awareness about ICANN's functions and role in the Internet governance landscape while increasing engagement in ICANN issues relating to the domain system.

Announced at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which took place in Baku from 6-9 November, the partnership will leverage ICC's global and diverse business network to ensure greater business participation and, most of all, awareness.



The partnership is in line with ICC's belief that stakeholders must collaborate more fully in order

to bring about the positive and informed policy developments needed to deliver open trade and Internet investment to enhance future economic growth and maintain the free flow of information online.

In an opening speech to IGF participants Mr Carrier underscored the importance of fostering dialogue, building relationships and bringing together diverse stakeholders, to help solve issues of common concern.

For more information visit the ICC Digital Economy Commission and ICC Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS)

Time for young entrepreneurs to assume responsibility as global contributors

Addressing the opening plenary of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) World Congress in Taipei last week, World Chambers Federation (WCF) Chair Rona Yircali called on young people to take a leadership role in addressing the concerns of the global economy and act as pioneers in its transformation.



Underscoring that the voice of youth had been largely absent from global decision-making platforms and mechanisms to date Mr Yircali said: "The on-going economic crisis is a wakeup call for every economic actor in the world."

Noting that 50% of the world's population was aged under 27 and living in urban areas, Mr Yircali urged young entrepreneurs to assume their responsibilities to contribute effectively to shaping the new world order. "There is a clear need for young business people to step forward with specific ideas for consideration by G20 governments

in these volatile times," he said. "The youth of today is an invaluable resource for development and is critical to the transformation of the global social, economic and political landscape. The global community is becoming increasingly aware that solutions to our global challenges must engage youth at all levels."

During his keynote speech Mr Yircali also highlighted the long standing working relationship between ICC WCF and JCI, and current collaboration to bring the voice of youth into the ICC G20 work programme, particularly on unemployment and business creation issues. Following Mr Yircali's address, JCI President Bertold Daems and JCI Secretary General Edson Kodama submitted JCI G20 proposals and projects, for inclusion in ICC messages to G20 countries.

On Thursday 22 November – during a JCI award ceremony recognizing the pro-active work undertaken by JCI chapters around the world – JCI Lebanon and JCI Switzerland were awarded the ICC medal for the best local economic development programme. The ICC medal has been awarded to JCI chapters for more than 20 years and

recognizes the projects relating to international business cooperation and investment, business and trade development, partnerships (public and private sector, including business associations and chambers), executive training and development.

JCI Switzerland was recognized for its SME success programme in association with FER (the federation des entreprises Romandes). The programme provides training to both senior and junior entrepreneurs on the financial, psychological, legal and operational aspects of transferring a business from retiring business owners to the incoming generation.

JCI Lebanon received acclaim for its cross-country 'Global Business Opportunities' – a 17-day business planning training programme, bringing young entrepreneurs aged 20-28 from UAE, Colombia, and Lebanon skills to develop their respective projects. ICC's partnership with JCI at the global level extends almost 30 years. JCI is a permanent member of the WCF General Council, and a member of its Transnational Chamber Board.

JCI is a worldwide federation of young leaders and entrepreneurs whose mission is to contribute to the advancement of the global

community by providing the opportunity for young people to develop the entrepreneurial

and leadership skills needed to generate positive changes in their communities, their countries and

the world. Its network comprises approximately 6,000 communities in more than 100 countries worldwide.

Torino Chamber of Commerce wins bid to host 9th World Chambers Congress

Torino Chamber of Commerce has emerged victorious to be named host of the 9th World Chambers Congress. Following an unprecedented number of bidding chambers, Torino's bid with the theme "community, identity and vision", narrowly triumphed to co-host the Congress with the ICC World Chambers Federation (WCF) when it returns to Europe in 2015.

Located in the geographic and manufacturing heart of Italy, Torino is a constantly evolving city. The cradle of the Italian automotive industry, Torino is also the home of thriving industry sectors from aerospace, energy and environment and biomedicine to food and wine.

President of the Torino Chamber of Commerce Alessandro Barberis links the process of organizing the

9th World Chambers Congress to a broader initiative aimed at making Torino a city well-prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of globalization.



With the Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce as first-rate contenders, voting was a close call.

On behalf of the selection jury comprising the WCF General Council and the ICC chairmanship Mr Yircali congratulated Torino and extended his personal gratitude to the other candidates, for the great deal of effort and thought put into their bids.

Organized by WCF and held every two years in different regions of the world, the World Chambers Congress is the only international forum for chamber of commerce leaders to share best-practice experience, develop networks, learn about new areas of innovation from other chambers, and address the local business issues pertinent to the companies in their region. The 8th World Chambers Congress will be held in Doha, Qatar, 22-25 April 2013.

Ethics training and government transparency needed to fight corruption, survey reveals

Ethics training can be a major tool in fighting corruption in developing countries, according to the results of the latest quarterly World Economic Survey (WES) by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Institute for Economic Research (Ifo) in Munich. The survey's findings, based on responses to an ICC Special Question, also revealed that transparency in government procurement is the most important factor in fighting corruption. The results of the ICC Special Question in the Q4 WES survey were based on the views of 1,156 experts polled in 124 countries worldwide.

Emerging nations favour ethics training

In the first part of the question the experts were asked whether they agreed stronger emphasis on ethics and compliance training for business in their respective countries would help improve productivity and

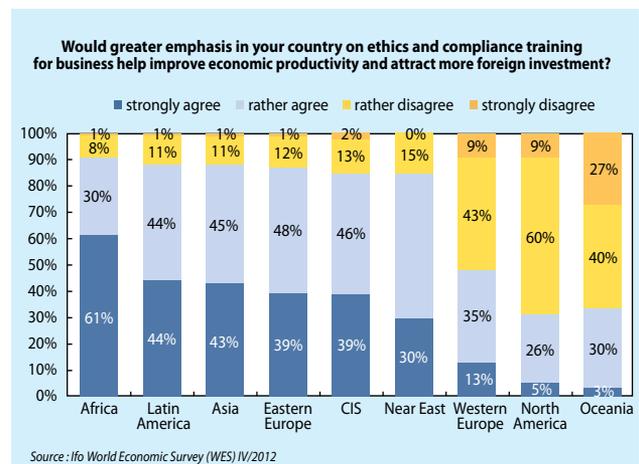
attract more foreign investment. Although the results differed markedly according to the region, it was clear experts in emerging nations overwhelmingly supported the statement.

In Africa, 90% of experts agreed and in both South America and Asia the consensus level was at 88%. There was also a high level of agreement from experts in Eastern Europe and the CIS countries where the statement was supported by 87% and 85% respectively. In Europe, 48% of respondents agreed with the statement and in North America and Oceania it was supported by 31%

and 33% of respondents respectively.

Government transparency required

In the second part of the ICC Special Question, 'Transparency



in government procurement' was clearly identified by the vast majority of experts across all countries and regions as the most important factor in fighting corruption.

ICC is a pioneer in developing practical tools to help business drive integrity in business transactions. Reacting to calls from G20 governments for business to take concrete steps in the fight against corruption, ICC has recently

expanded its suite of anti-corruption tools that includes the ICC Rules on Combating Corruption, and the RESIST toolkit for countering solicitation and extortion.

Most recently, ICC introduced an

anti-corruption clause for companies to insert into any contract – whereby parties agree to comply with the ICC Rules on Combating Corruption or commit to put in place and maintain an anti-corruption compliance programme.

ICC unveils new rules for forfeiting

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on November 14 unveiled new uniform rules on forfeiting (URF) to govern the international forfeiting market estimated at more than US\$300 billion annually. The URF will enter into effect on 1 January 2013, providing a set of rules for the sale of instruments used for financing trade – which include bills of exchange, promissory notes, documentary credits and invoice purchases as well as some newer instruments.

Forfeiting facilitates the provision of finance to the international trade community and gives liquidity to instruments that would otherwise

be limited to evidencing payment claims. By making payment claims easier to transfer, forfeiting enables them to be used as more than just



a means of obtaining payment for goods or services delivered: they can be used to provide finance.

The URF are the result of an ambitious project by ICC and the

International Forfeiting Association (IFA) to create new rules for a multilateral trading system fit for the 21st century. Meticulously prepared over a period of three-and-a-half-years and with input from experienced professionals from all over the globe, the URF are destined to become the standard text for both the primary and secondary forfeiting markets worldwide.

The URF do not change the nature of the payment claim being originated or on-traded, and as such can be used alongside the full and ever-expanding range of instruments used to finance trade.

ICC and UNDP seek nominees for the 2013 Business for Peace Award

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Oslo-based Business for Peace Foundation are seeking nominees for the 2013 Business for Peace Award, a global honour accorded to inspiring business leaders and entrepreneurs who combine ethical responsibility with business success.



The independent jury that will choose the seven honourees includes Nobel laureates Muhammad Yunus, whose Grameen Bank pioneered micro-lending worldwide, and A. Michael Spence, Professor Emeritus of Management at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business and

Board Member of the ICC Research Foundation.

The Oslo Business for Peace Award is the highest distinction for outstanding businessworthy accomplishments. The 2012 award attracted more than 90 nominees from 60 nations. The 2012 Business for Peace winners said their award was inspiring ethical business practice in others.

One 2012 honouree, Latifur Rahman, of Bangladesh, believes the Business for Peace Award's "socially responsible and ethical business criteria" have struck a chord among his peers. He said: "I have been overwhelmed by the enthusiastic felicitations from a cross-section of the Bangladeshi business community on my being honoured with the prestigious Oslo Business for Peace Award 2012. I believe the award will encourage the business community in Bangladesh to practice and strive

to uphold the guiding principles of the Business for Peace Foundation."

Eduardo Eurnekian, of Argentina, who is also a 2012 honouree said: "It is up to businessmen of today to hand on a patrimony of values to future generations, to nourish their vitality and initiatives. May the significance of this award – and its desire for peace and freedom – continue to inspire men and women in every time and place."

The award ceremony, on 14 May 2013 in Oslo, Norway, will be hosted by the City of Oslo, the Oslo Business for Peace Foundation with support from ICC, and the International Herald Tribune as official global media partner. Governing Mayor of Oslo Stian Berger Roesland said: "Oslo is pleased to be a part of this unique initiative. The city has followed the development of the Business for Peace Award with great interest, and is impressed by the

position it has achieved in just a few years. See you in Oslo!”

ICC is already receiving award nominations from its global network

of local representative offices and chambers of commerce.

ICC participates in Latin American G20 trade and investment, WTA events

In light of its leadership role with the Mexico 2012 B20 task force on trade and investment, ICC was invited to give one of the inaugural addresses at the first G20 Trade and Investment Promotion Summit, 4-6 November



in Mexico City. ICC presented the recommendations of the task force on trade and investment, which were the basis for the organization of this summit.

The summit was organized by ProMexico – the Mexican trade and investment promotion agency

– in collaboration with ICC, the International Trade Centre, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization, and the Mexico 2012 B20 organizing committee.

The event brought together 22 high-level representatives from G20 trade and investment promotion agencies, together with senior representatives from the above-mentioned international organizations.

The summit combined plenary sessions and roundtable discussions organized around three main topics: building synergies between trade and investment, exploring company internationalization, and peer-learning in trade and investment promotion. The cross-cutting theme

of the event was the evolution of international trade and investment into global value chains and the associated impact on trade and investment promotion agencies and business.

Main outcomes of the summit included the decision to make this a recurring annual event within G20's ambit or beyond, creation of an online platform for information-sharing among agencies, and strategic conclusions endorsed by all agencies present. Alejandro Ramirez, chair of the Mexico 2012 B20 organizing committee, gave the concluding address. He told the story of his company, Cinopolis, and its transformation from a domestic Mexican cinema chain into the world's fourth largest chain, present in 11 G20 countries, illustrating the benefits of open trade and investment.

Beijing conference highlights role of IP in fostering competitiveness

Government officials and intellectual property experts at a recent conference in Beijing emphasized the strategic importance of intellectual property (IP) in shaping current economic policies of governments and businesses.

The conference, co-hosted by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) on 26 October, addressed how economic and business competitiveness could be increased by using intellectual assets. The event

was attended by nearly 200 business representatives, IP professionals and policy makers from China, Latin America, the US, Africa and Europe.



David Koris, Chair of the ICC Commission on Intellectual

Property, launched the Chinese edition of the 2012 edition of ICC's popular IP report, The ICC Intellectual Property Roadmap: Current and emerging issues for business and policymakers, during the conference.

Speakers from Chinese, European, and US companies and patent offices shared information on developments, laws and IP management practices in the protection of technologies, trade secrets, brands and designs.

UN endorses Incoterms 2010, ICC rules for international trade

The latest version of the Incoterms® rules, ICC's standard commercial terms for use in contracts for the sale of goods, have been officially endorsed by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), confirming their position as the global standard for international business transactions.

UNCITRAL, whose mandate is to remove legal obstacles for international trade, applauded ICC for its “valuable” contribution to facilitating the conduct of global trade by making the Incoterms® 2010 rules simpler and clearer, reflecting recent developments in international trade. The endorsement was



published after UNCITRAL's 45th session in New York, with a decision to "commend the use of Incoterms® 2010, as appropriate, in international sales transactions".

The Incoterms® rules, developed by experts and practitioners brought together by ICC, are used worldwide in international and domestic transactions for the sale of goods.

ICC first defined the Incoterms® rules in 1936, and has since revised the rules a number of times. The latest version came into effect in January 2011.

Chambers establish new certificate of origin structures and action programme

Chamber trade documentation experts from more than 20 countries set in motion a series of global initiatives and action plans during their recent meeting on 6 November

the CO Chain brings reassurance to business, traders, banks and customs administrations that COs are issued according to internationally accepted best practices. Participating

of its International CO Accreditation Committee (ICOAC), to support the roll out of the chain.



chambers will be recognized in future by a distinctive accreditation seal which will appear on certificates of origin, identifying the chamber as recognized globally to

To be chaired by Nigel Rudd, Head of Chamber Accreditation at British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), with the support of Atiq Nasib, Senior Director, Commercial Services Sector of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce as his deputy, the ICOAC was charged to manage the expansion of the CO Chain, prepare recommendations, monitor compliance and formalize the approval of chambers wishing to join the chain.

in Goa, reinforcing their central role in helping business do international trade.

meeting international best practices.

Building upon the launch earlier this year of the ICC WCF International CO Accreditation Chain (CO Chain), the Task Force on Certificates of origin, to be known in future as the International CO Council (ICO Council), updated members on work with member countries and customs agencies in establishing the CO Chain.

The International Guidelines worldwide acceptance was recently reinforced over the past two weeks with their endorsement by nine national chambers from the CIS countries at their regional meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, announced Damir Aitkulov, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation during the meeting.

In addition to BCC and Dubai Chamber, the first incoming members of this group include the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade / China Chamber of International Commerce, Paris Chamber of Commerce, Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and the Union of Turkish Chambers/

Based upon the International Certificates of Origin Guidelines,

Underpinning the effective implementation of the chain, the ICO Council approved the creation

Case studies and experience sharing are an important foundation on the ICO Council's mission.

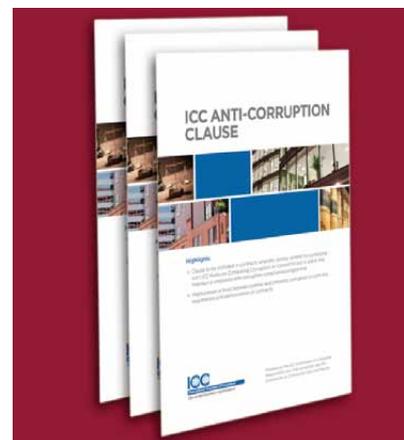
New ICC tool responds to G20 anti-corruption call

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on October 10 unveiled the latest addition to its suite of tools to help business stamp out corruption: the ICC anti-corruption clause.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Bribery Working Group. It delivers a pragmatic response to calls from G20 leaders for the private sector to play an active role in fighting corruptive practices.

Designed for inclusion in any contract, the clause is part of ICC's commitment to supporting implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and more active engagement with the

The new clause provides a contractual basis for parties to commit to complying with ICC's voluntary Rules on Combating Corruption or to implement a corporate anti-corruption compliance programme.



The clause was drafted by experts of the ICC Commission on Corporate Responsibility and Anti-Corruption and the Commission on Commercial Law and Practice, the ICC body responsible for drafting Incoterms® Rules – the world renowned trade terms used in international and domestic contracts for the sale of goods.

The new anti-corruption clause debuted on October 10 at Business/G20 working group meetings taking place at the OECD in Paris. ICC also previewed its forthcoming Ethics and Compliance Training, a practical training, to be made available by the end of 2012 that will provide companies with the know-how they need to implement an effective anti-

corruption compliance programme.

The anti-corruption clause is available as part of a suite of pragmatic ICC tools to help business drive integrity in business transactions. ICC continues to develop such tools that provide guidance on a range of related issues including gifts and hospitality, and solicitation.

ICC announces Ulf Pehrsson as Vice-Chair of the Commission on Trade and Investment Policy



The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Ulf Pehrsson as incoming Vice-Chair of the ICC Commission on Trade and Investment. Mr Pehrsson is responsible for Telecom, Regulatory and Trade Policy at Ericsson. Pehrsson, with more than 25 years of experience in government and telecommunication, is the architect of the company's strategic development

of strong ties to governments and regulators around the world.

Mr Pehrsson has been active in ICC policy work for many years with both the ICC Commission on Trade and Investment Policy and the ICC Commission on the Digital Economy. His involvement on expanding product coverage of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) underscores his expertise in such cross-cutting issues that increasingly characterize the globalized economy.

As Vice-Chair, Mr Pehrsson is tasked with assisting the Chair in Commission meetings and chairing meetings in the Chair's absence. He contributes to the elaboration of commission agendas and assists the process of building consensus within the commission and the development of commission policy products. Mr Pehrsson also acts as a spokesperson and ambassador for the Commission

in relation to governmental decision-makers and the media.

Prior to joining Ericsson, Mr Pehrsson served as the Deputy Director-General for the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as Director, Ministry for Industry and Trade. He worked primarily in the fields of trade policy, trade and investment promotion and the EU Single Market, and also represented the Swedish government at various embassies around the world.

Currently Mr Pehrsson chairs the Business Europe Internal Market Committee and is on the board of a number of organizations such as the Swedish ICT Association, Swedish Foreign Trade Association, International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR), ICC Sweden, Chair of the Computer/Telecom Group as well as the Trade Policy Group, SPIDER - Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions and the Palestine International Business Forum.

ICC announces new leadership for the Environment and Energy Commission



ICC is pleased to announce Kersten-Karl Barth, Sustainability Director at Siemens AG, as new Chair of its Commission on Environment and Energy. Mr Barth has worked at Siemens AG for almost 20 years and has held various positions across the company's portfolio and geographical reach, including hydropower in Latin America, industrial energy efficiency in Europe, and field service for power plants worldwide. In his current position he focuses on the

implementation of Siemens' global sustainability programme.

Joining Mr Barth at the helm of the commission as Vice-Chairs are Martina Bianchini, Director of EU Government Affairs and Public Policy for the Dow Chemical Company and Chair of the ICC Task Force on Green Economy, and Wendy Poulton, General Manager for Organisational Strategy Eskom. Mr Barth takes over from Laurent Corbier who has led the commission for six years.

WTO News

WTO approves Tajikistan's membership

The General Council on December 10 paved the way for Tajikistan's membership of the WTO by approving its accession package. Tajikistan would have to ratify the deal by 7 June 2013 and would become a WTO member 30 days after the ratification.



“Once Tajikistan completes its domestic ratification procedures, it

will become the 159th member of the WTO family. For Tajikistan, a small and landlocked country, WTO accession is a road leading to the world economy. For the WTO, it is another step towards universality and a sign of confidence in the values and benefits of the multilateral trading system,” said Director-General Pascal Lamy.

Tajikistan's President, Emomali Rahmon declared “Today constitutes a landmark in Tajikistan's history and lays solid foundations for further promotion of sustainable social and economic growth. Applying for WTO membership 11 years ago was the right step forward for Tajikistan as it transforms itself into a market

economy. Tajikistan will use its WTO membership as a means of fostering future economic growth and prosperity”.

WTO members congratulated Tajikistan for completing its accession process. Tajikistan applied for WTO membership on 29 May 2001 and the Working Party concluded the negotiations on 26 October 2012. Tajikistan's accession package contains the Working Party report outlining its reformed trade regime and its commitments as a WTO member, its market access schedules on goods and services, the General Council Decision and the Protocol of Accession.

Lamy hails ICC's World Trade Agenda initiative

Director-General Pascal Lamy, during a briefing by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on its World Trade Agenda initiative at the WTO on 6 December said “with the Doha Round as a package at an impasse and political energy for international initiatives at a low ebb, a strong push by business is needed if we are to successfully deter protectionism and infuse trade policy with new energy and vigour.” This is what he said:

It is a pleasure to welcome you here to the WTO.

I would like at the outset to extend my thanks and appreciation to you and your colleagues at the International Chamber of Commerce and Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry for your efforts at raising awareness of the WTO through your World Trade Agenda initiative. I want to thank you as well for taking the time to meet today with WTO members and to outline for them your own campaign for a more open multilateral trading system.

The connections between business and the WTO and the GATT go

back to the earliest days of the multilateral trading system. The ICC's participation in the multilateral trading system actually predates the creation of the WTO or even the GATT. The ICC sent a delegation to London in 1946 for the first session of the Preparatory Committee of the ill-starred International Trade Organization. For decades, you have encouraged and prodded your governments to advance the agenda of trade opening and stronger global trade rules. Representatives from the ICC and other business organizations have attended every WTO Ministerial Conference, every Public Forum and virtually every other WTO meeting since we opened our doors in 1995.

Trade is a potent tool in enhancing efficiency, generating wealth and creating jobs. It spreads gains across an economy through lower prices, wider selection of goods and services and through the innovation that arises from greater competition. But we need to acknowledge that not everyone benefits from trade. Trade

affects nearly everyone, but not in an equal manner. For those that have been hurt by trade, we need to improve training, counselling and job placement programmes.

We at the WTO have been at the coal face in the debate over trade for 17 years. We have welcomed the support we have received from our supporters like the ICC, but at the same time we cannot turn our backs on the sceptics. We are an intergovernmental organization that must seek to balance the needs and interests of 157 members and the myriad of constituencies that seek to influence them. Perhaps this explains in part how business and the WTO drifted apart some years ago.

Many business leaders have been disappointed by the slow pace of WTO negotiations; they have expressed frustration that certain issues of importance to them seem to have dropped off the agenda; they believe that the WTO rule-making is slow in adapting to the changing needs of their businesses.

But the lingering and formidable economic crisis has put all of this into perspective. It has highlighted the fact that the business community and the WTO need each other. The diminished appetite for trade opening, already latent in many countries before the crisis, has threatened to morph into trade restrictive policies. Businesses have seen and appreciated that WTO surveillance of trade policies has had an important deterrent effect on government imposed trade restrictions.

Global businesses recognize that in an era of global production and supply, no regional or bilateral deal can level the playing field like a global accord, and no regional entity has the same capacity to keep markets open. This is not to say that the protectionist threat has receded entirely, nor that growth has not been hampered by the accumulated

impact of measures applied over the past four years. But I think we all realize that absent an active WTO at the core of world trade, the situation could have been much worse.

The launch this year of the ICC's World Trade Agenda and the efforts of Jean-Guy and his colleagues at the G-20, OECD and other fora are much appreciated here. We at the WTO know well that unless there is a strong constituency for further trade opening and stronger trade rules we cannot succeed in modernizing our trading system.

So we too have undertaken efforts to build bridges to business. We hosted the ICC here in March when they launched the World Trade Agenda. I have spoken regularly to their board and together with many members of the Secretariat we have reached out to the ICC, other businesses groups and individual companies around

the world. We launched last month a survey of businesses in more than 100 countries - inviting them to give us their views on how we can provide them with better service. We will be releasing the results very soon. Look for new business-tailored information pages to appear on our website very soon. I have also convened a Panel of Experts to define the future of world trade with a strong business presence, including the honorary chairman of the ICC Victor Fung.

With the Doha Round as a package at an impasse and political energy for international initiatives at a low ebb, a strong push by business is needed if we are to successfully deter protectionism and infuse trade policy with new energy and vigour. So, we welcome the ICC once again to the WTO and offer our encouragement and support for the World Trade Agenda initiative.

WTO launches new “International Trade and Market Access” interactive tool

The “International Trade and Market Access” interactive tool, launched by the WTO on 19 November provides a new dynamic presentation for all WTO data on merchandise and commercial services trade as well as selected market access indicators from World Tariff Profiles, a WTO, ITC and UNCTAD co-publication. The tool is accessed through the WTO's website: www.wto.org/stats

The tool consists of four elements:

- The Trade Dashboard reveals the leading traders by commodity group, sector and year. Data can
- be shown by country, by region or by economic grouping. The dashboard also shows the leading partners of selected countries.
- The Trends Dashboard shows the evolution of trade between the selected country/region/economic grouping and a particular partner.
- The Tariffs Dashboard displays statistics on market access for goods by country or customs territory, using data from the latest edition of the World Tariff Profiles.
- Made in the World provides information on the WTO's

participation in projects aimed at measuring and analysing trade in terms of value added.

The data is presented in the form of interactive maps, charts and data tables, using arrows and pop-up boxes to depict trade flows and to provide supplementary information. Users are able to export the data underlying the graphics. WTO-related information for the countries, such as accession and membership status, is also included. A search function is provided in the data table of the Trade Dashboard to allow users to search by specific countries.

Historic signing ends 20 years of EU-Latin American banana disputes

The European Union and 10 Latin American countries signed an agreement on 8 November settling the longest-running series of disputes in the history of the multilateral trading system.

Mr Lamy distributed to the countries concerned legally certified copies of the EU's revised commitments replacing, with tariffs only, a

complicated and WTO-illegal banana import regime. These banana import tariffs decline annually to 114 euros per tonne. The EU's revised commitments include the 2009 Geneva Banana Agreement. The WTO is the depository of these revised commitments, which have now been accepted by the WTO's membership.

Dispute Settlement Body chairperson Shahid Bashir, who is Pakistan's ambassador, presided when the EU and the 10 Latin American countries signed a “mutually agreed solution”, officially closing the legal disputes over bananas (cases DS16, DS27, DS105, DS158, DS361 and DS364) between the EU and Latin American countries. One positive feature of the



disputes is that they have provided a “rich source of jurisprudence” on WTO law.

The deal

The Latin American countries present were: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela and Peru (which did not

sign the mutually agreed solution because it was not directly involved in the disputes but participated in some key negotiations). Some had brought legal dispute cases against the EU, others were involved in other issues, including negotiating the EU’s new commitments to take into account its enlargements to include new members.

The Geneva Banana Agreement was agreed by the EU, the Latin American countries and the US in December 2009. Since then a number of legal steps were required, including each country ratifying the 2009 agreement and the EU introducing legislation and regulations to implement it. Having been accepted by the WTO’s membership as part the EU’s new commitment, it is now multilateral.

The new EU commitments were circulated on 27 July 2012 as a revision to the EU’s list of commitments. WTO members were then given three months under WTO regulations to object. Since there were no objections, the director-general certified the “schedule” at the end of October.

WTO releases 2011 trade and tariff data

The WTO released on 23 October its annual package of trade and tariff data, providing detailed statistics on import/export trade flows and tariff rates in 2011. This package includes the 2012 editions of its annual publications — International Trade Statistics, Trade Profiles and World Tariff Profiles — plus an update of the WTO Statistics Database and other data sources.

All the trade and tariff data can be downloaded free of charge from the WTO web site’s statistics page (www.wto.org/statistics), which has been redesigned so that data can be selected by trade category (merchandise or services), tariffs or by information source (e.g. databases and publications).

The statistics reveal that world merchandise exports increased by 5 per cent in 2011 in volume terms. The United States remains the world’s biggest trader (in value terms), with imports and exports totalling US\$ 3,746 billion in 2011. China and Germany rank second and third respectively. Exports of commercial services grew by 11 per cent in value terms. The United States is the

world’s largest trader, with US\$ 976 billion of services trade in 2011.

International Trade Statistics 2012 provides a comprehensive overview of world trade up to the end of 2011, covering merchandise trade by product and services trade by category. Through the use of extensive charts and maps, the publication illustrates noteworthy trends in global trade with links to numerous tables containing more detailed data. A methodological chapter explains how the data is compiled while an appendix illustrates historical trends.

The publication serves as an invaluable reference tool for researchers, policy makers and anyone interested in international trade. It is available first in electronic format with a print version to follow in November. Data can be downloaded from the WTO web site in Excel and pdf formats and from the searchable database. PDF versions of the entire report in English, French and Spanish are now available on the web site.

To further improve the quality of the publication, we invite you to provide your feedback by filling in the ITS 2012 Survey.

World Tariff Profiles — a joint publication of the WTO, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) — provides comprehensive tariff information on all WTO members and a number of other countries where data is available. It is the only compilation of tariff information of its kind available to researchers and negotiators.

The data provided include basic economic indicators (such as gross domestic product or GDP), trade policy indicators (such as tariffs, import duties, the number of disputes, notifications outstanding and contingency measures in force), merchandise trade flows (broken down by broad product categories and major origins and destinations), services trade flows (with a breakdown by major components) and industrial property indicators. With one page devoted to each economy, Trade Profiles offers a concise overview of global trade. PDF versions of the publication in English, French and Spanish can be downloaded from the WTO web site.

Our recent achievement...



Best Financial Institution of Bangladesh Award

In recognition of its consistent performance, Bangladesh Business Award by DHL - Daily Star, awarded Pubali Bank as the Best Financial Institution 2010.



Country's largest online network with 350 branches

With in-house software - Pubali Integrated Banking System (PIBS) - evaluated by PwC, the bank launched its online Banking - becoming the largest online network of the country with 350 branches



Largest Private Bank with 410 branches

Rather than focusing on only in metro areas, to reach the rural economy, the Bank has established 410 branches all over Bangladesh - largest network in private sector banks



Double A Three Credit Rating

Credit Rating Authority of Bangladesh (CRAB) has rated AA3 signifying "Very Strong Capacity" in long term and ST1 signifying "Highest Grade" in short term



Highest ever growth achieved by Pubali Bank

In the year 2010, the Bank continued its consistent performance and has marked the highest ever growth



One of the largest private sector recruiters

The bank is ensuring employment of Bangladeshi talents through massive recruitment and proper training - this year 550 officers joined the Pubali family



Diverse list of products

The bank introduced diversified products to cater the financial needs of a larger scale - Innovation and emphasis on agriculture, foreign wage earners scheme, remittance, SME, trade finance etc



Introduced Islamic Banking

With increasing demand, the Bank has opened its Islamic wing



Special recognition for CSR

Huge contribution for disaster management, development of health sector, supporting local sports and different other social contributions brought the Special Recognition for CSR by Banker's Forum and others

...we will continue to strive for excellence in coming days



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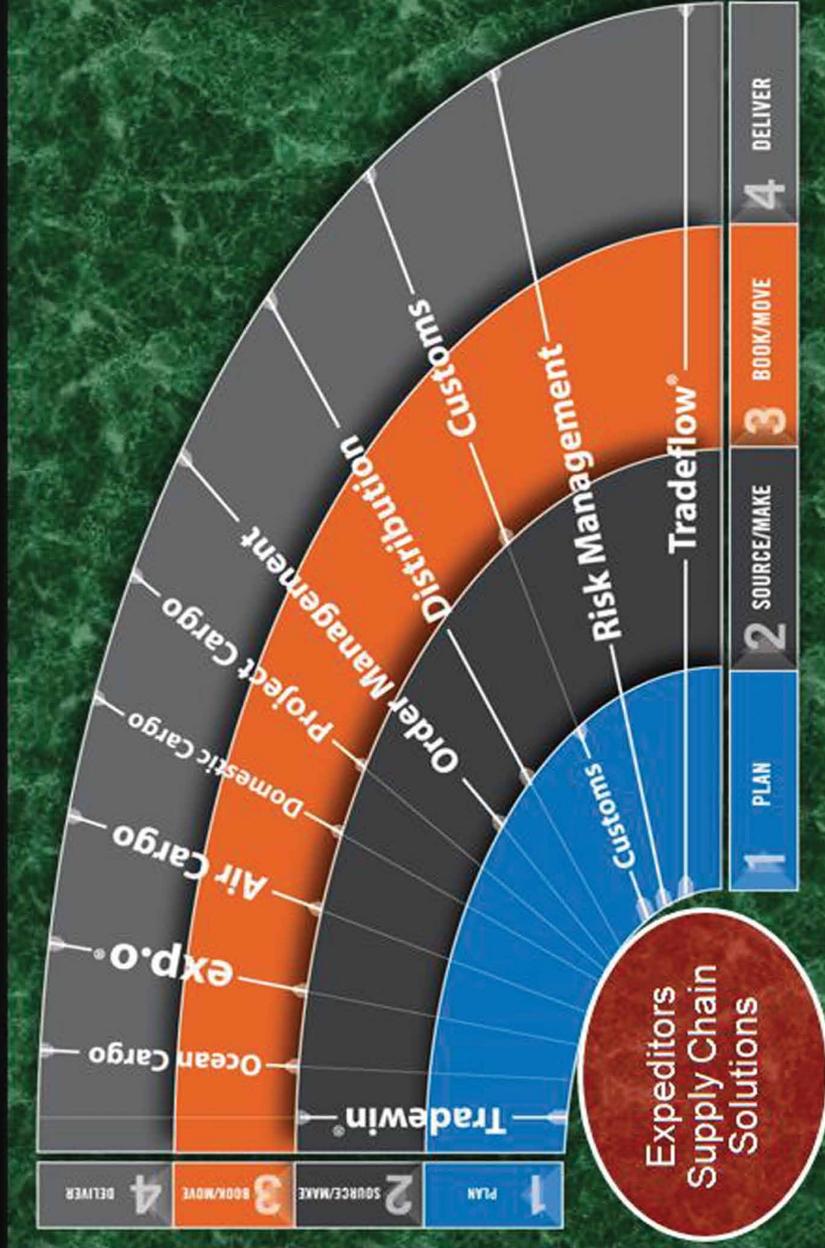


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