

Press Release

Monday, 30th September 2024

EBFCI Meeting with Honourable Advisor to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (retd), Focuses on Strengthening Security, Economic Growth, and Tourism

A high-level meeting was held today between the European Bangladesh Federation of Commerce and Industry (EBFCI) and Honourable Advisor to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (retd). The meeting covered a wide range of initiatives aimed at strengthening Bangladesh's national security, promoting economic growth, and enhancing the country's appeal as a tourism destination. The discussions highlighted Bangladesh's commitment to collaboration with international partners in key areas of development.

Key Discussion Points and Outcomes:

1. Enhancing National Security through Technology.

The Honourable Advisor welcomed proposals to strengthen Bangladesh's security infrastructure through advanced technologies. Topics included the potential of AI-driven surveillance, smart policing tools, and robust cybersecurity systems. These innovations will help the country combat crime, terrorism, and cross-border threats. The Advisor affirmed that international collaboration would be pivotal in keeping Bangladesh at the forefront of modern security solutions.

2. Simplifying Visa and Work Permit Processes

Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury announced significant changes to ease the visa and work permit processes, particularly for foreign tourists and expatriates. This includes simplifying the visa application process to attract more tourists and streamlining work permits for expatriates. The introduction of the "Digital No Man Visa" concept aims to facilitate seamless cross-border business movement, supporting startups and fostering stronger international relations.

He further emphasised that tourism is a potential sector for the country, and by simplifying these processes, Bangladesh hopes to attract more foreign visitors. If required, inter-ministerial meetings will be convened to consider policy changes to achieve these goals.

3. Strengthening Trade and Export Potential.

The meeting underscored Bangladesh's dedication to improving trade processes and bolstering its export potential. Measures discussed included simplifying the import-export process, particularly for perishable goods, and reducing logistical costs for exporters by lowering cargo costs for the national carrier, Biman. These changes are expected to support the export sector and increase the competitiveness of Bangladeshi businesses in the global market.

4. Collaborative Efforts to Enhance Farming Capabilities.

To strengthen Bangladesh's agricultural sector, the Advisor called for joint efforts from the government, private sector, and international partners. Key areas for improvement include modernising farming techniques, upgrading processing facilities, and expanding cold storage and logistics capabilities. These efforts, coupled with improved access to financing for farmers, are expected to boost agricultural exports and improve the livelihoods of rural communities. The Advisor also sought the expatriates' cooperation in mechanising agriculture and investing in the sector.

5. Support from NRBs and Diaspora Communities.

The Honourable Advisor recognised the vital role of Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) and the diaspora in the country's development. He described them as assets to Bangladesh and stressed the importance of their contributions in terms of knowledge, investment, and innovation. Specific initiatives are being planned to encourage NRBs to actively participate in national development projects. Additionally, he appealed to the Bangladeshi expatriate community to assist in repatriating funds siphoned off from the country, which would further contribute to its growth.

Closing Remarks

In his concluding statements, Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury reaffirmed his commitment to fostering open dialogue with international stakeholders. He expressed gratitude to the EBFCI delegation for their continued support and interest in working together toward a safer, more prosperous Bangladesh. The Advisor emphasised that the country's development is a collective responsibility, urging all stakeholders to contribute to building a brighter future for Bangladesh.

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About EBFCI:

The Europe Bangladesh Federation of Commerce and Industry (EBFCI) is a platform dedicated to fostering partnerships and collaborations within Europe, United Kingdom and Bangladesh. EBFCI brings together governments, businesses, and institutions to advance mutual economic, healthcare, and social development goals across member countries.