

Getting momentum in Trade & Businesses, bringing back confidence of Businessmen and setting FBCCI as the true representative of Business Community will be Prime Task.

Md. Hafizur Rahman



Md. Hafizur Rahman took charge as the Administrator of FBCCI

From the Desk of the Administrator



Dear Colleagues

It is my pleasure to extend warm greetings to you all as we embark on publishing our monthly E-bulletin for the month September, 2024. It gives me great pride to bring the FBCCI E-Bulletin, since I joined as new Administrative of FBCCI.

The Monthly E-bulletin brings out FBCCI's activities and related developments regularly, visualizing our views and positions on various aspects of trade, commerce, and industry in the country. It provides feedback about FBCCI's organizational endeavors in upholding the interests of its members engaged in various business sectors of the country.

The month of September has been eventful for FBCCI. On September 11, the Ministry of Commerce dissolved the FBCCI board and appointed me as Administrator of FBCCI under section 17 of the Trade Organisations

Act, 2022. The Administrator took charge on September 12, 2024. I believe, this transition will help to build FBCCI as a democratic and business friendly organization.

Aligning with the Government's goal to create a conducive environment to help carry out business activities safely and responsibly, FBCCI held a number of courtesy meetings with business leaders from sectoral associations during September. Valued thoughts, views and ideas of the business community extracted from those meetings help FBCCI to design its programs and strategies for the betterment of overall businesses of the country. As the apex trade organization, FBCCI has represented the diverse business community in significant dialogues. Besides, FBCCI engaged in continued approaches to Government agencies, local and international counterparts throughout the month.

FBCCI had the privilege of engaging itself in numerous activities believed to have strengthened our commitment to bolstering economic development, cementing international relations, and involving private sectors in different policy discourses at home and abroad.

Looking back on the events, it is evident that FBCCI remains committed to its mission of promoting and protecting the interests of the private sector through providing valuable insights and creating opportunities.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our members, partners, and stakeholders for congratulating me and giving their support to FBCCI's endeavors. Together in the same spirit, we will shape our future in more brighter and prosperous way.

Warm regards,

Md. Hafizur Rahman
Administrator, FBCCI

Message from the Administrator

At the outset, as administrator of FBCCI, I warmly welcome you all to the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) - the apex trade organization of Bangladesh comprising more than 500 members including Sectoral Associations, District Chambers and Joint Chambers. Since its inception in 1973, FBCCI is playing a pivotal role in consultative and advisory capacity, safeguarding the interest of the private sector.

I really feel honored that the Interim Government has appointed me as the Administrator of FBCCI under section 17 of the Trade Organisations Act, 2022. This is a unique opportunity for me to serve this apex body of trade and businesses. In fact, I look forward to working closely with all spectrum of the business community for the betterment of the private sector and our beloved country. Though I have been tasked by the Ministry of Commerce to conduct the FBCCI election within shortest possible time, nonetheless I would try my best to bring reasonable changes in the FBCCI structure, Acts & Rules, those are fundamental to make FBCCI a true representative of business associations-chambers.

To this end, I am working closely with my colleagues, business houses - the chambers and associations. It might take a few months more to bring the coveted changes, but I think these are fundamental of utmost importance to bring those changes/amendments in the Acts, Rules, Regulations and practices those impel transition to democratic institutions.

The arduous task that has been assigned to me, I am sure with all of your support and help, I would be able to accomplish in time. That's why I solicit yours unwavering support to help me transforming FBCCI to a truly democratic and representative institution of business bodies.

May Almighty help us all and give us courage and wisdom to make our beloved country a real abode of happiness and a true hub for national and international trade and businesses.

Please don't hesitate to visit my office or contact me, if you have any suggestion. You are always welcome to FBCCI.

Md. Hafizur Rahman
Administrator, FBCCI

Md. Hafizur Rahman took charge as Administrator of FBCCI



Md. Hafizur Rahman, Member of Bangladesh Competition Commission and former Additional Secretary, took charge as the Administrator of The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) on September 12, 2024.

The Interim Government has appointed Md. Hafizur Rahman as the Administrator of FBCCI under section 17 of the Trade Organisations Act, 2022.

FBCCI Administrator attended National Business Dialogue at Hotel Intercontinental

National Business Dialogue on 12th September, 2024 at Hotel Intercontinental in Dhaka. Jointly organized by International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh (ICCB) including FBCCI and other trade bodies like DCCI, MCCI, BGMEA, BKMEA etc. Newly appointed administrator of FBCCI Mr. Hafizur Rahman attended the dialogue on behalf of FBCCI

Chief Advisor Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus graced the



event as the chief guest. Chief Advisor urged the businessmen to work together with the interim government to help build a new Bangladesh as dreamt by students & common people.

Business Leaders congratulating the newly appointed Administrator of FBCCI

FBCCI General Body Members congratulated the newly appointed Administrator of FBCCI Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 12, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

They expected that during his time a fair and free election will be held in FBCCI. They also opined that he will bring necessary changes in the T.O Act/Rules to facilitate true representation of business communities in the FBCCI.



The Administrator met with FBCCI Secretariat



The newly appointed Administrator of FBCCI Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman met with FBCCI officials and staffs on September 12, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka, to get acquainted with the officials and staffs of FBCCI and to understand the various activities of FBCCI.

Administrator visited FBCCI Hatkhola Building, Dhaka. (Research & Innovation Center)

The newly appointed Administrator of FBCCI Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman visited FBCCI's building at Hatkhola, Dhaka (mainly known as Research & Innovation Center) on September 14, 2024.

Among others, Secretary General of FBCCI Mr. Md. Alamgir, Adviser of FBCCI Safety Council Brig. Gen. (Retd.) Abu Nayeem Md. Shahidullah, Head of FBCCI International Wing Mr. Md. Zafar Iqbal ndc, Chief Executive Officer of FBCCI Innovation and Research Centre (FIRC) Dr. Bikarna Kumar Ghosh were present. During the visit CEO of Research & Innovation Center gave a presentation on the activities of R&I Centre firsthand overview of Hatkhola Bhaban.



Administrator visited FBCCI Gulshan Extended Office, Dhaka



Administrator of FBCCI Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman visited FBCCI's Gulshan Extended Office in Dhaka on September 14, 2024. Secretary General of FBCCI Mr. Md. Alamgir, Head of International Wing Mr. Md. Zafar Iqbal ndc accompanied him.

Secretary General of FBCCI gave an overview of FBCCI Extended Office to the newly appointed Administrator, FBCCI. Administrator highly appreciated the location, settings and decorations of the building. He urged official concerned to take registration of the building at the earliest.

Steel Importers called on FBCCI Administrator

Representatives of Bangladesh Iron and Steel Importers Association met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 15, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

President of the Bangladesh Iron and Steel Importers Association Mr. Abujar Gefaree Jewel, Former FBCCI Director Mr. Md. Amir Hossain Noorani, FBCCI Secretary General Mr. Md. Alamgir, and Head of International Wing Mr. Md. Zafar Iqbal ndc, among others, were present at the meeting.



A delegation from ESSAB and FEBOAB met with the Administrator

A business delegation from the Electronics Safety and Security Association of Bangladesh (ESSAB) and Fire Fighting Equipment Business Owners Association of Bangladesh (FEBOAB) met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 21, 2024 at FBCCI office in Gulshan, Dhaka. The delegation was led by the President of ESSAB and Former Director of FBCCI Mr. Md. Niaz Ali Chisty. Among others, business leaders from ESSAB and FEBOAB were also present.



BABMA President met with FBCCI Administrator



Mr. Shahidul Islam Howlader, President of Bangladesh Automobile Body Manufacturers Association (BABMA) met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 22, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

Administrator appreciated the delegation and highly spoke of their contribution in the transport sector and employment creation. He hope that BABMA will continue to support building new Bangladesh in the coming days.

Former Director of BCDS paid a visit to the FBCCI Administrator

Mr. Zakir Hossain Rony Former Director of Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Samity (BCDS) paid a courtesy visit to the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 25, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

Administrator patiently heard their problems and promised them to solve their problems at the earliest. He urged them to move their chemicals to government designated plots from densely populated old Dhaka and other places.



Acting President of BCCCI met with Administrator of FBCCI

Mr. Md. Khorshed Alam, Acting President of Bangladesh China Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCCCI) paid a courtesy call on the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 25, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

Among others, BCCCI Vice-President Mr. Nizam Uddin Chowdhury, Secretary General Mr. Al Mamun Mridha and business leaders were present.



Coordination Meeting of the FBCCI Secretariat held



Coordination meeting of the FBCCI Secretariat was held on September 26, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka. Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman chaired the meeting.

Secretary General of FBCCI Mr. Md. Alamgir, Head of International wing Mr. Md. Zafar Iqbal ndc and other officials were present at the meeting.

Secretary General of FBCCI briefed Administrator about the activities of FBCCI, its opportunities and challenges.

Business leaders from Specialised Textile & Powerloom Sector met with FBCCI Administrator

Business leaders from Bangladesh Specialised Textile Mills & Powerloom Industries Association, led by its President Mr. Hamidul Haque Khokan, met Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 26, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

The delegation briefed Administrator about the contributions of Specialised Textile and Powerloom sector and urged them to contribute more to the economy of Bangladesh.



Former President of Bangladesh Restaurant Owners Association met with FBCCI Administrator

Mr. Khandaker Ruhul Amin, Former President of Bangladesh Restaurant Owners Association (BROA) and Former Director of FBCCI met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 26, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka. He requested Administrator to look into the harassment of restaurant owners by different agencies in the name of compliance. He affirmed that restaurant owners would like to follow government's directions and work to have license from one authority.



President of Bangladesh Paper Importers Association paid a courtesy call to FBCCI Administrator



Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam Vorosha, President of Bangladesh Paper Importers Association (BPIA) and Former Director of FBCCI met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 26, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

President of BPIA requested Administrator to conduct election after undertaking proper reforms in Trade Organization rules and regulations. He also requested Administrator to reduce VAT, Taxes on paper imports. Administrator assured them to look into the matter.

BAFISA President met with FBCCI Administrator

A delegation from Bangladesh Food Stuff Importer & Suppliers Association (BAFISA), led by its President Mr. Md. Borhan-E-Sultan, met the Administrator Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman on September 30, 2024 at FBCCI office in Motijheel, Dhaka.

BAFISA President congratulated Administrator for taking the charge of FBCCI. He requested Administrator to take measures for conduct election after taking necessary reforms. Administrator requested them to support him in this effort.



Bangladesh- Brazil Trade Opportunities and Challenges

Bangladesh is the world's 2nd largest apparel exporter after China. Bangladesh is also the largest producer of raw jute (the best environment-friendly fiber), 3rd largest rice producer, 3rd largest vegetable and freshwater fish producer. Our economic growth is fueled by major development in infrastructure and the best uses of our resources. Brazil being the most influential country of South America, a rising economic power of BRIC countries, could be a new frontier for trade and investment from Bangladesh. Brazil is a big country and their purchasing power is also big. But this South American market remained unexplored until recently.

There is immense potential of business, trade promotion, and investment opportunities between Bangladesh and Brazil, which has surpassed 2 billion dollars in the past two years. In fact, bilateral trade between the countries reached \$2.7 billion last fiscal from \$1.5 billion in 2021. Bangladesh mainly imports soya, soybean oil, cotton and sugar, worth over \$2 billion. The export of ready-made garments is about \$200 million. Bangladesh does not get any duty-free market access. Bangladesh looks forward to getting for duty-free market access of ready-made clothes to Brazil.

But to increase it more, Bangladesh needs to sign the PTA with MERCOSUR. MERCOSUR-Bangladesh Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), if concluded will enhance the business opportunities and foster private sector engagements between Bangladesh, Brazil, and the other MERCOSUR State Parties, significantly contributing to the promotion of South-South Cooperation. For this Bangladesh is keen to commence of the process for negotiating MERCOSUR Bangladesh Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), at the earliest opportunity.

Brazil is a member of the BRICS. Bangladesh wants to join the group. Brazil is also the current president of the G-20. So, Brazil can help Bangladesh to join the group. If not as a member, Bangladesh likes to participate in three sectors of G20 under Brazil's Presidency-

- i) **environment and climate sustainability working group;**
- ii) **empowerment of women working group and**
- iii) **the task force for the launching of the global alliance against poverty and hunger.**

It is to be noted that in 2023, President Lula and Bangladesh counterpart met on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in South Africa and agreed to have increasing cooperation and exchanges in the fields of agriculture, livestock, science, technology and innovation, education, climate change and energy transition, and technical cooperation, among others.

Brazil is a major exporter of edible oil, sugar, cotton, ethanol, semi- finished iron, and other products to Bangladesh. While Bangladesh is a major supplier of ready-made garments to Brazil. Bangladesh also provides jute products like jute bag and jute sack for Brazilian Coffee industry. Bangladesh trade with Brazil has increased from \$1.5 billion in 3 years to \$2.7 billion within a short span of time.

Bangladesh and Brazil have huge potential for bilateral trade in a number of sectors, if both countries resolve trade barriers, especially Brazils imposing 30%-35% tax on Bangladeshi products. Bangladesh's 40 million out of 175 million people, have adequate purchasing power and Bangladesh can be a good destination for Brazil exports. So both parties work together to unleash the opportunity by overcoming the challenges.

Key Industries for Collaboration:

Key Industries for Collaboration between Bangladesh and Brazil:

1. Agriculture: Both Bangladesh and Brazil have significant agricultural sectors, albeit with different focuses. Brazil is a global powerhouse in agribusiness, known for its large-scale production of soybeans, sugarcane, coffee, and beef. Bangladesh, on the other hand, is renowned for rice production and fisheries. Collaboration in agriculture could involve knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and joint research initiatives to improve productivity, enhance food security, and explore new markets.

2. Textiles and Garments: Bangladesh is one of the world's largest exporters of textiles and garments, while Brazil has a burgeoning textile industry. Collaboration in this sector could involve vertical integration, where Brazilian textile manufacturers provide raw materials to Bangladeshi garment factories, taking advantage of Bangladesh's expertise in garment manufacturing and Brazil's cotton production capabilities. Joint ventures could also explore sustainable practices and innovative technologies improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

3. Technology: Both Bangladesh and Brazil have made strides in the technology sector, with growing IT industries and a burgeoning startup ecosystem. Collaboration in technology could involve partnerships between Brazilian and Bangladeshi tech companies to develop innovative solutions for common challenges in areas such as e-commerce, fintech, healthcare, and education. Joint ventures could also facilitate technology transfer and skill development through exchange programs and collaborative research projects.

4. Renewable Energy: Brazil is a global leader in renewable energy, particularly in hydro-power and biofuels, while Bangladesh has been investing in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power to meet its growing energy demands sustainably. Collaboration in renewable energy could involve sharing best practices, technology transfer, and joint investment in renewable energy projects. Partnerships could focus on developing solar and wind farms, promoting energy efficiency, and implementing smart grid solutions to enhance energy security and mitigate climate change.

5. Infrastructure Development: Both Bangladesh and Brazil face infrastructure challenges, including transportation, logistics, and urban development. Collaboration in infrastructure development could involve joint ventures or public-private partnerships to finance and execute large-scale infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, ports, and urban infrastructure. Brazilian expertise in construction and engineering combined with Bangladeshi market knowledge and investment opportunities could create significant synergies and opportunities for collaboration.

In summary, collaboration between Bangladesh and Brazil in key industries such as agriculture, textiles, technology, renewable energy, and infrastructure development holds immense potential for mutual benefit. By leveraging each other's strengths, resources, and expertise, both countries can drive innovation, create jobs, and foster sustainable economic growth. Joint ventures, partnerships, and knowledge exchange initiatives are essential for unlocking the full potential of this dynamic collaboration and shaping a brighter future for both nations.

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