

THOUGHTS AND INITIATIVES

1. BDI WORK GUIDELINES:

AN OVERVIEW

The following summary guideline was written on the backdrop of the emerging possibility that new BDI chapters may be initiated across USA. It was written on the request of a few individuals who have shown interest to open BDI chapters across USA. Hopefully, it will help new BDI chapters to launch their own initiatives consistent with BDI policies. If you are interested in opening BDI chapters in your area, please contact BDI head office.

BDI believes in the development of work strategies as an evolutionary process and is therefore open to suggestions from its members and supporters.

All BDI initiatives should be targeted towards "systemic changes rather than isolated activities". Isolated individual efforts do not produce any meaningful impact on the Bangladesh national economy. For example, four-hundred-million US dollars generated in Bangladesh can only add about a single penny to the existing national daily per capita income of Bangladesh, i.e., the present per capita income of 0.45 US dollar increases to 0.46 US dollar. Tangible initiatives, when undertaken, should form an integral part of a planned formula that has a reasonable chance in bringing about policy-level positive structural changes in Bangladesh Economy.

BDI initiatives will generally be guided by two economic propositions, which constitute the philosophical basis and the fundamental objectives of the development strategy for Bangladesh. According to the first proposition, the social progress of a nation can be measured by the technological sophistication of the labor that goes into the production of the commodities of that nation. In other words, the social progress of a nation can be measured by the type of commodities (computer chip or potato chip) that the nation produces. Sophisticated technology is required to produce durable, intermediate and capital goods. Therefore, BDI will advocate the production of these types of goods in Bangladesh for the sake of social progress. Note that "social progress", with its full implication, is advocated here as the desired goal. That is, "higher technology" congealed in the produced commodities is not merely an aggregate of scientific and technical knowledge, it is an unmistakable indicator of social progress as well.

Second proposition: until and unless the national average per capita income of Bangladesh is brought to a level comparable to that in the advanced industrialized countries, the roots of sustainable and stable economic development cannot be established in Bangladesh. If international income differential exists, the countries with higher national incomes are capable of subjugating the countries with lower national incomes. The former countries, through their influence, can render the bureaucracy, the intellectual community, the administration, the political parties and even the law of the low-income countries defenseless. Therefore, the removal of international income differentials ought to be made an indispensable element of the development-philosophy of Bangladesh. This process may be termed as "the development of an internal market".

1. In keeping with the first proposition, BDI will help establish industries to produce durable, intermediate and capital goods. Examples of durable goods would be automobiles or components, refrigerators or components, computer or components, televisions, radios, advanced telecommunication devices, aircraft, mechanized boats, trains or components. Capital goods are goods that are employed in the production of other goods, e.g., the machineries employed in the garment industries, jute mills, sugar mills, rice-husking mills, etc. The petro-chemical, pharmaceutical and bio-technical intermediate products that are required to produce other products may be termed as intermediate goods. The initiation of production of these goods will create productive employment for both "skilled" (technical as well as non-technical) and "non-skilled" Bangladeshi workers by broadening the industrial base of Bangladesh. BDI will attach a lower priority to activities related to the production of consumer goods, which does not employ "skilled" technical and non-technical workers (besides the unskilled laborers).
2. The industries capable of producing above-mentioned goods already exist in Bangladesh in some form. BDI is in the process of developing work plans to ensure continued existence and growth of these industries and to help them develop into modern industries capable of producing goods of international quality. Please refer to Sections 9 and 10 of this document to learn more about these work plans. BDI would also like to learn about your ideas on this issue.
3. BDI is looking for sponsors who can make a one-time contribution of 20,000 US dollars. The entire contribution will be used toward establishing a perpetual fund in any Bangladeshi University or College for Master's or Doctorate level research in any suitable discipline. The research

could be in agriculture, engineering, basic sciences, medicine, economics, finance, marketing, etc. The main focus of the research will be to help the process of industrialization in Bangladesh. BDI will take the responsibility of establishing and administering the fund in Bangladesh. Please contact BDI main office for details on the establishment of this fund.

4. BDI is also seeking sponsorship from organizations or individuals for employing individuals with different educational backgrounds who can carry out BDI's mission in Bangladesh. For example, BDI is in urgent need of two individuals in Bangladesh, one economist and one mechanical engineer with at least Master's level educational background and experience, who will keep in constant touch with the Bangladeshi domestic producers/entrepreneurs mentioned in item 2 above. Recruitment of one individual will cost BDI about 5000 US dollars annually at an approximate monthly salary of 15,000 takas.
5. The Institute of Engineers in Bangladesh (IEB) is in need of Personal Computers. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, the current President of IEB, has formally requested BDI to donate PCs to IEB. IBM 286 PCs or compatible computers will be sufficient for their purpose. BDI needs help from the chapters to launch a campaign to solicit PCs from different organizations or individuals. BDI will also require financial assistance from donors to defray the expenses of sending the PCs to Bangladesh. Besides IEB, the Universities, the Medical and Agriculture colleges and related institutions, may also make use of computers. BDI will, therefore, keep the campaign an on-going project as long as possible.
6. Since roads, bridges, integrated telephone networks, water supply and sewerage facilities, etc. are considered to be national investments rather than mere expenses, BDI will constantly campaign for their construction in Bangladesh. BDI will entertain ideas from members and well-wishers on launching effective campaigns on this issue. BDI will also consider the possibility of private ownership of these facilities and will keep in touch with potential entrepreneurs who would be interested in undertaking these business ventures. BDI will also campaign for the private ownership of radio and television stations in Bangladesh.

(The statements in this flier are approved by the Executive Committee of BDI. BDI is a non-profit non-political federal tax-exempt corporation based in Pennsylvania, USA. Note: BDI has no overhead expenses.)