**Pakistan-Bangladesh business-to-business ties**

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In a meeting with M Hafizur Rahman, the administrator of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), on October 30 at the FBCCI Office in Gulshan, Pakistan’s High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Syed Ahmed Maroof, placed a strong emphasis on growing bilateral trade between the two nations.

Advancement of bilateral trade was severely hampered by geopolitics, particularly during the previous 15 years when the Hasina administration was strongly biased in favor of India. It prompted Bangladesh to consistently degrade its bilateral ties with Pakistan.

Trade relations have been hampered by the tense bilateral relationship. But in light of Bangladesh’s recent political upheaval, Pakistan is persistently working to improve all aspects of its relationship with the country, including commercial relations. Bangladesh is a possible market for Pakistani goods due to its expanding economy and customer base.

Some Bangladeshi goods, such as jute and medications, may find increasing demand in Pakistan. Resuming business-to-business (B2B) ties with Pakistan might spur growth since the country offers a competitive supply of intermediate products and raw resources. Thus, investigating trade cooperation needs to be taken into account.

Pakistan and Bangladesh can create a strong cooperation that benefits their economies and advances regional peace and development goals.

To avoid the possibility of an abrupt decoupling in the event that the next administration takes a different foreign policy stance, this reaffirms the necessity of establishing bilateral connections that are based on institutional procedures and long-lasting frameworks that can withstand political transitions. It is also important that Dhaka shifts its perspective from only considering Pakistan-Bangladesh ties in the context of regional geopolitics, which has historically influenced both countries’ foreign policy. As opposed to external geopolitical situations, this would enable both nations to build relationships based on long-term goals and common interests.

As the discussion also covered other topics, such as the Joint Business Council, B2B meetings, the recognition of certificates by the two nations’ quality control agencies, the import and export of halal food, SME, pharmaceuticals, and other possible industries, Pakistan places a high importance on its ties with Bangladesh, which are founded on shared history, customs, and religion.

Strong trade links exist between the two nations. Furthermore, there is a great deal of potential in the areas of trade, business, economics, and interpersonal relationships that will be advantageous to both nations. The FBCCI Administrator pointed out at the meeting that there is a trade imbalance between Bangladesh and Pakistan even though there is a lot of room for bilateral trade. “Currently, Bangladesh exports goods worth $100 million to Pakistan, while imports range from $600 to $700 million,” he said.

According to the administrator, Bangladesh needs support in order to boost its exports of jute and related items, as well as other possible SME goods in Pakistan. Nonetheless, he said, the nation’s top trade organization, FBCCI, would continue to actively contribute to enhancing trade links between the two nations and opening up new doors for businesses and businesspeople.

“The Joint Business Council should be made more active in expanding trade between the two countries,” stated the High Commissioner of Pakistan. In order to implement the role of the private sector in the economies of the two nations, a virtual conference between the apex trade bodies FBCCI and FPCCI might be arranged.

There are several chances to promote closer trade relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan in spite of the obstacles. Cross-border commerce may be streamlined and market access improved by lowering tariffs, standardizing laws, and streamlining customs procedures. Investing in transportation infrastructure, such as ports, railroads, and highways, may lower trade costs and increase connectivity. Facilitating market connections and capacity building for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) may stimulate inclusive growth and trade diversification. Finding complementary industries to work with, including information technology, medicines, and agriculture, might lead to profitable trade prospects.

There is enormous potential for improving commercial cooperation between Bangladesh and Pakistan in a number of areas, including services, internet commerce, and conventional products trade. Both countries can open up new potential for economic development and prosperity by implementing a comprehensive strategy that tackles trade obstacles, encourages regional integration, supports services trade, and takes advantage of the opportunities presented by the digital economy. Pakistan and Bangladesh can create a strong cooperation that benefits their economies and advances regional peace and development goals by maintaining communication, working together, and changing policies.

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