

German Companies Attend the Business Opportunities Fair Organised by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in order to Explore their Chances in Tenders

OAV–German Asia-Pacific Business Association – led a delegation to the Business Opportunities Fair (BOF) organised by the ADB from 27 to 28 March with a subsequent visit to Bangladesh. This was the third mission of this kind, organized together with the EZ Scout Programme, this time in cooperation with the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the German RETech Partnership e.V. and the German Biogas Association (Fachverband Biogas e.V).

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Members of the delegation were twelve representatives of German companies from the infrastructure sector, their Asian subsidiaries and cooperation partners. The delegation visited the ADB at its headquarters in Manila during the Business Opportunities Fair (BOF) and then its Resident Mission in Dhaka. Many of the companies operate in the biogas sector.

German companies used the first stage of the trip from 26 to 28 March to learn more about their chances in tenders for ADB-funded projects. Medium-sized German companies can promote economic growth and sustainable development in emerging and developing countries and contribute to a robust infrastructure in Asia through their entrepreneurial commitment in the planning and implementation of ADB-funded projects, and in doing so contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) enshrined in the United Nations 2030 Agenda. This stage of the trip also allowed the delegates to gain first-hand insight into the economic policies and state development programs in the Philippines, which is currently the ADB's fifth-largest borrower.

During the two-day BOF forum, the ADB's procurement and sector specialists provided information on the ADB's terms and conditions, procurement regulations and procedures, as well as on current and future business opportunities. Regional sector specialists discussed the project pipeline in relation to the funding instruments in the individual sectors.

As part of the supporting programme for the Manila stage of the trip, Helmut Fischer, the ADB Director responsible for Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Luxembourg, gave the German delegates an overview of the role of the multilateral development bank, its organisational structure, operating income and its Strategy 2030 with its mission statement and operative priorities. He also provided some information about the ADB's operative business, the bank's biggest borrowers and the development of order volumes for German companies in ADB-funded projects. ADB's Procurement Director Jeff Taylor used his talk entitled "Essentials of Successfully Doing Business by Participating in Tenders of the ADB" to outline the benefits of ADB-funded orders, as well as the procurement regulations and procedures. He also provided advice for identifying business opportunities using the Consultant Management System and on successful participating in ADB tenders. The bilateral discussions arranged in advance with ADB's procurement experts and sector specialists were particularly appreciated and allowed the delegates to discuss matters specifically relating to their business.

Dr. Martin Henkelmann, Executive Director of the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, informed the delegates about the economic climate in the Philippines and presented the Philippine government's Build, Build, Build programme for infrastructure develop-

ment. The delegates were given some insight into political developments in the Philippines at the beginning of a dinner to which the German Ambassador to the Philippines, Dr. Gordon Kricke, invited the participants and the ADB representatives Jeff Taylor and Helmut Fischer. They also used the opportunity to strengthen ties with the ADB representatives and other members of the delegation, as well as to explore opportunities for cooperation in developing the Asian markets. Among them were a company from Bavaria and one from Hesse, who intend to work together in future.

The delegates used the second stage of the trip to Bangladesh from 31 March to 1 April as a fact-finding mission to learn more about the general business opportunities within ADB-funded projects in Bangladesh and within urban development in particular. Bangladesh was the second-largest ADB borrower in 2018.

Manmohan Parkash, the ADB Country Director for Bangladesh, presented ADB's Bangladesh portfolio to the delegates. Early on Bangladesh played an important role for the ADB, as evidenced by its opening of a Resident Mission in Dhaka in 1982. Over the last three years, the country has tripled its borrowing for ADB projects to over US-Dollar 10 billion in 2018. The three most important sectors are energy (accounting for 31%), transport (21%) and education (18%), with a strong focus on education and vocational training. The volume of orders has risen by 100% in the last four years. At present, order volumes – including reserves – stand at US-Dollar 8 billion for 2019–2021, of which 24% will be used for contracts in the energy sector, 22% in the transport sector and 22% in the water, urban development, waste management and sanitation sectors.

Janyna Rhor, ADB's Principal Procurement Specialist, introduced the delegates to the business opportunities of ADB-funded projects for consultants, contractors and suppliers. She used examples to outline changes in ADB's new Strategy 2030 for developed ADB member states, for instance the switch from rule to principle-based procurement, as well as the main motivations for this switch in strategy and the most important changes within Strategy 2030. Ms. Rhor also gave a presentation exclusively on the business opportunities for consultants, in which she showcased the important Consultant Management System for the identification of suitable business opportunities and gave useful advice for its successful use. Her detailed description of business opportunities for suppliers and contractors also pointed out to the Procurement Activity Monitoring Tool (PAMT), a mobile platform for the procurement of goods and services for ADB-funded projects in Bangladesh.

The delegates used these opportunities and also attended a joint lunch with representatives of the German Business Council (GBC), with whom they engaged in lively discussions on the business climate in Bangladesh. GBC consists of representatives from the German business community operating in Bangladesh who came together in summer 2018 to promote trade with Bangladesh, investments in the country and other things, as well as to function as a network for German companies that are active in Bangladesh.

The highlight of the trip to Bangladesh was a visit to the ADB-funded project "Regional Integrated Landfill & Resource Recovery Facility Center" (IL&RRC) in Jessore, which is located around an hour's flight from Dhaka. The project ran for three years and cost US-Dollar 288,321. Constructed on 13 hectares of land, the waste and faecal sludge recovery facility will produce electricity, biogas and fertiliser and was completed in December 2018. It is a waste-to-energy project within the City Region Development Project (CRDP). The political commitment of the Bangladeshi prime minister was key to the successful construction of this

first municipal waste processing plant in the country. The delegates learned about challenges and solutions in the realisation of a municipal waste management infrastructure project for a medium-sized city in Bangladesh. Predicted to grow to almost 280,000 inhabitants by 2021, Jessore extends over 14.72 km² and will produce 54 tonnes of waste each day in 2021. The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) as the executing agency, the City of Jessore as the owner and the general contractor Edeltech Engineering provided the delegates with insight into project management and construction of the facility during a presentation of the project's completion, a subsequent discussion and a guided tour of the integrated waste processing and biogas facility. Over half of the machinery comes from Bangladesh, while the wastewater filters use locally sourced coconut fibres.

The City of Jessore plans to sell the biogas and fertiliser which it will produce at market rates as soon as the facility reaches a waste recovery capacity of 25–30 tonnes. The city should be able to power the waste processing self-sufficiently using the electricity produced at the facility. Its aim is to process 45 tonnes of waste each day. Nonetheless, running the facility successfully will be a challenge for the city and the private sector operator – Khan Agriculture Products Ltd. – due to the anticipated waste volume, as it can only start regular operations once waste separation and collection have been introduced based on a two-bin system. Establishing a system of waste separation and collection in Bangladesh has proven difficult so far. Previous attempts in the capital city Dhaka have failed.

A dinner hosted for the delegates by Michael Schultheiss, Chargé d'Affaires at the German Embassy in Bangladesh, brought the second stage of the trip to a pleasant conclusion. He gave a nuanced talk on the political situation in Bangladesh, which has stabilised since the elections at the end of 2018, although it remains affected by problems associated with an increasingly authoritarian government. Infrastructural deficits impede the country's development. Between 50 and 60 German companies are active in Bangladesh and are seeking to exploit the future business opportunities of a high-growth market and a rapidly expanding population.

Andreas Gross, Head of International Business Development at Rädlinger primus line GmbH, gave a positive assessment of the "... extremely well-organised and fascinating trip", while Heinz-Peter Mang, Representative of the Fördergesellschaft für nachhaltige Biogas- und Bioenergienutzung e.V. and Senior Manager at Umwelt-Projekt-Management (UPM) GmbH, voiced his gratitude for the "... excellent organisation of the mission and the meetings in Bangladesh".

The exclusively positive feedback received from the delegates and varied business opportunities featured by ADB-funded projects have prompted OAV and the EZ Scout Programme to plan another delegation trip to the Business Opportunities Fair in Manila in March of next year.