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WRITTEN BY: ASHOK DHILLON



Ashok Dhillon has 40 years of front-line business experience in Canada and International markets. He incorporated his first construction company in 1974, and since then has founded and led companies in construction and international power development.

Over the last 20 years Mr. Dhillon, has led and worked with top Canadian talent in the legal, engineering and accounting firms, such as Fasken Martineau, Russell & DuMullen, Stikeman Elliott; Hatch, Monoco Agra, New Brunswick Power, SNC Lavalin; and Ernst & Young, Arthur Anderson, and Grant Thornton. And in London, worked with Perkins Couie and Morgan Grenfell. Mr. Dhillon's companies have partnered and worked with Pan Canadian Oil & Gas, WestCoast Energy, TransCanada Pipelines, and international companies such as AES, Enron Power, Hyundai Heavy Industries.

Mr. Dhillon has worked and negotiated with highest levels of Governments in Canada and India. He has pursued and won mandates to develop power plants in Canada, and foreign jurisdictions such as Hungary, Iran, Pakistan and India with uncompromising ethical standards. His extensive experience in securing and negotiating multi-hundred million and billion dollar mandates in power project development, gives him in-depth knowledge and intuitive insights into macro and micro, national and international, geo-political and economic realities and trends.

Mr. Dhillon has been invited to speak on international business at various forums, including as an expert witness for the Standing Senate Committee, Government of Canada, on "The Rise of Russia, China and India".

## The Third World Factory – And The West

Now, over 500 people are estimated to have died a horrific death in the collapse of the garment factory in Bangladesh (the number is expected to continue to climb). This is the latest graphic example of Third World exploitation of the poor and the disenfranchised by the majority of local businessmen, who are not familiar with the requirement of having to worry about the quality of life or safety of their workers. The nexus of the moneyed and government apparatus has always ignored the rules and the rights of less the privileged, universally, but more so in the impoverished developing countries where the poor are particularly powerless. These conditions generally are, and have almost always been, the constant in most of the 'Third World' countries that are now the factory to the 'First World'.

It is the Western buyers who can change this reality, whether they are corporations who select the manufactures or the end consumers. Do not expect the Third World realities to change any time soon.

First of all, let's be clear, the work going from the West to these Third World countries has been responsible to a large degree for the upliftment of millions of poor, into better lives, providing jobs where there were none. Whether it be manufacturing, lately the biggest beneficiary being China, or be it services, back office/information technologies, were India is currently dominant. Investments, orders and export revenue flowing into the emerging markets have transformed the economies of these countries, and lifted millions of lives out of poverty. And, given hope to an entire generation. So it is important, for this humanitarian, and many other economic/commercial reasons that work continues to flow there.

It's just that we in the West can no longer be so nonchalant about the realities of these millions of lives that at times work under unacceptable conditions to supply us our necessities, at the cheapest price. There is a price being exacted there, on a daily basis, that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is really quite unacceptable by any yardstick of 'human' standards. The corporations, consumers and the governments in the West need to be more responsible in our engagement with the developing World.

Demanding greater accountability will not alter the price structure appreciably, but it will alter and add greater value to human life, in those jurisdictions, where for the most part it doesn't figure in profit calculations, at this time. And, as for the centre of right business purists, it is better business, for if human values do not move you, then the costs of future lawsuits alleging gross negligence might.