

GULF TIMES BUSINESS



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Qatar-Sri Lanka trade relations at a defining moment, says Seetharaman

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Stronger Qatar-Germany ties seen in food security, infra creation

By Peter Alagos
Business Reporter

With €10bn worth of Qatari investments set to be poured in the German economy over the next five years, Qatar and Germany could further expand partnerships in the areas of food security and infrastructure creation, among others, Doha Bank CEO Dr R Seetharaman has said.

Seetharaman said a large percentage of food products available in the

Qatari market is imported, adding that the country is still developing and growing its local food manufacturing industry.

"Food security has been a major concern and Qatar is trying to fix it through multi-supply chain by creating a long-term supply chain and sustainable food security, and Germany can play a big role on this.

"In terms of food processing, Qatar's current local, indigenous production is less than 10%, so the products are getting imported, and Germany can give substantive role

in fixing the gap," Seetharaman told *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of a forum held in Berlin, Germany.

With the "growing opportunities" in the country, Seetharaman stressed that aside from food security, Qatar and Germany could also work together in other sectors such as urban development, renewable energy, and World Cup-related infrastructure projects, including stadiums.

"If you look at Qatar's fiscal framework, it's all going towards infrastructure creation; even in the

last fiscal budget itself, all QR81bn has been projected for government expenditure such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure creation, and that's where Germany can play a bigger role," he pointed out.

"With the design specialisation that Germany has got, whether it is in manufacturing or arts and culture, or industrial engineering or machineries, German designs can be a great attribute for quality assurance for urban development, take for example the building of stadiums," Seetharaman continued.

He said as Qatar opens up to multiple sectors, the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) industry is another area the country could further develop with Germany, whose SME sector is regarded as the backbone of its economy.

"The Germans have extraordinary experience in terms of SMEs, and German companies can come in and partake in Qatar's overall economic expansion in terms of SMEs," said Seetharaman, who added that Doha Bank plans to bring in more German companies to Qatar.



Seetharaman: Growing opportunities.

PICTURE: Peter Alagos