

DHAKA FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2020, FALGUN 8, 1426 BS o starbusiness@thedailystar.net

About time women's unpaid work is given formal recognition and respect

Says finance minister

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government will take measures to recognise the unaccounted work of women in the upcoming budget session for fiscal 2020-21, said Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal yesterday.

"We will explore how unpaid work can be attached to the GDP for greater interest of the country's development and ensuring women empowerment," he said while delivering his speech as the chief guest at a dialogue styled 'Formal Recognition of Women's Unaccounted Contribution'.

The event was organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), a nongovernmental and non-profit organisation,

at the capital's Brac Centre Inn auditorium. A large number of women are not getting recognition for their work such as child-rearing, household chores and farm labour in the national account.

The amount of unpaid and unaccounted domestic work was 49 per cent of GDP, found a study by SANEM using 2016-17



From left, Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairperson of Brac; Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; AHM Mustafa Kamal, finance minister; Selim Jahan, a former director of the Human Development Report Office at the UNDP; and Sharmind Neelomi, an economics professor at Jahangirnagar University; attend an event styled 'Formal Recognition of Women's Unaccounted Contributions' organised by the foundation at the Brac Centre Inn in Dhaka yesterday.



labour force survey and 2012 time-use survey. And 40 per cent was by women.

MJF has been carrying different awareness campaigns since 2012 to include the unaccounted household activities in the GDP under the programme of "build equality with dignity".

no qualms about the proposals given by the MJF," he said, adding that the recommendations, which are recognised globally, would be implemented verbatim.

Kamal said he would try to establish the other proposals that are yet to get recognition from the global community to the authority concerned.

"I think sustainable development means women empowerment and establishing "The government has equality between male and female as well."

At the event, the finance minister requested Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairperson of Brac, to produce a writeup on the unpaid work of women for presenting in the upcoming budget sessions.

Unaccounted work of women would have to be recognised in order to implement the sustainable development goals, said Shaheen Anam, executive director of the MJF.

READ MORE ON B3

Bangla domain criminally neglected

Muhammad Zahidul Islam

The country's own bangla internet domain (.bangla) has failed to garner much enthusiasm among users though it allows them to write their web addresses in Bangla alphabets and end with .bangla.

Bangladesh State-owned Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL) owns the domain that they got from the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) in October 2016.

Neither the Bangla nor the English domains (.bd) are in BTCL's focus, as a result of which as a nation Bangladesh is also missing its presence in the international internet

community, said industry insiders. So far BTCL has sold only 595 bangla web domains, and

a good number of them are not active even.

And for dot bd (.bd) that BTCL has received in 2003, the

total domain number is about 50,000. "Both bangla domain and .bd domain are huge assets but I think BTCL has failed to promote it," said Sumon

group of UN's Internet Governance Forum (IGF) BTCL cannot exploit people's emotions for the bangla domain, said Sabir, also the chief technology officer of Fiber@Home Global, one of the leading wholesale

Ahmed Sabir, a member of multi stakeholder advisory

bandwidth suppliers of the country. However, Bangladesh had won the six-year-long battle that started in 2010 with Indian state West Bengal and Sierra Leone, one of whose official languages is Bangla, for the

internationalised domain name (IDN) label-dot bangla. After winning that battle Bangladeshi people got the right to write Bangla in internet and open websites in their

Today is the international mother language day and ICANN has also considered the language movement for allocating the bangla domain, said officials who were related with the issue that time.

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Relocation of chemical factories from Old Dhaka still uncertain

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It took the government almost nine years to draw up a project for relocating chemical factories and inferno claimed 124 lives in 2010.

COST

Tk 1,615.73cr

Tk 397.45cr

Tk 138.70cr

Tk 315.80cr

PROJECT NAME

201.80-crore project on a 50-acre land in Keraniganj upazila under Dhaka district was "very inadequate".

So, the project site was changed and more warehouses from Old Dhaka's Nimtoli where an funds were allocated: the BSCIC Chemical Industrial Park will now be built on 308 acres After another fire in Chawkbazar last year, in Sirajdikhan upazila of Munshiganj, while the authority finally figured out that the Tk project costs ballooned to Tk 1,615.73 crore.

SPENT AS OF AUG'19

Tk 103.77cr

Tk 49.95cr

Tk 74.65cr

Tk 236.24cr

SOURCE: BSCCI

was highly susceptible to fire incidents due to the presence of a huge number of plastic and chemical plants and warehouses. Then, the government considered four FOUR BSCIC PROJECTS TO RELOCATE OLD DHAKA INDUSTRIES

plants and warehouses would start.

projects to relocate four types of industries chemical, plastic, printing and light electronics. Even until the Chawkbazar fire that claimed 71 lives, the implementation of the projects remained at the preliminary stage mainly due to

The changes in the plan are set to cause delay in

project implementation and government officials

cannot give exact time when the relocation of the

relocation came to the fore as the neighborhood

After the Nimtoli fire, the issue of factory

problems associated with land acquisition and bureaucratic tangles. The latest disaster could have been avoided had the authority taken prompt action following recommendations of a taskforce formed after

the Nimtoli fire, experts and activists said. The actual number of chemical warehouses and stores in the old town is hard to come by. But the leaders of Bangladesh Chemical and Perfumery Merchant Association claim they have over 1,500 members.

But at least 7,000 to 8,000 shops and stores housed in residential buildings in Old Dhaka are not affiliated with the association, said its leaders.

These warehouses store various chemicals including glycerine, sodium anhydrous, sodium thiosulfate, hydrogen peroxide, methyl ethyl ketone, thinner and isopropyl. If these chemicals come in contact with fire, there is a high risk of explosions.

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Md Sirazul Islam, executive chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, speaks at a discussion styled 'Ease of doing business: Is Bangladesh ideal for investments, especially FDIs' at the Westin Dhaka yesterday.

BIDA serious about improving ease of doing business

Says its chief at an event yesterday

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Massive reforms in regulations are highly necessary to rapidly improve the ease of doing business, said Md Sirazul Islam, executive chairman of the Bangladesh Development Authority (BIDA).

"BIDA is creating an enabling environment for foreign and domestic investors to boost investment in the country," he said while addressing a discussion themed, 'Ease of doing business: is Bangladesh ideal for investments,

especially FDIs', organised by the France-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry at The Westin Dhaka vesterday.

Bangladesh ranked 168 out of 190 countries in the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 index. Just the year earlier, Bangladesh stood at 176, making this the biggest climb for the country in recent

"We have to ensure massive reforms to our existing laws and enact new laws to take the flow of FDIs to the level of our expectations.

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SDGs on inequality reduction, good governance to remain unattained

Says report of CPD, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh is unlikely to achieve its sustainable development goals (SDGs) of reducing inequality, fighting climate change and establishing good governance by 2030, found a study by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

The report -- "Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Measuring Progress and Charting the Path Forward" -reviewed the progress of six out of the 17 SDGs adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by

Of the six, goals of quality education, decent work and economic growth and partnerships may be partially achieved.

"Achievement of these goals will be challenging since the progress on these goals has been little so far," said CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun while presenting the report at

The CPD in association with The Asia Foundation-Bangladesh, SDGs, Citizen's Platform for Bangladesh and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation jointly organised the event at the capital's Lakeshore Hotel yesterday.

A second report -- "Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Non-State Actors as Delivery Partners" -- was also

The CPD and Citizen's Platform tracked the progress of the six SDGs in line with a High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York last year.

The first report said SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 17 (partnership) were "going in the right direction but require some policy interventions to steer them towards their achievements by 2030".

SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) a dialogue styled "Delivering SDGs in are "not going in the right direction

significant efforts from all involved stakeholders in order to reverse their trajectories".

"What comes out very strongly

Bangladesh: Role of Non-State Actors". and require radical policy changes and is that three areas are where we are not doing very well," said Debapriya Bhattacharya, convenor of the Citizen's Platform and distinguished fellow at the CPD.

"Any country which is suffering in the area of fragility of rule of law, and in the inequality issue and affected by climate action will never be able to sustain the other achievements

elsewhere. So in order to protect other achievements elsewhere, we will have to address these," he added. The review report said the situation

of SDG 13 (climate change) looked most grim and Bangladesh had not created the issue and global initiatives were needed to reverse the trend.

The report said the number of households affected by natural disasters was rising and the figure was expected to reach around 30 million

The effects of natural disasters in the forms of economic losses to households and the economy, the incidence of sickness and injury, as well as the loss of schooling days are all at high levels, and expected to get worse in the coming years, it added.

The review report on four years of SDGs in Bangladesh said greenhouse gas emissions were forecasted to increase at faster rates in 2030, which would also be accompanied by warmer average temperatures.

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Abul Kalam Azad, sixth from left, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the planning ministry; Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the CPD; fifth from left; and Debapriya Bhattacharya, sixth from right, a distinguished fellow; launch a report styled 'Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Measuring Progress and Charting the Path Forward' at the capital's Lakeshore Hotel yesterday.



Tapan Chowdhury, sponsor and patron of Guardian Life Insurance, receives the ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 27001:2013 certificates from Rashid M Akhter, managing director of ISO QAR Bangladesh, a subsidiary of United Kingdom Accreditation Service in Bangladesh, at a programme at the head office of the Bangladeshi insurer in Dhaka on February 18. Md Shafiqur Rahman Patwari, chairman of the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority, was also present.

China to cut \$71.3b insurance fees to help firms amid coronavirus outbreak

China is expected to cut pension contributions and insurance fees by more than 500 billion yuan (\$71.27 billion) this year, government officials said on Thursday, as it seeks to help companies weather the coronavirus

The forecast follows a government pledge this week to reduce or exempt companies across the country from pension contributions, jobless and work-injury insurance for a period of

"Based on preliminary estimates, we expect the cuts in three kinds of social insurance fees to exceed 500 billion yuan," You Jun, vice minister at the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, told a news briefing, adding that the impact of the measures would surpass changes

Under the exemptions announced this week, firms in Hubei province, the epicentre of the outbreak, will not have to pay pensions, jobless and work-injury insurance until June.

Small firms in other provinces will be exempt from paying pensions, jobless insurance and work injury nsurance until June, while payments by large firms will be reduced by half until April. You said the government could ensure pension funds and other social insurance would be paid in full and on time despite the exemptions and reductions.

Separately, Yu Weiping, vice finance minister, told the briefing that the impact of the fee cuts on government revenue would be manageable.

"In the short-term, those measures will lead to a reduction in revenue of government funds, but in the longrun, it will reduce the burden on companies," Yu said.

"With the improvement of corporate performance, China's tax base can be expanded and the fiscal revenue situation will gradually improve." China would continue with a proactive fiscal policy and step

up its quality and efficiency, Yu added To fight the virus, authorities have imposed a host of strict containment measures but they have slowed businesses across the country, with companies unable to resume production or restore output to normal levels after the Lunar New Year holiday because of a lack of workers.

"The current epidemic will inevitably have an impact on employment ... and there are also some firms facing relatively huge operation pressure, and there is also supply and demand mismatch in the labour market," You said.

But he said the impact would be short-term.

Coronavirus poses risks to fragile recovery in global economy: IMF

The coronavirus epidemic has already disrupted economic growth in China and a further spread to other countries could derail a "highly fragile" projected recovery in the global economy in 2020, the International Monetary Fund warned on Wednesday.

In a note for G20 finance ministers and central bankers, the global lender mapped out many risks facing the global economy, including the disease and a renewed spike in U.S.-China trade tensions, as well as climate-related disasters.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said the outbreak was a stark reminder of how unforeseen events could threaten a fragile recovery, and urged G20 policymakers to work to reduce other uncertainties linked to trade, climate change and inequality.

"Uncertainty is becoming the new normal," Georgieva wrote in a blog posted on the IMF website. "While some uncertainties like disease are out of our control, we should not create new uncertainties where we can avoid it." Finance ministers and central bankers from the top 20 advanced industrialized economies will gather in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, this week, still uncertain about the impact of the coronavirus, known as

Despite the outbreak, the IMF said it was sticking to its January forecast for 3.3 per

cent growth in the global economy this year, up from 2.9 per cent in 2019. It represents a downward revision of 0.1 percentage points from its forecast in October.

It said the recovery would be shallow and could be derailed by a re-escalation of trade tensions or further spread of the disease, which had already disrupted production in China and could affect other countries through tourism, supply chain linkages and commodity prices.

China has said it could still meet its economic growth target for 2020 despite the epidemic. Georgieva said the IMF expected only a small reduction in China's gross domestic product growth unless a protracted outbreak worsens the slowdown.

Even in the best-case scenarios, the projected rate of global growth was modest, she said, urging G20 policymakers to act to reduce trade tensions, mitigate climate change and tackle persistent inequality.

Cyber attacks, an escalation of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East or a breakdown in trade talks between China and the United States could impede the short-term global recovery, the IMF said. Climate-related disasters, protectionism and social and political unrest triggered persistent inequality posed further economic risks.

In her blog, Georgieva said a Phase 1 trade deal between the United States and China eliminated some negative consequences of trade tensions, reducing the drag on global GDP by 0.2 per cent



IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva speaks at the Global Women's Forum in the Gulf emirate of Dubai.

in 2020, or about one quarter of the total

But it left many tariffs in place and contained managed trade arrangements that could distort trade and investment. She said the IMF estimates that these provisions will cost the global economy some \$100

She also cited new IMF estimates that a typical climate-related natural disaster reduced growth by an average of 0.4 percentage points in the affected country the year it occurred.

To respond, policymakers should focus on diversifying energy sources and investing in resilient infrastructure.

Georgieva said it was also critical to address persistently high income and wealth inequalities that she said could foment distrust in government contribute to social unrest.

Ministers could act this week by focusing on raising living standards and creating better paying jobs through investments in high-quality education, research and digitalization, she said.

EU leaders set to squabble as Brexit blows hole in joint budget

European Union leaders start two days of tough talks on Thursday on a joint seven-year budget from 2021 and must work out how to fill a 75 billion euro (\$81 billion) hole left by Britain's departure just as they face costly climate

The joint budget is the most tangible expression of the key topics the EU members want to focus on over the next seven years, as well as of their willingness to stump up cash.

While the bloc wants to spend more on climate, migration, digitalisation and security measures, the rich net contributors refuse to pay more while poorer net beneficiaries are determined to keep in place the support they get for farming and development.

Everything is on the table. Waiting will not make things easier," chairman Charles Michel said ahead of the leaders' summit. The starting proposal for national contributions is 1.074% of the bloc's gross national income (GNI), or a combined 1.09 trillion euros. While that is only a fraction of the 27 member states' national budgets, there is little expectation that the leaders will agree on it this week.

The discussion will lay bare divisions in the bloc and differing priorities of countries in the north and south, the east and west, and the more developed and less advanced economies. "The proposal is not just, because it lowers cohesion funds and we need investments," Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis said ahead of the gathering. "It is going to be a tough struggle. I think that the positions are so far apart that there will hardly be an agreement."

The EU budget gets money from customs duties on goods entering its single market, a cut of sales tax, antitrust fines imposed by the EU on companies, and from national contributions. It spends money on subsidies for EU farmers, on equalising living standards across the bloc, border management, research, security and various foreign aid programmes.

Some net contributors - the "frugal four" of the Netherlands, Austria, Sweden and Denmark - want to limit the budget contributions to 1 per cent of GNI. Germany, the biggest contributor, is prepared to accept a bit more, but 1.07 per cent is too high for Berlin.

'Uncertainty' from trade disputes hits business investment

The US administration's top economist says

REUTERS, Washington

A slowdown in US growth last year was at least partly the fault of President Donald Trump's global trade battles and the resulting hit to business investment, the administration's top economist said on Thursday in an outlook for the coming years.

"Once we got renegotiation of

did trim rates three times to boost the

But policymakers cited trade-related risks as a chief reason for the rate cuts. Philipson agreed with Trump that it was necessary to confront China on trade but said it did cause short-term disruption.

"I don't know if we fully agree on



Donald Trump

trade agreements, we saw uncertainty in the market, and investment took a hit," Tomas Philipson, acting chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, said in a briefing with reporters about said. the CEA's annual Economic Report of the President.

Philipson said the CEA had impact but referred journalists to a Federal Reserve study that said trade uncertainty may have reduced growth in U.S. and world gross domestic products by as much as 1 per cent.

Trump has blamed the Fed as the economy slowed from a 2.9 per cent annualized growth rate in 2018 to 2.3

in his second term. Obama's term. The CEA

> the quantitative point, but on the qualitative we certainly agree ... It is well known, if we have uncertainty, investment takes a hit," Philipson

was rare acknowledgement from the administration of the costs of a trade only done internal estimates of the war characterized as largely beneficial to the U.S. economy despite lingering questions about who pays the price of higher tariffs, whether global supply chains will be reorganized to the U.S. economy's benefit and even whether China will deliver on commitments made under a Phase 1 trade deal.

Philipson said he expects last year's pace.

per cent last year, and the central bank investment to rebound this year "if uncertainty settles down, which we hope it will."

The CEA report, an annual exercise that is one part review of events and one part aspirational statement, outlined what will likely prove key talking points for Trump's reelection campaign: The economy now is doing better than it did under President Barack Obama; it only started doing better under Trump and is poised to thrive even more if Trump administration proposals are

Those conclusions are likely to get pushback from Democrats who note that the jobs recovery, for example, began under Obama and accelerated

A rise in the net worth of the poorest half of Americans, cited in the report and in Trump's recent State of the Union speech, has been largely driven by a rise in home ownership and home values that began late in

report projected economic growth this year will hit 3.1 per cent and continue at 3 per cent annually through 2024, as long as a full suite of suggested reforms are enacted including trade deals, an infrastructure plan and immigration rules that would favor more skilled workers.

Those changes, the CEA contends, would boost the annual increase in labor productivity from below 2 percent annually to 2.6 percent, a rate more akin to the high-growth 1990s than the more tepid growth of recent

Fed policymakers, whose forecasts do not take into account any of the administration's policy proposals, see the economy growing around 2 per cent this year, with even the most optimistic seeing growth at no more than 2.3 per cent, unchanged from

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD

Road Division, Bagerhat.

2 0468-62485 **3** 0468-63224 E-mail: eebeg@rhd.gov.bd.

Reference No: 2511

Date: 19-02-2020

e-Tender Notice

| SI No | Package Description | Last Selling Date & Time | Closing, Opening Date & Time |
|----------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01. | 18/e-GP/BRD/2019-2020(ID-430559) | | |
| | Supply of different sizes Wire Rope & U Clump for | 08-03-2020 | 09-03-2020 |
| | Morelgonj & Mongla Ferry Ghat under Bagerhat Road | 5:00 PM | 12:00 AM |
| | Division, during the year 2019-2020. | | |
| 02. | 19/e-GP/BRD/2019-2020 (ID-430560) | | |
| | Construction of R.C.C U-Drain at 39th (Ch.38+778) KM | | |
| | Raynda Bridge Approach of Signboard-Morelgoni-Raynda 08-03-2020 | | 09-03-2020 |
| | Sharankhola-Bogi Road (R-773) under Bagerhat Road | 5:00 PM 12:00 AM | |
| | Division, during the year 2019-2020. | | |

This is an Online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches up to 08 March, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

> ID No- 602218 Executive Engineer(C.C),RHD Road Division, Bagerhat.

Workshop to raise awareness on insurance held in Sylhet

A training workshop themed, 'Raising Awareness Regarding Insurance under the Bangladesh Insurance Sector Development Project (BISDP), was held in Sylhet yesterday.

"Insurance is a promising industry as only 0.5% of the total population is covered by insurance while all others are left out," said Md Mashiur Rahman, Sylhet's divisional commissioner, while addressing the event as chief guest.

There are misconceptions about insurance regarding religion. The general public have a negative perception on the service due to the way insurance companies operate, especially when people claim their

This must be changed and new products must be introduced while going completely digitalised, Rahman added.

The Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), in association with the government and World Bank,

organised the workshop, where various stakeholders were present.

Svlhet's Divisional Commissioner Md Mashiur Rahman attended the event as chief guest while the IDRA's Executive Director Dr. Sheikh Md Rezaul Karim acted as chairperson.

Md Mahfuzul Haque, managing director of Jiban Bima Corporation, M Kazi Emdadul Haque, deputy commissioner of Sylhet and Dr Md Monirul Islam, dean of Management and Business Administration at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) spoke as special guests.

Dr Mohammad Ashraful Ferdous Chowdhury, associate professor of the department of Business Administration of SUST, Dr Mohammad Shohrab Uddin, former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, Jamal Mohammed Abu Naser, CEO of National Life Insurance Company Limited and Subhasish Barua, executive vice president of Green Delta Insurance presented research papers at the event.

Global accolade for Rahimafrooz group director

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mudassir Murtaza Moin, group director of Rahimafrooz (Bangladesh) Ltd, has recently been awarded with AsiaOne Young Asian Entrepreneur 2019-20 by AsiaOne Magazine and URS Media.

The award giving ceremony was held at the 13th edition of Asian Business & Social Investor Forum 2019-20 in Bangkok, Thailand, according to a statement.

Rahimafrooz is one of the largest business groups in Bangladesh, consists of eight strategic business units and several other affiliations

Relocation of chemical factories from Old Dhaka still uncertain

Besides, a large number of rubber, plastic and sandal-making factories have been operating in some areas.

According Bangladesh Conservation Environment 1997, no industrial units using hazardous chemicals or goods can operate in and around a residential area, and the factory owners must have environmental clearance certificates before using the materials.

Ignoring government the ban, unscrupulous traders store inflammable chemicals in the area.

CHANGES IN PLAN In October 2018, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) approved the BSCIC Chemical Industrial Park project to be completed within June 2021.

But, when the authority had started working on land acquisition, the Chawkbazar fire in February last year made the government rethink its plans and bring fresh changes, according to Project Director Saiful

The Keraniganj site initially selected for the project was densely populated, he said, adding that the Ecnec in April last year approved the first revision of the project and selected Sirajdikhan as the site. It will now be completed within June 2022.

After getting the revised order of the project in June last year, they started discussion with the local administration to acquire land and within six months they completed the procedure, Islam said.

month, commissioner's office of Munshiganj sought Tk 531.26 crore within four months to acquire all the 308.33 acres of land and we have given them Tk 144 crore so far," he said.

crore," he added.

But a source at Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC), which is implementing the projects, said Tk 80 has been allocated for this project in the current fiscal year and they have already got the

"So, we would need more money to complete the land acquisition timely," he said wishing anonymity. "Land acquisition may be delayed if we fail to provide the rest of the amount within four months.

Islam said if the funds are provided on time, land acquisition and development can be done within six

INDUSTRIES REVISED TOO

The government in 2004 had taken a move to relocate plastic industrial units from Old Dhaka considering fire risk and environmental hazards for the densely populated area. The Nimtoli fire intensified the move.

In December 2015, the Ecnec approved BSCIC Plastic Industrial Estate project to be implemented in Sirajdikhan upazila in between July 2015 and June 2018 involving Tk 133

But the project authority could not start the work due to complications related to land acquisition. Land owners of the project site in Sirajdikhan vehemently opposed the government plan. Even the project director was assaulted by them when he went there to conduct a survey, a BSCIC official said.

Long delay in land acquisition forced the authority to extend the deadline for one year. But a rise in

adding that the authority concerned

should create a database to give

recognition to the unpaid work of

She went on to call for day care

Such initiatives will lower women's

engagement in household activities

and also play a role in boosting the

GDP growth, said Bidisha, also a

research director of the South Asian

Network on Economic Modelling

"Recognition of unpaid work of

females is important to ensure their

social dignity, right and equitability,"

said Selim Jahan, a former director of

Human Development Report Office at

59 per cent is based on remuneration

per cent are done by male and the 21

priority in remuneration-based works.

in African countries to further his

per day to bring water to accomplish

their household activities. These

types of jobs, which are done

"But, it is not impossible to

mostly by women, are considered as

and the rest is without payment.

Of all types of work in the world,

Of the remuneration based jobs, 48

"This means, men are getting

He went on cite the case of women

Women spend 200 crore hours

make the most of it," she added.

UNDP headquarters.

per cent by females.

unaccounted work.

This is very significant.'

centres to help females enter the

labour market.

(SANEM).

As per the revised plan, the project cost would be Tk 397.45 crore, which is 198 percent higher than the original cost and fresh deadline would be June

However, after a long round of negotiation involving the deputy commissioner's office in Munshigani, leaders of the association of plastic industries and project officials, the owners agreed to hand over their land, the BSCIC official said. A total of Tk 94.95 crore was spent till August last year.

Two other projects—Printing Industries Estate and Electric Products and Light Electronics Industries Estate—witnessed better progress. However, both the projects failed to be complete within the deadline mainly due to problems related to land acquisition.

The project involving Tk 213 crore to shift light electronics industrial units in Old Dhaka was supposed to be completed within June 2019 but as per the revised plan, its new deadline is June 2022 and cost is Tk 315.80

The project, which is being implemented on 50 acres of land in Tongibari upazila of Munshiganj, spent Tk 236 crore till August last year.

The Ecnec passed the BSCIC Printing Industries Estate project of Tk 138.70 crore in January 2016 and it was scheduled to be completed within December 2018.

But the project to be implemented beside the Plastic Industry Estate in Sirajdikhan could not be completed within the extended deadline of December 2019. So, BSCIC last month sent a proposal to the planning land cost led the authority to revise ministry for a fresh revision of cost the cost and deadline of the project and time, the BSCIC official said.

Walton rolls out red carpet to lure in customers

Walton currently has around 70 lakh registered customers and it plans to register half of the country's population in 10 years, he said.

Walton refrigerators will have replacement guarantee while fridge compressors will have 12 years guarantee. The buyers of airconditioners will enjoy six months' replacement guarantee and a maximum of 10 years' guarantee for compressors.

Each Walton television has 6 months' replacement guarantee along with a maximum of 4 years' guarantee to about 35 countries in Asia, Europe, on TV panels and 5 years' service Africa and the Middle East.

The domain was inaugurated by the

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on

December 2016 but after that the

domains did not get much attention

BTCL was trying to sell it in the last few

years at the Ekushey Boi Mela. So far,

only two bangla domains were sold at

go for promotion, which is what is

sure about their security system and

that's why corporates are not willing

to get on board the bangla domain

In February 2017 local mobile

The country also expects to buy 2,000

MWs of electricity from large solar

parks being developed in Gujarat

and Rajasthan. Besides, deals were

signed on a number of deals for the

construction of a 130 km oil pipeline,

a 1320 MW coal-fired Maitree thermal

power plant in a 50:50 JV between the

National Thermal Power Corporation

(NTPC) of India and Bangladesh

like the Indian Oil Corporation,

Numaligarh Refinery Limited, Petronet

LNG Ltd are seen working with their

Bangladeshi counterparts in the rising

relations will reach at 50-year

landmark in 2022. Since its inception,

Japan has been a major partner for

the development of Bangladesh's

2021', Japanese official development

assistance has played a pivotal role.

To help realise Bangladesh's 'Vision

diplomatic

Markedly, Indian public institutions

Power Development Board.

oil and gas sector.

infrastructure.

Bangladesh-Japan

and .bd domain," Sabir added.

But in Sabir's view BTCL cannot

"And most importantly we are not

this year's book fair, said officials.

To promote the bangla domain

from the authority.

actually required here.

Established in 2008, Walton now manufactures refrigerators and freezers, compressors, air conditioners, LED and smart televisions, electrical appliances, home and kitchen appliances, mobile phones, laptop, computers and related accessories, elevators and industrial solutions in its 700-acre factory in Gazipur's Kaliakair.

The company has 73 service points across the country for after sales service and it ships a wide range of electronics and electrical appliances

as the first private company but this

job last month said though they have

bangla web address most of the viewers

also expressed his dissatisfaction

about the BTCL's apathy towards

He said: "BTCL should take up a

programme to popularise the bangla

domain, which will also give us

pride. You will find that very fewer

countries in the world have their own

that privilege and why we are wasting

Bangladesh's energy diplomacy: Looking back and way forward

Also, Japan will aid in the construction

of Matarbari's coal-fired power project

to support the development of the

Moheshkhali-Matarbari area and make

it an energy hub in the sub-continent.

biggest bilateral development partner

for Bangladesh. At present, about

300 Japanese companies are doing

income countries before 2010,

energy diplomacy did not feature

prominently in Bangladesh's overall

With the country's economy

booming and the rising demand for

imported energy, the government has

set a target to significantly expand the

globalization', no country can

design and practice fruitful energy-

related diplomatic strategies without

to

As it was with all lower-middle

business in the country.

channels of energy supply.

In the age of

integrating global energy policy.

diplomacy.

corresponding

In totality, Japan has become the

Telecom minister Mustafa Jabbar

browse through the English web.

promoting the bangla domain.

A top executive who has left the

domain is not active.

Walton inked an agreement with global e-commerce giant Amazon last year to market 'Made in Bangladesh' electronics and ICT devices in the US. Walton is also set to export smartphones to the US from March this year.

Nazrul Islam Sarker, managing director of Walton Industries Ltd; Eva Rezwana, sales and marketing department's chief coordinator; Golam Murshed, CEO of the refrigerator department; Tanvir Rahman, CEO of the AC department, and Mostafa Nahid Hossain, CEO of the television department, were also present at the press meet.

Bangla domain criminally neglected brand 'WE' has taken bangla domain can earn handsome revenue from

penetration like Brazil did. The South American nation used to earn huge amounts from .br, which they used for building their internet

selling the bangla domain, which

they can use for improving internet

"The citizens are ultimately benefitted," he said, while citing neighbouring India as another

India successfully managed to brand .in for the country's internet identity, according to Sabir.

But for that first BTCL needs to language internet domain. We have ensure both .bd and bangla domains' security systems and try to promote it by mixing with emotion and country Sabir said if BTCL plans they even

growing economy, Bangladesh energy

diplomacy should primarily focus

on ensuring energy security followed

by energy equity and environmental

1) Sign win-win situation contracts

2) Gradually decrease dependence

3) Implement regional energy

4) Consideration security issues

6) Establish independent advisory

Prioritise environmental issues

8) Consistently improve ability to

9) Emphasise on issues like 'low-

seize the available opportunities in

Prioritise technology-centric

dimension.

capabilities

deals

To feed the energy demand cost transportation' and 'reliable

TO-DO LIST:

on specific energy sources

while signing energy deals

panel on climate change

storage' during negotiations

while negotiating

energy market

Strengthen

agreements to share hydropower

A large amount of work done by women are adding value to the formal

recognition from both the society and the state," she said, while urging the government to assess the value of women's unpaid work by using the satellite account system that many countries have employed.

the economic value of household activities that are done without financial transactions and subsequently get excluded from the national account.

the event is to improve females' status both at home and society The traditional thinking process for quantifying female will be changed if their contribution can be highlighted appropriately.

Women's status in society is lower than that of men's and they have been facing inequality.

"For this reason, women face tremendous violence both at home and outside. In Bangladesh, the rate of domestic violence against women is much too high."

Such ferocity would not have reached the extreme level had women got their due dignity.

Women are doing many types of jobs that have a direct link to the financial market and the informal sector, said Sayema Haque Bidisha, a professor of economics at the University of Dhaka.

But only 36.3 per cent of the country's women are in the labour market.

the labour market is 80 per cent as per the labour survey carried out in 2016-

About time women's unpaid work is given formal recognition and respect

"But such activities are yet to get

The accounting system calculates

"The core objective of arranging

In contrast, male participants in

calculate the value of unpaid work, "Household activities of women he said, adding that the government should be considered and the SDGs can come up with some method have also laid emphasis on calculating to incorporate the contribution of the unpaid work of women," she said, unpaid work to the national account.

The government should reflect it while forming economic regulations, tax and policies, Jahan added. "Women empowerment should

become the fundamental goal of the society," said Zillur Rahman, also an adviser to a former caretaker

Their lack of recognition should be identified as a deeper problem of the

The government should make investment to ease the burden of household activities on women so Gender budget has been widened in that they get the chance to participate the last fiscal budget. "And we should in more productive work.

"Violence against women is increasing in our society day by day. Recognition to unpaid work of women can reduce the violence, Rahman added.

Only 22 per cent of the female students are preparing to enter the labour market, said Sharmind Neelomi, a professor of economics at Jahangirnagar University.

The ratio is 82 per cent for the male students.

The urban females are lagging behind the rural ones when it comes to entering the labour market, she

"They enjoy better education than the rural ones -- they should be helped to get gainful employment, she added.

The government should take initiatives to make women's unpaid work more visible and requested the finance minister to take initiatives to this end, said Khushi Kabir, a rights activist and the coordinator of Nijera Kori.

SDGs on inequality reduction, good governance to remain unattained

"Overall, the analysis of SDG 13 indicates that Bangladesh is in a precarious situation with respect to climate change and has to take preparations," it said

On the SDG 10 related to reducing inequality, the report said the prospects of achieving it appeared to be bleak

It said the income share held by the poorest 40 per cent is expected to keep falling from the already low level of 2015.

"This will lead to an increase in income inequality in the country," it added.

Meanwhile, the state of the banking sector, which accounts for the largest part of the financial sector, is in a difficult situation. Defaulted loan are at high levels, and they are creating a drain on public resources since the

government is bailing out banks with taxpayers' money year after year, the report said. On establishing good governance under SDG 16, the report said 10 out of a total of 23

indicators for the goal were going in the wrong Three indicators are in the right direction but required some policy intervention to steer it towards SDG target achievement by 2030, said

against women and children, bribery, and illicit financial flows were "all disturbingly high", and most of these crimes will increase in 2030 if they follow their historic trends.

'economic

Bangladesh's

On the other hand, reporting of violence is quite low, and reporting of detention or kidnapping is virtually non-existent except for high profile cases, it said.

There was no discussion of the SDGs in parliament but there should be whole sessions, perhaps meeting twice a year, on implementation and oversights by the government and the civil society, said Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the CPD. "We are missing an overall holistic exercise by the government that can reach out to all the different players," he added.

Terming the reports rich contributions to global dialogues, Mia Seppo, United Nations resident coordinator and representative of UNDP Bangladesh, said it remained to be seen whether the reports led to changes in policies and in people's lives and resource allocations.

The role of the private sector goes beyond corporate social responsibilities and with nonstate actors being in Bangladesh's DNA, closing the space for civil society actors poses a threat to attainment of the SDGs, said René Holenstein,

However, the report said murder, violence ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh. Iftekhruzzaman, executive director

Transparency International Bangladesh, spoke on SDG 16 of peace and justice, saying that institutions have to be transparent while engagement with the government, despite being a challenge, will pay off in the end.

"We must practice what we preach...catalyse that in government institutions," he said.

Non-state actors contribute to the 56 targets of the six SDGs in question through micro level intervention and various synergies, said Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the CPD. This includes use of the right to information act at the grassroots and providing low-cost solutions to deliverables such as sanitation.

There is a dearth of appropriate data, which can be addressed through collaborations of non-state actors and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with adequate funds at their disposal, he said.

Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of the Campaign for Popular Education, also lamented of the data gap while talking on SDG 4, which encompasses quality of education.

Abul Kalam Azad, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the France to Bangladesh. Ministry of Planning, was the chief guest.

BIDA serious about improving ease of doing business

Certain bottlenecks that prevent investors quickly receiving services still This includes bringing change to regulations, which is a lengthy process.

With these issues in mind, the BIDA prioritised having a unified system in place, from where investors would be able to avail whatever service they require. In line with their intention to expedite

reforms, BIDA spoke with eight ministers and secretaries in the last three months, according to Islam. Speaking about why the implementation of reforms has been delayed, he said that

ministers and secretaries are positive of ensuring quick service delivery. However, desk officials are not interested

and that makes the issue challenging. Islam also stressed on the need to change certain cultures and traditions alongside

policy reforms to ensure service delivery. "BIDA's immediate plan is to move the status [Doing Business] into double digits by 2021," he added.

In 2019, Bangladesh was the world's third biggest supplier of garments and footwear, said Jean-Marin Schuh, ambassador of

The country accounts for 7.2 per cent

of global import of the products, with the other two big suppliers being China and Italy. France ranks just 29th on the list of countries that provide FDIs to Bangladesh and 7th among European Union member states. French stock value stands at about \$40 million, less than 0.4 per cent of the total FDI stock value of Bangladesh, according to the ambassador.

Bilateral trade with Bangladesh reached record €3.24 billion in 2019, according to Schuh. This was the highest amount over the past ten years.

However, France's trade deficit rose to €2.71 billion at the same time. French exports to Bangladesh, which amount to €263 million, have decreased 21 per cent, while Bangladesh's exports to the European nation show a 14 per cent increase and

account for €2.98 billion, he added. A total of 180 French companies have invested in the country, said Maruf Alam, president of the France-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Alam hopes that the tally will only increase in the future if the ease of doing business improves. Syed Mahmudul Huq, chairman of Shihan Emulsion Co. (Bd.), and Rubaba Navera Sayeed, executive director at CCIFB, also spoke at the programme.

the review report.

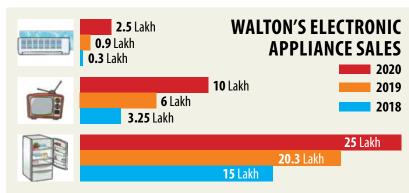
Walton rolls out red carpet Bangladesh's energy diplomacy: to lure in customers

Announces Tk 35 lakh a day as cash voucher against fridge, TV and AC sales

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Local electronics giant Walton yesterday introduced a huge sales campaign to give away cash vouchers worth Tk 35 lakh every day among the buyers of its refrigerators, televisions and air-conditioners.





of Tk 5 lakh in cash voucher under the campaign," said Ariful Ambia, the campaign's chief coordinator.

The prime objective of the campaign is to make the company's after sales services accessible to all of its customers, said Ambia, also an executive director of Walton.

To avail the offer, the customers have to provide phone number, product's name and barcode to get registered on the Walton's database under its Digital Campaign Season-6, he said.

"A customer can win a maximum will get cash vouchers through SMS confirmation. Winners will be randomly selected through a computerised system.

"Every registered consumer of Walton products will get the desired after sales service even if they lose the product's warranty card," said Ambia.

The customer database will help Walton expand its market, he said at a press briefing at Walton's corporate head office in the capital.

However, Walton declined to disclose how many days the campaign out the untapped market and get would continue. But, according to an customers feedback," Alam added. After registration, the customers official, Walton typically runs such

campaigns for two to three months.

A portion of a day's sales volume will be disbursed as cash vouchers, explained Mohammad Firoj Alam, a deputy executive director of the

"From our previous experience, we had always been able to provide the customers with what we declared."

Thanks to the spiralling sales of Walton electronics, the company is confident that it will be able to give away such a big amount—Tk 35 lakh-as cash vouchers every day,

Walton now holds around 75 per cent of the local refrigerator market in Bangladesh, according to company

The company's refrigerator sales increased 35.33 per cent year-on-year to 20.30 lakh units in 2019 and it aims to sell 25 lakh units in 2020.

In AC sales, the company posted 216 per cent growth in 2019. It plans to sell 2.5 lakh units of ACs in 2020, which is about 187 per cent higher than their previous year's sales figure.

The company sold 6 lakh units of LED and smart televisions in 2019, an 85 per cent year-on-year growth. Walton hopes to sell 10 lakh units of televisions in 2020.

The customer database will help Walton to conduct research and find

READ MORE ON B3



COLLECTED

Loss (in %)

13.08

10.06

9.47

9.00

7.92

Walton officials launch its 'Digital Campaign Season-6' at its corporate office in Dhaka yesterday.

Looking back and way forward





MUHAMMAD HASANUJZAMAN

Bangladesh has precious little experience in energy diplomacy, which refers to the practices and norms by which political institutions and large companies cooperate to promote energy trade.

Energy diplomacy remains at the forefront of many country's foreign policy, including major economies like China and the United States (US) of America.

Aimed at meeting local energy needs and managing the implications of the energy to national wealth and geopolitical power ratio, US energy diplomacy promotes a stable global energy supply.

It also encourages efforts to strengthen ties with new and emerging producers through international fora.

Despite only having begun in the early 1990s, China energy diplomacy recently gained pace through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Therefore, it is worthwhile to take

a look back on all the international, both bilateral and multilateral, energy agreements made by Bangladesh since its independence.

Since the 1970s, when it was known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Russia has remained a tested strategic partner for Bangladesh for both economic and energy issues.

bilateral diplomatic relationship between the two countries, which formally began in January 1972, was strengthen in the early 70s through financial and technical assistance from Russia.

With a view to revitalise a warraved economy, the former Soviet Union helped develop the country's biggest power plant, the Ghorashal Power Station, in Palash Upazila of Narsingdi district in 1974

Russia also aided in the construction of the Siddhirganj power plant in Narayanganj and an electrical equipment factory Chattogram.

A more recent example for Russian assistance would be the signing of a G2G agreement for the construction of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in November 2011.

Electrification-2021' plan, which responsive to important energy deals features Rosatom, a Russian state with its neighbour. corporation, as a key stakeholder.

The deal was made in line

Specialized Russian companies like Gazprom

International and Engineering have since signed multiple contracts with Petrobangla, BAPEX, BGFCL and the Bangladesh Power Development Board.

The deals were signed seeking cooperation on a number of activities, ranging from the exploration and development of hydrocarbons to repairing and modernising existing Chinese investment towards the

Bangladesh's energy sector gained momentum after a visit from President Xi Jinping in October 2016. During his visit to Dhaka, the Chinese premier penned a number of agreements, totalling about USD 10 billion.

Those investments were made mainly in the energy sector, specifically coal based power plants. This includes the 1,300 megawatts (MW) coal-fired power station in Chattogram, another in Patuakhali and the proposed 1,300 MW plant in Cox's Bazar.

Albeit a bit rocky, the bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and India, which began in the early 70s, has been very significant for both countries.

After Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled 'Southeast Asia-first' policy, an with the government's 'Universal energy starved Bangladesh has been

> As of 2019, Bangladesh had energy imported 1160 MWs from India.

READ MORE ON B3

FINALLY AN UPBEAT BOURSE

DSEX, the benchmark index of the premier bourse, continued its gaining streak for the second consecutive week as investor confidence appears to be coming back following a number of measures including the central bank's liquidity support for the stock market, interest rate cut on post office savings scheme by half and the Asian Development Bank's approval for a \$170 million loan for the bourse's develop-

Company

Standard Ceramic

Sinobangla Industries

Shyampur Sugar Mills

Provati Insurance

Samata Leather

DSEX rose to 4,733 points (up 169 points, or 3.7%)



Daily average turnover rose to Tk 1,021.34cr (increased Tk 44.95cr, or 4.6%)

TOP FIVE LOSERS

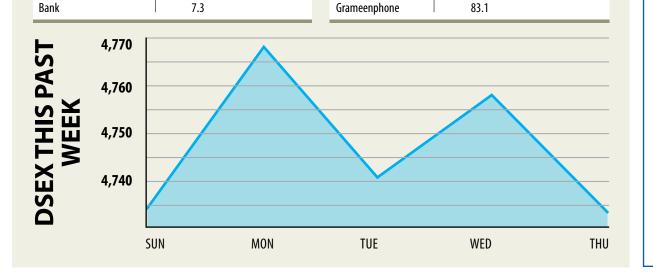
| TOP FIVE GAINERS | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|--|--|--|
| Company | Gain (in %) | | | |
| MI Cement | 40.20 | | | |
| Premier Cement | 39.45 | | | |
| Kohinoor Chemicals | 35.25 | | | |
| BSRM | 27.37 | | | |
| Regent Textile | 24.14 | | | |
| Regent Textile | <u> </u> | | | |

| Regent Textile | 24.14 | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| TOP SECTORAL CONTRIBUTION | | | | | |
| Sector | Change in Market cap (in %) | | | | |
| Engineering | 14.8 | | | | |
| Pharma & Chemicals | 13.9 | | | | |
| Textile | 13.5 | | | | |

Fuel & Power

10.6

| TOP TURNOVER | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Company | Daily average turnover (in cr Tk) | | | | |
| LafargeHolcim | 131 | | | | |
| Khulna Power | 114 | | | | |
| Summit Power | 102 | | | | |
| Orion Pharma | 87.3 | | | | |



NEXT STEP

Making a **DIFFERENCE**

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

IMPROVING NEGOTIATION SKILLS



DEFLECTING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS



When asked a tricky question, deflection can help you avoid suffering economic or social penalties that might come with being honest, declining to answer, or lying.

Surprises can be disorienting, and therefore expecting the unexpected can reduce the destabilizing effect of surprises. Improvisation is the key in such situations.

STAYING POSITIVE YET FIRM



In competitive negotiations, using phrases like "Yes, if" works like a charm. For example: "I want to pay less than the asking rent for this working space." "Yes, if you get the maintenance done by yourself."

NOT AVOIDING CONFRONTATION

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED



Confrontation can be difficult when the stakes are high, but it is not necessarily combative and can lead to positive outcomes. On the other hand, being extra nice in negotiations can backfire.

INFO-GRAPHIC: NAHALY NAFISA KHAN