

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▼ 0.52%	▼ 0.18%	\$1,603.00	\$59.30	▼ 0.37%	▲ 0.34%	▼ 0.47%	▲ 1.84%	BUY TK 83.95	89.78	107.71	11.80
4,733.14	8,812.23	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	41,170.70	23,479.15	3,198.68	3,030.15	SELL TK 84.95	93.58	111.51	12.40



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BUSINESS

DHAKA FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2020, *FALGUN 8, 1426 BS*


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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 non-governmental 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 Sharmin 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.



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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”.

“The government has

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 equality between male and female as well.”

At the event, the finance minister requested Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairperson of Brac, to produce a write-up 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.

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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.

State-owned Bangladesh 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 Ahmed Sabir, a member of multi stakeholder advisory 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 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 mother language.

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

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It took the government almost nine years to draw up a project for relocating chemical factories and warehouses from Old Dhaka’s Nimtoli where an inferno claimed 124 lives in 2010.

After another fire in Chawkbazar last year, the authority finally figured out that the Tk

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 funds were allocated: the BSCIC Chemical Industrial Park will now be built on 308 acres in Sirajdikhan upazila of Munshiganj, while project costs ballooned to Tk 1,615.73 crore.

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 plants and warehouses would start.

After the Nimtoli fire, the issue of factory relocation came to the fore as the neighborhood 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 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 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.



COLLECTED

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 FDI’s’ 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 Investment 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 FDI’s’, organised by the France-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry at The Westin Dhaka yesterday.

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 years.

“We have to ensure massive reforms to our existing laws and enact new laws to take the flow of FDI’s 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

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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 2030.

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 a dialogue styled “Delivering SDGs in

Bangladesh: Role of Non-State Actors”.

The CPD in association with The Asia Foundation–Bangladesh, Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, 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 launched.

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) are “not going in the right direction

and require radical policy changes and significant efforts from all involved stakeholders in order to reverse their trajectories”.

“What comes out very strongly

is that three areas are where we are not doing very well,” said Debapriya Bhattacharya, convener 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 by 2030.

“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.