

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES				
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY	
1.02%	0.80%	\$1,681.80	\$56.16	1.96%	Closed	1.22%	0.28%	83.95	90.00	107.95	11.79	
4,650.89	8,656.18	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	40,363.23		3,142.20	3,031.23	BUY TK	84.95	93.80	111.75	12.39

আপনার বিআরটিএ ফি এবং সকল ইউটিলিটি বিল এসআইবিএল এর যে কোন শাখার মাধ্যমে জমা দিন



ফ্রি অনলাইন সেবা  
যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০০৯৯২২

# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 25, 2020, FALGUN 12, 1426 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

## BB formally asks banks to set single-digit lending rates

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday instructed banks to set a maximum 9 per cent interest rate on all loan products except credit cards, in a move that suggests single-digit lending rate would actually be materialising.

But borrowers will have to cough up an additional two per cent in penal interest along with the new rates if they default on their instalment payments, according to a central bank notice.

The new rates will come into effect on April 1.

On December 30, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said that banks

would have to fix the interest rate on lending at 9 per cent from the first day of April as per Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's instruction.

The central bank, however, kept unchanged the interest rate of 7 per cent for exporters who take loans before shipping products.

In many cases, exporters take out loans to purchase raw materials in order to produce export-oriented items.

From this year, banks will also not be allowed to lower the disbursement of funds flowing to the industrial sector below their average credit growth in the last three years.

The provision came as central bankers fear that banks may cut loans to industries because of the new ceiling on the lending rates.

The existing high interest rate on loan products for

small, medium and large industries has created a barrier for the expansion of the country's business and service sector, the central bank notice said.

Under such scenarios, the cost of production cost goes up, creating hurdles for businesses to market products.

This also creates indiscipline in the banking sector and hampers economic development in the country as a whole, the BB said.

"The single-digit lending rate will help the country achieve the desired economic growth."

The central bank, however, will not issue any notice on fixing the interest rate on fixed deposit schemes at 6 per cent as banks have already started to do so in preparation for the 9 per cent lending rate, said a BB official.

On January 28, the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh, a forum of managing directors of banks, took the decision to provide not more than 6 per cent on fixed deposit receipts (FDRs) from February 1.

As of February 14, 21 banks brought down the interest rate on FDRs to 6 per cent.



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## Japanese firms to invest \$6.4b

Six infra projects will be implemented under the PPP model

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

Major Japanese large firms are to invest about \$6.4 billion to implement six infrastructure projects in Bangladesh under the public-private partnership model.

The implementation timeline for the projects to be implemented by groups such as Kajima, Sojitz and Marubeni will be set at the fourth Bangladesh-Japan Joint PPP Platform meeting in Dhaka next month.

The feasibility study, the construction period and other issues will also be fixed at the meeting, said officials of the Prime Minister's Office and the planning ministry.

The government had submitted a list of 18 projects to the Japanese government in December 2017. But Shinzo Abe's administration picked the six projects from the list that it deemed suitable for investment through Japanese private investors.

The ministry of land, infrastructure, transport and tourism (MLIT) of Japan has selected a consortium of private investors for each project to be led by a major company. The consortium is known as the sub working group (SWG).

The Japanese companies, which have set up their offices in Dhaka to start the construction of the projects, will invest under the government-to-government system without participating in any bidding.

At the meeting, Dhaka will seek investment for four more projects, which include the Bhola-Barishal bridge and the deep water container terminal at the Payra port.

SECOND METRO RAIL

the project. The metro rail is expected to go on commercial operation in 2030.

"Japan SWG will make best efforts to secure MLIT's fund from next fiscal year's budget starting from April 2020

### Japan-Bangladesh PPP projects at a glance

PROJECTS	LEAD COMPANY	AMOUNT
Multimodal hub at Kamalapur Railway Station	Kajima Corp.	\$310m
Multimodal hub at Airport Railway Station	Sojitz Corp.	\$200m
Inland Container Depot in Dhirasram	Sojitz Corp.	\$500m
Improvement of Ctg-Cox's Bazar Highway	Marubeni Corp.	\$1.7b
Outer Ring Road Dhaka	Marubeni Corp.	\$273m
Metro Rail Line-II	Marubeni Corp.	\$3.5b

The proposed route of the MRT Line-2 is Gabtoli-Mohammadpur-Jigatola-Science Lab-New Market-Azimpur-Palashi-Shaheed Minar-Police Headquarters-Motijheel-Kamalapur-Demra-Chattoogram Road covering around 40 kilometres.

The cabinet committee on economic affairs has already approved

for the basic study of the project," said an official of the PMO.

The lead company of the project is Marubeni Corporation. The other participating companies are: Oriental Consultants Global, Katahira & Engineers International, Sojitz and Sumitomo Mitsui Construction Corporation.

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## Imports from China tumble 21pc for coronavirus

NBR suggests exploring alternative markets to source apparel raw materials

SOHEL PARVEZ

Imports from China slumped 21 per cent year-on-year in volume in the one and a half months to February 15 amid supply disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic, official data showed.

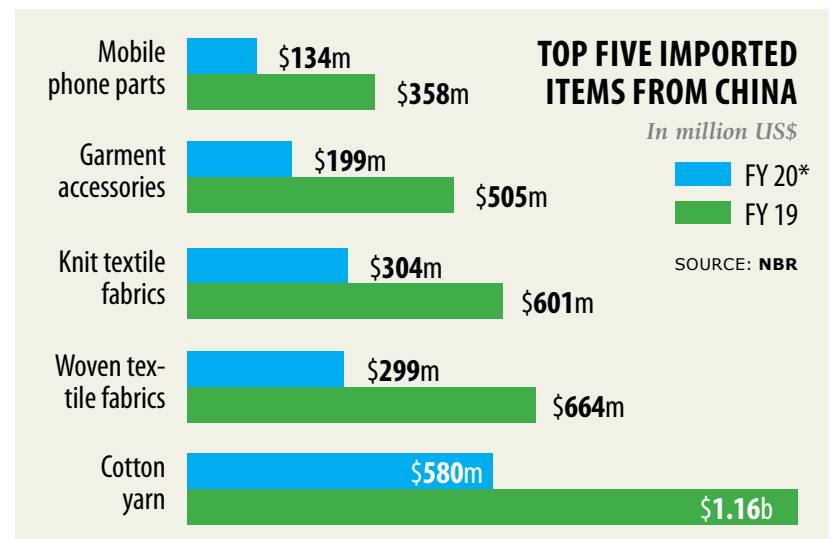
Businesses imported 36 lakh tonnes of products in the first seven months of fiscal 2019-20, down 19 per cent from a year earlier, according to the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

In monetary terms, imports also declined this year compared with the same period a year ago, said the revenue administration in a report on the possible impact of the coronavirus outbreak in the world's second largest economy.

Bangladesh's main export earner apparel and textile industry is highly dependent on China for cotton yarn and fabrics, textile fabrics and garments accessories.

"Alternative sources should be actively considered to import the raw materials of garments if the coronavirus outbreak disrupts supply from China," the report said.

It also suggested considering alternative sources to import parts of mobile phones to support the



budding mobile handset assembling sector.

China is the biggest trading partner of Bangladesh and the biggest source for imports. The world's second largest economy accounted for more than a fifth of the country's imports of \$56 billion in fiscal 2018-19, Bangladesh Bank data showed.

The NBR report comes amid growing concerns among businesses about potential supply disruption of

raw materials, intermediate goods and other materials brought about by the coronavirus outbreak in December last year.

The deadly disease has already claimed more than 2,500 lives.

The NBR report assessed the possible effects of the coronavirus pandemic on export and imports by taking seven top-ranked inbound and outbound items to and from China.

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## Beximco Pharma to sell global drug maker Mylan's products

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Generic drug manufacturer Beximco Pharmaceuticals yesterday penned a deal to begin the sale of medication for cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and other diseases made by US-based Mylan, in what can be viewed as a stroke of good news for the country's healthcare sector.

Under the agreement, Beximco Pharma will be allowed to launch Mylan's portfolio of key monoclonal antibodies for different types of cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and other medical conditions, said the listed company in a press release.

The news of this tie-up though failed to boost Beximco stock: it closed 0.41 per cent lower at Tk 73.30 yesterday.

The first product, a breast cancer drug called Ogivri, will become available to the public in the first quarter of the current year.

Cancer is now one of the leading causes of death in Bangladesh: more than 50,000 women have tested positive for breast cancer.

Ogivri, which is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and also received marketing authorisation from the European Medicines Agency, is biosimilar to Roche's blockbuster drug Herceptin. Its global sales in 2018 exceeded \$7 billion.

The growing rate of breast cancer patients is a major public health concern in developing markets, said Rakesh Bamzai, president of Mylan's India and emerging markets operations.

"As a global leader in the

At present, Beximco Pharma produces more than 300 generics.

With an international footprint spanning more than 50 countries, the company has been accredited by leading global regulatory authorities, which include the FDA, Malta



development of complex pharmaceuticals, Mylan, through its commercial agreement with Beximco Pharma, is pleased to make its products accessible for patients in Bangladesh," he added.

With one of the most diverse portfolios of biosimilar medicines that are approved in over 80 countries, Mylan is an ideal partner for Beximco, according to Nazmul Hassan, managing director of Beximco Pharma.

Medicines Authority (EU), TGA (Australia), Health Canada, GCC (Gulf) and TFDA (Taiwan).

Mylan offers a growing portfolio with more than 7,500 of their products being marketed across 165 countries and territories.

The US-based company also provides antiretroviral therapies, which approximately 40 per cent of the world's HIV/AIDS afflicted population depend on.

## Grameenphone's mini victory against telecom watchdog

Getting away by furnishing one-sixth the sum demanded

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Supreme Court yesterday directed Grameenphone to pay another Tk 1,000 crore to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) within the next three months, in a development that can be viewed as a mini-victory of the country's leading mobile operator.

The Norwegian Telenor Group subsidiary has been locked in a locked in a bitter tug-of-war with the telecom regulator for the best part of the past 12 months over unpaid dues amounting to Tk 12,579.95 crore.

The regulator had tightened the leash on Grameenphone to get it to pay the sum, much to the detriment of the operator's business.

Now, it is bringing the matter to a possible close by paying just one-sixth the sum the telecom regulator was holding out for. On Sunday, the operator paid Tk 1,000 crore to the telecom watchdog.

The development though disappointed stock market investors: Grameenphone, which is the largest listed company on the Dhaka Stock Exchange, saw its share price slide 7.38 per cent after two consecutive days of rise. Grameenphone shares closed at Tk 299.40 yesterday.

Insiders of the telecom ministry said Grameenphone is now on a compromise mode and wants to avoid conflict with the



**GRAMEENPHONE'S FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

- Net profit in 2019 Tk 3,451.68cr
- Announced cash dividend of 130%
- Will take out Tk 1,755.39cr
- Left with Tk 1,696cr
- Surplus from 2018 Tk 26.97cr
- Total reserves now Tk 2,123.26cr

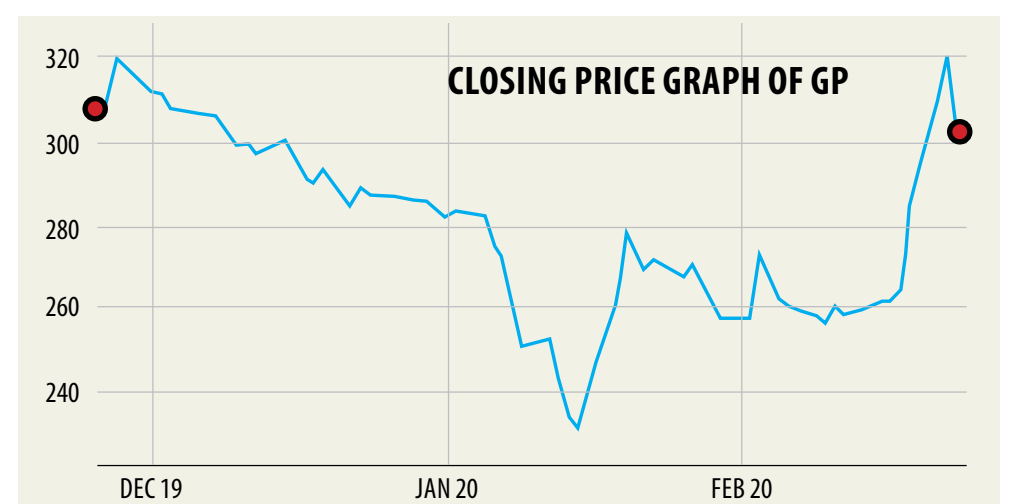
telecom regulator to save its business here.

While Tk 2,000 is a huge amount, it will not impact their financials much, they added.

"It is a tiny amount for them," said Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the telecom

regulator, adding that had Grameenphone agreed to furnish the sum as per the court order two months ago all the furore seen in the past few weeks could have been avoided.

Earlier on November 24 last year, the SC



directed Grameenphone to pay Tk 2,000 crore within three months.

"Tk 2,000 crore is not a matter for them as they are making about Tk 4,000 every year and they have also taken preparations for this claims settlement," Haque told The Daily Star yesterday at his office.

Also at yesterday's review petition hearing filed by Grameenphone, a six-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain also fired

a round of warning to foreign companies: they must abide by the law of the land when operating in Bangladesh.

**GRAMEENPHONE'S OPTION TO ARRANGE THE SUM**  
According to Grameenphone's annual report for 2019, its reserve and surplus amount stands at Tk 2,123.26 crore after disbursing 130 per cent cash dividend against their 135.03 crore shares for the year.

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Zaidi Sattar, chairman of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, and Shams Mahmud, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, exchange documents after signing a deal at the former's office in Dhaka recently for facilitating research and strengthening cooperation.

PepsiCo to buy Chinese snack brand Be & Cheery

PEPSICO, Beijing
PepsiCo Inc has agreed to buy Chinese snack brand Be & Cheery from local jujube maker Haoxiangni Health Food Co Ltd for \$705 million, the companies said.
The US multinational food and beverage maker said the acquisition of Be & Cheery, which sells snacks from nuts to dried fruits mainly on Chinese e-commerce platforms, was an important step in its goal to become China's leading consumer-focused food and beverage company.
"Be & Cheery adds direct-to-consumer capability, positioning us to capitalize on continued growth in e-commerce, and a local brand that is able to stretch across a broad portfolio of products, through both online and offline channels," Ram Krishnan, CEO of PepsiCo Greater China, said in a statement on Sunday.
"We also expect to leverage Be & Cheery's innovation and consumer insights capabilities to drive innovation in other key PepsiCo growth markets."
Haoxiangni, which is based in the eastern city of Hangzhou, said in a separate filing that it had decided to sell as it wanted to focus on the jujube business.
Founded in 2003, Be & Cheery is one of the largest online snack companies in China and reported revenues of about 5 billion yuan (\$711.7 million) in 2019, the companies said.

In Mumbai, Microsoft boss Nadella trumpets cloud tie-up with India's Reliance

REUTERS, Mumbai
Microsoft Corp Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella touted the new India cloud partnership with Reliance Industries as he shared center-stage with its chairman Mukesh Ambani at an event in India's financial capital on Monday.
that Jio (Reliance's telecoms unit) and Microsoft will have and I think that will be, as we look at this decade, a defining partnership," Ambani said.
During a keynote speech earlier, Nadella emphasized the need for businesses to build their own technology at a time digital services are transforming all industries, and



Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella

Microsoft struck a 10-year deal with Reliance in 2019, committing to power the oil-to-telecoms conglomerate's data centers with its Azure cloud.
"We've been working with Reliance across the entire stack - everything from what they are going to be doing with Azure in their own data centers and how they will extend it," said India-born Nadella at the event in Mumbai, where he began the first leg of his India tour.
"It's sort of a great example of a business leader and a company which is in very diverse sectors to take a platform approach, to use technology to create more technology."
The executives did not provide specific details about their growth plans.
"We're very excited about the partnership even homes.
Nadella visits his home country just weeks after telling Buzzfeed News that India's new citizenship law saddened him and was "just bad".
India's Citizenship Amendment Act, which paves a way for minorities from neighboring Muslim-majority nations of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to gain citizenship, has sparked weeks of protests.
Critics say that the law, combined with a proposed national register of citizens, will discriminate against India's Muslims minority.
Nadella, who did not broach political issues at Monday's event, will also travel to the southern tech hub of Bengaluru and the Indian capital New Delhi.

India refiners getting rare oil cheap as China demand slows

REUTERS, New Delhi/Singapore
Indian refining companies are snapping up rare crude grades as the coronavirus outbreak curtails China's demand for processing, executives and traders said, with prices for some grades falling by as much as 15 percent.
Chinese refiners have slashed output by at least 1.5 million barrels a day in February, or over 10 percent, after the virus outbreak hit domestic fuel demand, leading to swelling stocks.
"Opportunity for Indian markets is more in the context of what is happening in China and in recent times we received crudes which are appearing to be attractive as compared to their value earlier," said R. Ramachandran, head of refineries at Bharat Petroleum Corp.
Refiners in India, the world's third-biggest oil importer, rarely get the opportunity to buy suitable grades from areas like the Mediterranean and Latin America due to higher freight rates.
However, shipping rates have plunged by nearly half since the virus outbreak, and after the U.S. partially lifted sanctions on part of Chinese shipping firm COSCO.

Most small firms in China yet to reopen after virus outbreak



Employees wearing face masks work on a car seat assembly line at Yanfeng Adient factory in Shanghai, China yesterday.

AFP, Beijing
Most small businesses in China have yet to reopen and are struggling with supply chain obstructions after the new coronavirus epidemic triggered a national shutdown, officials said Monday.
Authorities extended January's Lunar New Year holiday and ordered the closure of schools, factories and railways to try and halt the spread of the outbreak, which has killed more than 2,500 people.
Some industries have since resumed operations but only around three in 10 small and medium-sized enterprises were back to work, industry ministry spokesman Tian Yulong said Monday.
Ongoing transport disruptions make it hard for workers to travel and has prevented the shipment of raw materials, he added.
Officials pledged finance and aid for smaller enterprises on Monday, including

preferential tax treatment for transport, catering and tourism businesses.
Key industries dominated by larger firms appeared to be in stronger shape.
Cong Liang, an official at China's top economic planning agency, said the steel industry was operating at nearly 70 percent capacity while rail freight had almost returned to normal. Small and medium-sized businesses account for around 60 percent of China's economy, and the crucial sector is reeling from the impact of the global public health crisis.
At least six in 10 small firms risked running out of cash to cover regular payments in the next two months, the Economic Daily state media outlet reported last week, citing a survey by a national representative body for small business.
President Xi Jinping said Sunday the overall economic impact of the virus would be "short-term" and manageable.



Mohammed Haider Ali Miah, CEO of Exim Bank, opens the bank's 131st branch in the capital's Dhanmondi recently.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
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www.police.gov.bd
গাড়ি ভাড়া নেয়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি-১/২০১৯-২০২০
দি পার্বলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেকর্ডেশন-২০০৮ ও ভূপেরবত্তী সংশোধনী আইন/বিধিমালা মোতাবেক ২০১৯-২০২০ অর্থ বৎসরে কুড়িয়াম জেলার বিভিন্ন থানা/ইউনিটে ভাড়া চালিত গাড়ি ব্যবহারের জন্য মাইক্রোবাস/কার/ পিকআপ সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত টিকাদার/মালিক/টিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিমিত্ত হতে সীলনোহরকৃত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।
১ মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ
২ সংস্থা
৩ দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান
৪ দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর জেলা/সংস্থা
৫ উন্নুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)
৬ বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত
৭ দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ
৮ দরপত্র সিডিউল সর্বশেষ প্রান্তির তারিখ
৯ দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়
১০ দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
১১ দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়
১২ দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও ঠিকানা
১৩ দরপত্র প্রান্তির স্থান
১৪ দরপত্র খোলার স্থান
১৫ দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজ জমা দিতে হবে
১৬ দরপত্র আহ্বান কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম
১৭ দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী ও ঠিকানা
১৮ লট নং
১৯ বিধি শর্তাবলী
ক বাজি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্ভাবিককারীর সীল স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত পাত্রে আবেদনপূর্বক অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)।
খ দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী সিডিউল সংগ্রহকালে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ে হতে জানা যাবে।
গ পিপিআর আইন/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর বিধিমালা/২০০৮ ভূপেরবত্তী সংশোধনী এবং সিডিউলে সংযুক্ত সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।
ঘ নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর সিডিউল বিক্রয় এবং দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
ঙ দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
স্বাঃ/-
মোহাম্মদ মহিবুল ইসলাম খান, বিপিএম
বিপি ৭৯০৫১০৪৩০৩
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কুড়িয়াম
ফোনঃ ০৫৮১-৬১৪৩৩, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০৫৮১-৬১৪২৭

China lifts import restriction on some pet food from US
REUTERS, Beijing
China has removed a ban on imports of pet food containing ruminant ingredients from the United States, according to a notice released by customs. The ban would take immediate effect, the General Administration of Customs said in the notice dated Feb.19. China also approved imports of beef, beef products and live poultry from the US this month.
মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম
সিডিএ এডিনিউ, মুরাদপুর, পাঁচলাইশ, চট্টগ্রাম
E-mail: info@bise-ctg.gov.bd, Website: www.bise-ctg.gov.bd
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (e-Tender)
মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর জন্য Motor Vehicle (16 Seater Microbus) একটি মাইক্রোসব (গাড়ি) ক্রয়ের লক্ষ্যে দি পার্বলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেকর্ডেশন-২০০৮ মোতাবেক দক্ষ, অভিজ্ঞ, যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত গাড়ি ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিমিত্ত হতে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র (e-Tender) আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।
১ মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ
২ সংস্থা
৩ দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা
৪ আহ্বানকৃত দরপত্রের নাম
৫ সূত্র পদ্ধতি
৬ দরপত্র সূত্র নম্বর
৭ অনলাইনে দরপত্র সিডিউল ডাউনলোড ও সাবমিট এবং খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
৮ অনলাইনে দরপত্র সিডিউল ডাউনলোড ও সাবমিট এবং খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
৯ দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা
১০ দরপত্র দলিগের মূল্য
১১ বাসনার অর্থ (আপেক্ষিত)
১২ দরপত্র ডাউনলোড ও সাবমিট করার বিধি
১৩ গাড়ি সূত্রের টেকনিক্যাল (Technical Specification) বিবরণী (Section-7 এর আওতায় Form PG 3-5) পূরণ হাইলি করে আবেদন করতে হবে।
১৪ বিধি শর্তাবলী
দরপত্র সিডিউল অনলাইনে ডাউনলোড ও সাবমিট করার বিধিমালা/২০০৬ ভূপেরবত্তী সংশোধনী এবং সিডিউলে সংযুক্ত সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।
১৫ দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
স্বাঃ/-
মোহাম্মদ মহিবুল ইসলাম খান, বিপিএম
বিপি ৭৯০৫১০৪৩০৩
পুলিশ সুপার
কুড়িয়াম
ফোনঃ ০৫৮১-৬১৪৩৩, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০৫৮১-৬১৪২৭

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
উপকূলীয় বন বিভাগ, পটুয়াখালী
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-২৩/২০১৯-২০
তারিখঃ ২৩/০২/২০২০খ্রিঃ
বনজন্ম বিক্রয়ের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, উপকূলীয় বন বিভাগ, পটুয়াখালীর আওতাধীন বিভিন্ন রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্রের বাড়া, বড়ো পড়া, স্ফুটীত, জলকৃত ও অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরিত বনজন্মের গ্রেপ/মামুল বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে বন বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী ও অন্যান্য জ্ঞাতব্য বিবয়ান অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ের অধীন সকল রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্র/ন্যাসারী কেন্দ্রসমূহ হতে জানা যাবে।
বাজি গাছের অবস্থানঃ
জেলার নাম
উপলোকার নাম
রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্রের নাম
বাসানের অবস্থান
পটুয়াখালী সদর
পটুয়াখালী সদর
এসএফএনটিসি, পটুয়াখালী
ক) পটুয়াখালী বন বিভাগের আওতাধীন বিভিন্ন রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্রের বাড়া, বড়ো পড়া, স্ফুটীত, জলকৃত ও অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরিত বনজন্মের গ্রেপ/মামুল বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে বন বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী ও অন্যান্য জ্ঞাতব্য বিবয়ান অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ের অধীন সকল রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্র/ন্যাসারী কেন্দ্রসমূহ হতে জানা যাবে।
খ) ৪৩/২/২০১৯/২০২০ খ্রিঃ হতে কলিকাতার প্যান্ডা বাজি পর্যন্ত ৮.০ সিকিমি.
গ) গুয়াবাড়িয়া হুসেনা হাওলাদারের বাজি হতে বাসেরহাট মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয় পর্যন্ত ৬.০ সিকিমি.
ঘ) কলাপাড়া সীমানা হতে রিক্ত ঘরামীর বাজি পর্যন্ত ২৫.০ সিকিমি. সওজ বাগান। (পুনঃ টেন্ডার)
ঙ) নাগোলা আদামীর দোকান হতে খলিপুর আদামীর বাজি পর্যন্ত ৪.০ সিকিমি. সওজ বাগান। (পুনঃ টেন্ডার)
চ) মাহিপুর রেঞ্জ
৪৭/৪ নং পোতাধারের জোনদারের হতে কীটজারনী ব্রীজ পর্যন্ত ১১.০ সিকিমি (মংশ)।
দশমিনা
দশমিনা রেঞ্জ
খারিজা বেতগাঁ মাটিভাগার বাজি হতে জমির মূখার খোয়ায়াট পর্যন্ত ২.৪৩ সিকিমি. বাধ পর্যন্ত।
জমির মূখার খোয়ায়াট হতে মাহিপুরের বাজার পর্যন্ত।
মাটিভাগার বাধ হতে ইয়াগাজীর চর (গাজীবাড়ি) পর্যন্ত।
সুবিধাবাহী ইউসুক হাওলাদারের বাজি হতে চরখালী গোলাখালী হুইজ পর্যন্ত।
৪০/২নং পোতাধারের জোনদার হতে বাসেরহাট হতে দক্ষিণ পাখরঘাটা পোতাধারের সীমানা পর্যন্ত ৩০.০ সিকিমি. বাসানের অংশ। (পুনঃ টেন্ডার)
টোবা মাহিপুর কাম্প অফিস হতে কুহিরা বাটলা বাজার পর্যন্ত ৬.০ সিকিমি. বাসানের অংশ। (পুনঃ টেন্ডার)
২০০৪-০৫ সনে সূত্রিত আমতলী বাস স্ট্যান্ড হতে ভাঙ্কার বাজি হতে উত্তরে আকন বাজীর জামে মসজিদ এবং মাহিপুরী শাহাজাহান হাওলাদারের বাজি হতে দক্ষিণে সুনামাখালী ব্রীজ পর্যন্ত সওজ বাগান। (পুনঃ টেন্ডার)
বনজন্মের সিডিউল মূল্য
দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময়
দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময়
১) বাজি গাছের প্রতিটি লটারে সিডিউল মূল্য ৪০০/- (অফেরতযোগ্য)
২) বড়োপড়া স্ফুটীত, জলকৃত ও অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরিত প্রতিটি গ্রেপ/মামুলের সিডিউল মূল্য ২০০/- (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
অন্যান্য বিবরণের তারিখ হতে ০৪/০২/২০২০ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত
১) বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, পটুয়াখালী
২) রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্র কার্যালয়, বরগুনা।
তারিখঃ ০৫/০২/২০২০ খ্রিঃ
সকাল ১০.০০টা হতে দুপুর ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত।
উল্লেখ্য, উল্লেখের সহিত ৭.৫% ভাট ও ৫% হারে আয়কর যোগ করে মূল্য আদায় করা হবে। দরপত্রের যাবতীয় শর্তাবলী ও অন্যান্য জ্ঞাতব্য বিবয়ান অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ের অধীন সকল রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্রসমূহ হতে জানা যাবে।
মোহাম্মদ আমিনুল ইসলাম
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা
উপকূলীয় বন বিভাগ, পটুয়াখালী
ফোনঃ ০৪৪১-৬২২৮৫



**DSE elects new chairman**

**STAR BUSINESS DESK**  
Md Eunusur Rahman, former senior secretary to the Financial Institutions Division, has been elected the chairman of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.  
The election took place at the bourse's board meeting in Dhaka yesterday, according to a statement.  
Prior to joining DSE, he worked as a senior policy adviser at the Business Finance for the Poor in Bangladesh project.  
Rahman obtained his graduation and post-graduation in accounting from Dhaka University.

**UTC, Raytheon offer EU concessions over \$120b merger deal**

**REUTERS, Brussels**  
United Technologies Corp and Raytheon Co have offered concessions to address EU antitrust concerns about their plan to create a \$120 billion US aerospace and defense giant, a filing on the European Commission website showed on Monday.  
The companies submitted their concessions on Friday. The European Commission, which did not provide details in line with its policy, extended its deadline for a decision to March 13 from Feb. 28.  
In January, UTC agreed to divest a military-focused GPS unit from its subsidiary Collins while Raytheon agreed to sell an airborne tactical radios unit to British defense company BAE Systems in a bid to win regulatory clearance.

**US sees on virus impact on China trade deal**

**REUTERS, Riyadh**

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told Reuters he does not expect the coronavirus outbreak to have a material impact on the Phase 1 US-China trade deal, although that could change as more data becomes available in coming weeks.  
Finance officials from the world's 20 largest economies said on Sunday they would keep a close watch on the fast-spreading outbreak, but stopped short of identifying it as downside risk to the global economy.

Fears of a coronavirus pandemic mounted even as they met in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, with sharp rises in new cases reported in Iran, Italy and South Korea.

Mnuchin, in an interview with Reuters late on Sunday, cautioned against jumping to conclusions about the impact of what he called a "human tragedy" on the global economy, or on companies' supply chain decisions, saying it was simply too soon to know.

China was focused on the virus for now, he said, but Washington still expected Beijing to live up to its commitments to buy more US products and services under the trade deal.

"I don't expect that this will have any ramifications on Phase 1. Based on

everything that we know, and where the virus is now, I don't expect that it's going to be material," he said.

"Obviously that could change as the situation develops. Within the next few more weeks, we'll all have a better assessment as there's more data around the rate of the virus spreading."

Mnuchin acknowledged the outbreak could also delay the start of negotiations on deepening the trade deal with Beijing and reaching a Phase 2 agreement, but said he was not worried about that at this point.

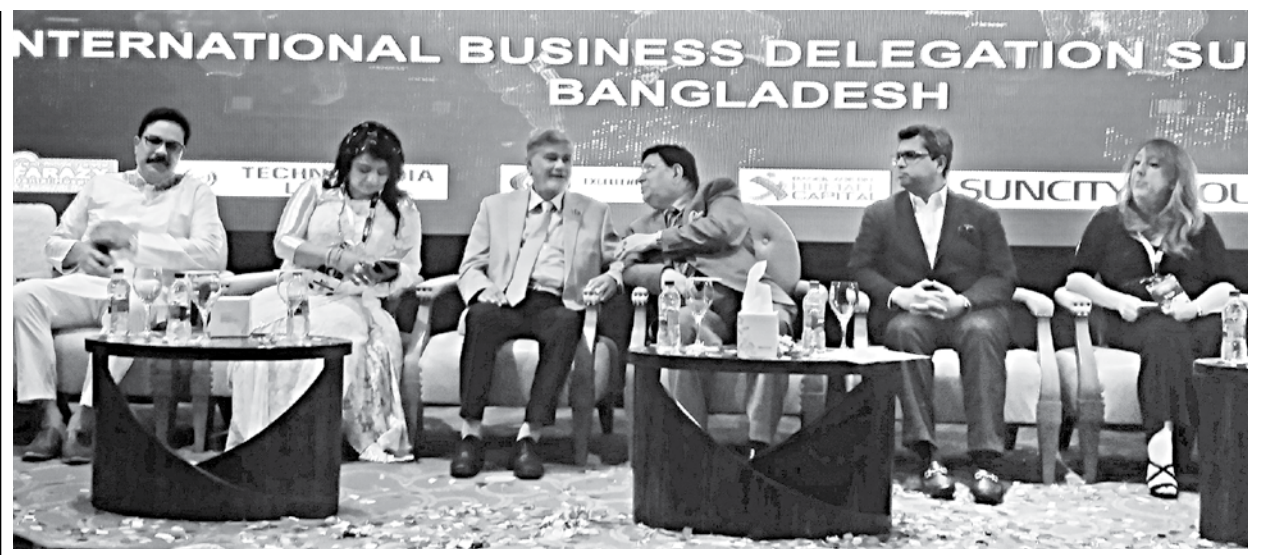
"If we get the right deal before the election, that's great. If we get the right deal after the election, that's great. We don't feel any pressure one way or another," he said, referring to the Nov. 3 US presidential election, in which President Donald Trump is seeking re-election.

Mnuchin noted that the contagion factor with COVID-19, the acronym for the virus, was higher than with the SARS outbreak in China in the early 2000s, but said the survival rate appeared to be much higher.

In a separate news conference, he said there could be some short-term impact on supply chains, but cautioned against the idea that it could increase concerns about globalization. Big companies were always assessing risks and adjusting supply chains, he added.



**US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin**



**AK Abdul Momen, foreign minister; MA Mannan, planning minister; and Sheikh Fazle Fahim, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, attend a summit organised by the International Business Delegation at the Westin Dhaka yesterday.**

**German business morale inches up despite coronavirus fears**

**AFP, Munich**

Confidence among German business leaders nudged slightly higher in February, a closely watched survey said Monday, as bosses appeared to shrug off fears about the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The Ifo institute's monthly business climate index climbed to 96.1 points in February, up from 96.0 in January.

The reading defied expectations as analysts surveyed by Factset had been bracing for a drop in morale.

"The German economy seems

unaffected by developments surrounding the coronavirus," Ifo chief Clemens Fuest said in a statement.

The virus has killed some 2,600 people and infected over 80,000 since it emerged in China late last year, and fears of a wider outbreak are growing after South Korea, Italy and Iran reported a spike in cases.

Looking in detail at the Ifo survey of some 9,000 firms, manufacturers were the most optimistic for the months ahead. Germany's crucial manufacturing sector has been hit

hard in recent months but a US-China trade truce and less Brexit uncertainty has eased concerns.

ING Diba bank analyst Carsten Brzeski however said the Ifo reading should be taken with "a pinch of salt", warning that Germany's export-oriented economy was uniquely vulnerable to trade upsets caused by the virus.

"Weaker Chinese demand will leave its marks on the economy," he cautioned. While it was still too early to gauge the full impact of the virus, Germany is "again at the centre of yet another adverse global event", he added.



**Fazle Kabir, governor of Bangladesh Bank and president of the Institute of Bankers, Bangladesh, speaks at a prize distribution ceremony organised by the institute at its conference hall in Dhaka recently. Three gold and nine silver medals were distributed among the institute's students for their outstanding performance in the banking diploma examinations for 2016 and 2017.**

**Gold soars more than 2.5pc as virus triggers flight to safety**

**REUTERS**

Gold prices surged more than 2.5 per cent to over seven-year highs on Monday as the spread of coronavirus outside China and its potential impact on global economic growth spurred safe haven buying.

Spot gold was up 2.5 per cent to \$1,683.94 per ounce at 0953 GMT after hitting \$1,688.66, its highest level since January 2013. US gold futures were up 2.3 per cent to \$1,686.40.

Gold in euros hit an all-time peak of 1,560.39 euros per ounce, while gold priced in sterling rose to a record high of 1,308.20 pounds an ounce.

"Beyond the near term disruptions to global supply chains, the coronavirus could have an effect on headline GDP," said FXM market analyst Han Tan.

"On the onset of 2020 we were optimistic that global economic conditions were able to recover on signs of subsiding trade tensions, but the potential fallout from the coronavirus not only triggers risk aversion, but could also erode the growth potential for the full year."

European shares tumbled more than 3 per cent after a sharp rise in new infections in South Korea, Italy and Iran exacerbated worries of a wider spread of the virus.

The World Health Organization said it is worried about the growing number of cases without any clear link to China.

"There seems to be a mix of short covering and a fear of missing out driving the gains (in gold), with \$1,660 well supported on any pullbacks," MKS PAMP said in a note. "Expect demand to remain firm through \$1,660-\$1,650, while there's little top-side resistance on the way to \$1,700."

The US dollar also gained on increasing interest in safe haven assets.

The benchmark US 10-year Treasury yield fell to its lowest level since July 2016. Investors are also expecting global central banks to further ease monetary policy as the risks from the virus threaten global growth. Lower interest rates reduce the opportunity cost of holding gold and tend to weigh on US yields.

Reflecting increased investor interest in bullion, speculators raised their bullish positions on COMEX gold and silver contracts in the week to Feb. 18, data showed on Friday.

Mirroring gold's gains, silver rose 2 per cent to \$18.82 an ounce, having hit its highest since September at \$18.90.

Palladium eased 0.4 per cent to \$2,691.75 per ounce, while platinum shed 0.1 per cent to \$972.96.

**Imports from China tumble 21pc for coronavirus**

**FROM PAGE B1**

Cotton yarn and woven textile fabrics top the list of the items coming to Bangladesh from China, followed by woven textile fabrics, knit textile fabrics and garment accessories.

Bangladesh imported nearly \$3 billion worth of the items in fiscal 2018-19 from China, the report said. These products are used as raw materials by the \$34 billion garment industry, which represents 84 per cent of the national export receipts.

The import from China was 41 per cent of the total import of cotton, cotton yarn/thread and cotton fabrics valued at \$7 billion in the last fiscal year, BB data showed.

Of the four products, yarn is used in textile

mills to make fabrics, while woven fabrics are used to make garments.

Manufacturers brought in \$1.2 billion worth of cotton yarn in fiscal 2018-19 and half of last year's total imports already reached Bangladesh between the months of July last year and January this year, the report said.

In the seven months since July, businesses also imported half of the total woven textile and knit textile fabrics they had brought in in the last fiscal year.

The picture is also the same for garment accessory imports from China. However, the import of mobile parts, which soared last year, may suffer as 27 per cent of last fiscal year's total imports amounting to \$505 million came in the

last seven months.

Bangladesh is importing ginger, garlic and cinnamon from Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia and Egypt, lowering the possibility of supply shortfall of the essential cooking ingredients, the NBR said.

In case of exports, garment is the main item shipped to China, followed by jute and jute goods as well as fishes, including crab and eel.

China is increasingly emerging as an export market for Bangladesh and half of the main exportable items destined for the country were shipped in the July-January period, the NBR said.

"Given the trend, there is no big risk to exports to China," the NBR said.

**Grameenphone's mini victory against telecom watchdog**

**FROM PAGE B1**

The exercise deducted Tk 1,755 crore, leaving it with Tk 1,695 crore of the Tk 3,450 crore net profit it logged in for 2019. It had about Tk 430 crore from the previous year.

Contacted, Grameenphone in a statement said: "We appreciate that the Hon'ble Appellate Division has maintained the injunction. We will evaluate the order before further comments."

The carrier, which has 46 per cent market share, got an injunction from the High Court on the BTRC's move to realise Tk 12,579.95 crore from them on October 17 last year.

The BTRC later filed a petition with the SC challenging the HC's injunction order and

following the petition the Appellate Division on November 24 last year directed Grameenphone to pay Tk 2,000 crore to the telecom regulator in three months.

On January 26 this year, GP filed a review petition with the apex court seeking its permission to pay Tk 575 crore in 12 equal instalments.

During the hearing yesterday, Grameenphone's lawyer advocate AM Amin Uddin and barrister Medehi Hassan Chowdhury placed documents proving the operator had paid Tk 1,000 crore to the telecom watchdog on Sunday before the apex court judges.

Then, chief justice asked the lawyers when Grameenphone will pay the remaining Tk 1,000

crore to the BTRC.

In reply, the Grameenphone's lawyers prayed to the court to give them six months more to furnish the sum.

The lawyers also said a title suit regarding the dues of Grameenphone to the BTRC is pending with the trial court concerned.

The SC granted them a three-month timeframe to pay next the instalment and said if the trial court finds in the final verdict that GP does not owe to the BTRC, then the Tk 2,000 crore will be adjusted.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and Barrister Khandaker Reza-E-Raquib appeared for the BTRC.



**Mohammad Akhter, chairman of Prime Islami Life Insurance; Md Apel Mahmud, CEO; and Rahim Uddaulah Chowdhury, chief consultant, attend the company's annual conference for 2019 at the Parjatan Holiday Complex in Kuakata recently.**



**Shayaan Seraj, a director of Elite Group, speaks at a technical session during the annual conference of the Public Works Department at Purta Bhaban in Dhaka on Sunday. The group's concerns Aqua Paints and Elite Steel organised the session to showcase their latest products.**

## Hero to ramp up production in Jashore plant

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Hero MotoCorp plans to increase the production capacity of its factory in Bangladesh seeing the huge growth potential of the country's automotive industry, said its chairman Pawan Munjal.

In 2016, Hero set up a motorcycle manufacturing plant in Jashore in what was the Delhi-based motorcycle and scooter manufacturer's first overseas venture.

Over the past four years, more than 250,000 motorcycles were manufactured at the factory, which has an average production capacity of more than 100,000 vehicles per annum.

"Compared with any other emerging country, Bangladesh has the fastest growing automotive industry. To meet the growing demands, we will increase the production capacity of our factory," Munjal told The Daily Star in an interview recently.

The sales of motorcycles increased 13 per

cent in 2019. But the growth rate was higher previously, according to industry insiders.

The sudden change in regulations is one of the biggest challenges faced by Bangladesh's automotive industry, which is the third largest in South Asia.

A set of regulations are changed when the government announces its yearly fiscal budget in June. Besides, the Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) also brings changes on taxes.

"We need consistent policies from the Bangladesh government," Munjal said.

When Hero began its manufacturing in Bangladesh, there was a specific set of rules. With time though, rules changed and the company was subsequently affected.

However, Hero's venture in Bangladesh has remained profitable and continues to grow.

"More than 500 people are directly employed in our company while a number of others are indirectly employed," he said, adding that Hero have a market share of 20 per cent.

Hero is also considering whether to export some of the vehicles made at their Bangladesh factory.

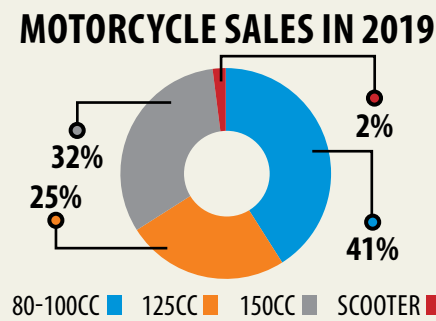
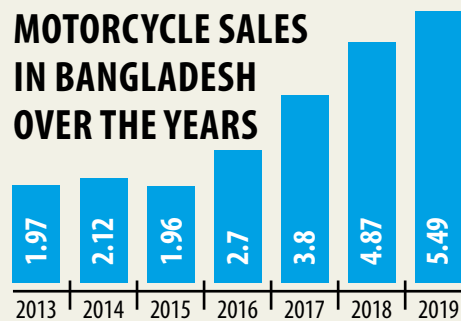
In 2011, when Hero began its solo journey after separating with Honda, the company had only three factories and were exporting to just four countries: Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Colombia.

"Today, with eight factories, including the one in Bangladesh, we export to almost 40 countries in Asia, Africa, Central and South America."

Innovation was the key to retaining consumer interest, so Hero expects more of the same from its global partners.

Although Pleasure, a scooter model sold by Hero, is available in Bangladesh, the demand for such vehicles is very less in the country.

Scooters account for only 1 per cent of the total demand for two-wheelers in Bangladesh, while motorcycles make up the rest. Munjal said, adding that 65 per cent of the two-wheeler market in Sri Lanka is covered by scooters.



# Bangladeshi roads to soon see 3 new Hero motorcycle models

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Hero MotoCorp has unveiled three new products in the mainstream and premium segments of motorcycle in India.

The new models are: Hero Xtreme 160R, Hero Passion Pro and Hero Glamour.

The bikes are packed with an engine of BS-VI category, meaning they would make less pollution and sound compared with the currently available two-wheelers.

The BS-VI, or Bharat Stage VI, is the new emission standard that all vehicles in the country will have to adhere to from April 1, 2020.

The new bikes will be available in the Indian market in April, said Pawan Munjal, chairman of Hero MotoCorp.

His comments came when he unveiled



Pawan Munjal

the new products at the Hero World 2020 at Hero Centre of Innovation and Technology of the New Delhi-headquartered company in the northern Indian city of Jaipur.

"The products will be available in the Bangladesh market just after their launch in India," said Rajat Bhargava, head of global business of Hero MotoCorp.

As BS-VI is not mandatory in Bangladesh yet and the preference of its consumers is different, the products will be slightly modified for the market, he said.

The other two models -- Glamour and Passion -- are already available in

the company's fast-expanding presence in the premium segment. The bike delivers acceleration to 60 km/hour in 4.7 seconds.

The company also introduced Hero Glamour BS-VI, which runs on the new 125cc engine with 19 per cent more power.

The new Passion Pro comes in new 110cc delivering high fuel economy and is available in four colours: red, blue, yellow and black.

Hero MotoCorp also launched the Hero XPulse 200 Rally Kit for aspiring racers.

With innovation at the core of its philosophy, Hero MotoCorp will invest Rs 10,000 crore in research and development in

the next five to six years, Munjal said.

The investment in R&D will be to focus on alternative mobility situation, sustainable development and brand-building across the globe.

He also announced the new vision and mission of Hero MotoCorp, which is "Be the future of mobility".

Hero MotoCorp has been the world's largest two-wheeler company by unit volume sales for the last 19 years.

It is the dominant market leader in India, the world's largest two-wheeler market, with more than 50 per cent share.

Currently, it exports products to 40

countries, up from only four in 2011.

Munjal also recalled the journey of Hero MotoCorp as a solo player in 2011 after splitting from Honda. "It was a young company with a rich legacy."

Hero MotoCorp currently has an annual combined production capacity of around 9 million units of two-wheelers, according to the company's website.

It has seven globally benchmarked manufacturing facilities, including five in India and one each in Colombia and Bangladesh.

The new manufacturing facility in Andhra Pradesh will start production this year.



## Mathbaria coasting on remittance

Migrant workers from upazila send home about Tk 300cr a year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Mathbaria upazila inside Barishal's Pirojpur district can be a good example of how remittance can help an economy grow.

The 353 square kilometre upazila has always been depending on the production of rice. Mathbaria's aman acreage was 20,100 hectares this year, which is about one-third the paddy produced in the belt.

But it was tough to live life through farming in a natural disaster-prone zone like this. Local people were frantically looking for an alternative source of earnings and then remittance came to the rescue.

It all started with the journey of 10 people to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 45 years back. They were the first group of people to go abroad to earn their living under state-to-state arrangement.

The 10 worked in a drainage project in the Western Asian country and started living there permanently. Years later, they began taking their relatives to the kingdom as workers.

Now, local people believe about 50,000 inhabitants of the upazila of nearly 3 lakh people live in Saudi Arabia. However, any official data on it was not available.

In Pirojpur district, Mathbaria upazila receives the highest amount of remittance, said Mohammad Sanaullah, manager of Rupali Bank's Mathbaria branch.

Migrant workers remit Tk 225 crore to Mathbaria every year through 19 branches of different banks, he added.

Another Tk 100 crore also come to the upazila every year through the illegal channels, said another banker requesting anonymity.

For Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia is the highest remittance sending nation in the world.

Migrant workers living in the second largest country in the Arab world remitted \$3.1 billion in fiscal 2018-19 to Bangladesh, while the UAE came in second with \$2.5 billion and the US third with \$1.8 billion.

In January alone, \$321.24 million came from Saudi Arabia, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

"My brother was in the first lot of 10 people who went to Saudi Arabia

free of cost as a top officer in 1975. It opened a scope for me to go and get established there," said Harun Ur Rashid Howlader.

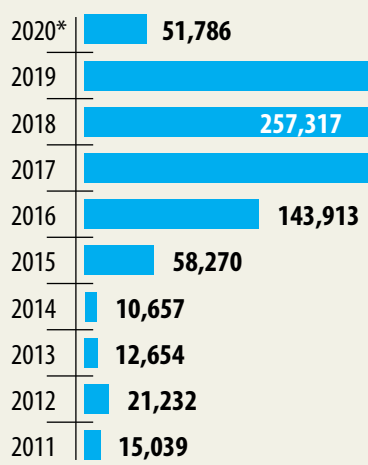
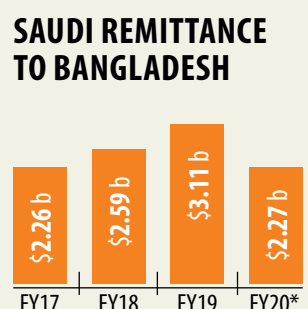
Howlader left his job in Bangladesh Rifles (now Border Guard Bangladesh) and also moved to Saudi Arabia in 1983.

"I helped a lot of people to migrate to Saudi Arabia from my upazila and other parts of the country. All of my relatives have at least once gone to the

house rent are also higher in the zone. The rent of a house for a small family may hit Tk 7,000 in Mathbaria, which is twice as much as in other upazilas.

The ever-increasing remittance sent by the migrant workers has been enabling the local people to live in an expensive place like Mathbaria.

Like Harun, many have seen a rise in their economic condition by going abroad.



kingdom."

Of the seven upazilas in Pirojpur, Mathbaria is the largest one that covers about one-fourth the total area.

The upazila with 66 per cent literacy rate is also the most expensive town to live in the district and one of the costliest ones in Bangladesh.

In a gap of 30 years, the price of land in Mathbaria increased more than 15 times. One decimal of land is now sold at Tk 40-50 lakh there, which is nearly four times that in any of the upazilas inside Pirojpur.

The prices of daily commodities and

At least one member of every family in the upazila now lives abroad, said Md Nuruzzaman Talukder from the upazila's Gulishakhali village.

"But the highest number of people live in Saudi Arabia," said Talukder, who lived in the kingdom nation from 1992 to 2008 and later started doing business in Mathbaria.

Remittance has helped Talukder make his fortune like many in the upazila. He now owns two houses in Dhaka's Kalyanpur and Mohammadpur and even a brickfield along with other businesses.

## Int'l call rate cut yet to benefit expatriate Bangladeshis

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Bangladeshis living abroad are still paying higher charges for international incoming voice calls although the government has cut the rate by 65.71 per cent to boost earnings from the sector.

The international gateway operators, known as IGWs, are charging \$0.017 a minute for the international calls although the government prescribed the rate should not exceed \$0.006.

However, the IGWs are sharing revenues at the government-set rate of \$0.006, pocketing the extra amount.

The telecom regulator fixed the floor price at \$0.006 a minute for international call termination on February 13, but it said nothing about the ceiling.

The latest decision also meant that IGWs will share revenue with the government based on the declared floor price regardless of how much they actually charge on calls.

The IGWs are taking benefit of these loopholes, according to industry insiders.

It is surprising to see the government is allowing a licensee to share revenue at the floor price and not the actual rates, said SM Farhad, secretary general of the Association of Mobile Telecom Operators of Bangladesh (AMTOB).

"What about other telecom licensees who have both upper and lower limits for their products or services?"

He also doubted whether the expatriates will at all be able to talk to their friends and families at the new tariff for international calls.

Bangladesh received about 888 million minutes of international calls on an average every month last year, according to data from the AMTOB.

The country's overall earnings were \$15.54 million in 2019 at the termination rate of \$0.017, the association said in a letter to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) on February 20.

The government will lose a few hundred crores of taka if the new rate is implemented, the association said.

If the call rate cut increases the

number of incoming calls by 10 per cent, the country will be deprived of \$9.68 million a year in lost earnings, the AMTOB estimated.

But if the number of calls increases by 20 per cent, Bangladesh is supposed to lose \$9.15 million a year, it found.

The new regulation on the incoming call termination rate will

BTRC.

"We have studied the market and found that a significant portion of international calls are now made through internet-based communication platforms, which cost nothing other than the price of data. That is why the BTRC had to revise the rate."

The mobile operators are protesting

IMPACT ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL CALL TERMINATION RATE CUT

- Average monthly incoming call min 88.8cr in Jan-Dec'19
- When termination rate \$0.017/min, the country earns \$15.54m
- When termination rate cut to \$0.006/min
  - ➔ If calls increase 10%, earnings will be \$5.86m
  - ➔ If calls increase 20% earnings will be \$6.39m
- In both cases, govt will lose more than Tk 300cr
- Mobile operators will lose more than Tk 200cr

leave a huge negative impact on the revenue stream of the government, said Farhad.

The revenue for other players, including interconnection exchanges and mobile network operators, will also decline drastically, he added.

The rate was cut following requests from the IGWs to help them cope with the growing threat of internet-based communication services, said Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the

the new incoming call rate as they run promotional campaigns on the internet-based communication applications, he added.

In fiscal 2014-15, the government's earnings from international calls stood at Tk 2,075.62 crore. It declined to Tk 1,387.37 crore, Tk 967.63 crore, Tk 900.35 crore and just a few hundred crores in the successive years, according to BTRC officials.

Currently, Bangladesh has 24 IGWs.

