

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
Week-on-week		As of Friday		Friday Closings				As on Thursday			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▲ 1.93%	▲ 2.39%	\$1,934.30	\$44.35	▲ 0.56%	▲ 0.17%	▲ 0.02%	▲ 0.50%	BUY TK 83.95	98.42	109.10	11.92
4,794.07	8,265.90	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	38,434.72	22,920.30	2,528.54	3,380.68	SELL TK 84.95	102.22	112.90	12.53

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Private sector players promising shuttered BJMC mills a new lease on life

SOHEL PARVEZ

The government is considering giving priority to leasing out state-owned jute mills to the private sector so that production could resume within a short time, according to officials of the textiles and jute ministry and industry stakeholders.

The development comes after the ministry found a greater response from private millers in taking on the 25 mills shuttered last month instead of the other options it had floated, including public-private partnerships (PPP).

Some millers said the PPP process was time-consuming and complex and they lacked the knowledge and experience to operate under the system.

The views came in the first two meetings of the 13-member committee headed by Textiles and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi held on 23 July and 5 August.

Some participants suggested declaring the machinery to be scrap while some recommended dividing the mills into three categories to be leased out, modernised and brought under the PPP.

Proposals were also placed for handing over some mills to the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, according to minutes of the meetings.

The government formed the panel on 16 July to recommend measures to modernise the production system of jute goods in light of the present and future market prospects



Platinum Jute Mills in Khulna, one of the plants run by state-run BJMC, lies empty. The photo was taken recently.

and to restart the plants under the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC). The panel comprises the executive chairman of BIDA; secretaries to finance, commerce, industries and textiles ministries; a director-general at the Prime Minister's Office; and presidents of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Association (BJMA) and the Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association.

The government closed down all 25 jute mills that employed 24,886 permanent workers and a large number of casual workers from 1 July to bring an end to continuing losses resulting from the use of decades-old machinery, corruption,

mismanagement and operational costs higher than those in the private sector.

Since the closure, the government has been maintaining that it would give the factories, which were nationalised in 1972, a new lease on life either under the PPP, government-to-government initiatives, joint venture or on lease.

Initially, the committee decided not to sell the lands of the closed jute mills for any other purpose, according to minutes of the first meeting.

In its second meeting, the committee decided to "consider leasing out mills as an effective and useful method to restart mills within a short time" by keeping the government's ownership on land and other properties.

It also decided to consider other options based on circumstances.

As per the decision, BJMC also offered scope for interested investors to visit the

shuttered plants such that they could see the condition of the factories and other properties.

Some 24 interested investors visited the mills located in Chattogram, Khulna and Dhaka divisions. The deadline for visiting the mills ended on 20 July.

BJMC Chairman Md Abdur Rouf, however, said interested investors would be able to visit factories if they want. On the method of the handover, he declined to comment.

Mohammad Abul Kalam, member secretary of the committee, said leasing those out was an option.

"All the options are on the table. We have not decided on anything yet," he added.

The investors would not be interested in taking rent of the mills for short periods, said Mohammed Mahubur Rahman Patwari, chairman of BJMA.

As the government says it will not sell the land, no other option will be feasible other than a long-term lease, he said, adding that the government understands that the lease format would be easier to jumpstart production at the mills at the earliest.

He favoured giving out leases for 99 to 100 years as banks will not provide finance to those not on a long-term lease.

As the mills had been established a long time ago, many pieces of machinery had become old and their capacities had eroded, said Patwari, who has visited some of the mills adjacent to Dhaka.

"As the machinery is old, new owners will have to start anew,"

The panel also decided to determine the recovery value of the machinery and divide mills into three categories depending on the condition of the machinery, said Patwari, also a member of the committee.

Aameer Alihussain, managing director of steelmaker BSRM, said they wanted to explore the potential for investment in the state jute mills.

"We are interested subject to due diligence," he said, while urging the authorities for making all the information available, give time and ensure clarity.

Rupali's secondary offering plan back on track

REJIAUL KARIM BYRON and AHSAN HABIB

The plan to offload an additional 15.2 per cent shares of state-run Rupali Bank has been revived after a delay caused by the coronavirus pandemic and the lender's preoccupation in disbursing stimulus packages.

Last month, Md Obayed Ullah Al Masud, managing director of the state lender, requested the Financial Institutions Division of the finance ministry to take the necessary steps for the secondary offering.

A secondary offering is the sale of new or closely held shares by a company that has already made an initial public offering (IPO).



RUPALI BANK'S STOCK MARKET JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

- » Listed on DSE in 1986
- » Paid-up capital: Tk 414cr
- » Shares already offloaded: 9.8%
- » Institutional investors hold 4.8%,
- » Individual investors 5%
- » Shares to be offloaded: 15.2%
- » Net profit ≈ Tk 57cr in 2019, Tk 40.9cr in 2018
- » Stock dividend: 5% in 2019, 10% in 2018
- » Last trading price: Tk 30.6
- » ICB & Rupali Bank Securities to offload the shares
- » BDBL to offload 25%; Janata and Agrani to offload 10% to 25% shares

SOURCE: RUPALI BANK, ICB, DSE

Rupali was listed with the stock exchanges in 1986, with 9.8 per cent of its shares now up for trade.

The decision to offload another 15.2 per cent shares of the bank came at a meeting on 9 February, where it was decided to list five state-run lenders in the stock market by September as part of the government move to prop up the ailing bourse.

As per plans, a quarter of the shares of Sonali, Agrani, Janata, Rupali and Bangladesh Development Bank (BDBL) would be offloaded.

BDBL is supposed to offload 25 per cent share, Janata and Agrani to offload 10 per cent to a maximum 25 per cent shares.

As Sonali acts as a treasury bank for the government, a decision on the country's largest bank would be taken later.

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Brokers can soon buy more stocks without keeping security

AHSAN HABIB

The Dhaka Stock Exchange is coming to the rescue of stockbrokers as the premier bourse is set to increase their share buying capacity without the need to keep security deposits.

The move comes following demand from brokers who can now buy stocks of Tk 10 crore a day without keeping security deposits or providing bank guarantees.

"As the turnover of the market has gone up, we need to have some advantages such as the capacity to buy more shares without security deposits," said a top official of a stockbroker asking not to be named.

Turnover, an important indicator of the market, was Tk 1,155 crore a day on an average in the last two weeks, according to

data from DSE.

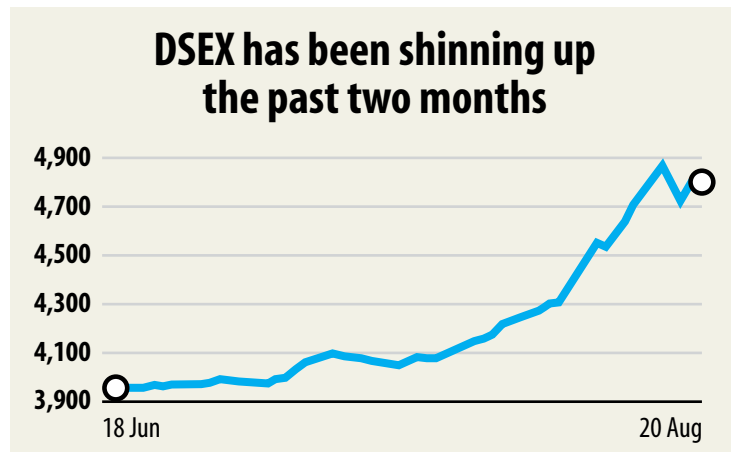
"The turnover of the market will go up further once the bond market becomes vibrant. So, such a measure from DSE was necessary," the official added.

The premier bourse has already sought approval from the stock market regulator to raise the limit based on the performance and net assets of the stockbrokers.

The limit would be two times the daily average turnover or 50 per cent of the TREC-holder (trading right entitlement certificate-holder) company's net worth, whichever is lower, according to DSE's proposal.

The bourse proposed to divide the brokers into five categories from A to E based on their performance.

The A category brokerage houses with an average daily



turnover of more than Tk 10 crore might be allowed to buy shares worth Tk 30 crore without any security deposits, according to the proposal.

The limit could be Tk 20 crore

for the second category brokerage houses whose average daily turnover is Tk 5 crore to Tk 10 crore.

DSE suggested the C category brokerage houses whose average

daily turnover is Tk 2 crore to Tk 5 crore should be allowed to buy shares of Tk 15 crore.

The D category brokerage houses with Tk 1-2 crore average daily turnover would get the Tk 5 crore-limit and the E category brokerage houses with less than Tk 1 crore average daily turnover might be allowed to buy shares of Tk 1 crore.

As the stock market has been bearish for long, stockbrokers are struggling to run their business, said another stockbroker and a leader of DSE Brokers' Association.

So, it is very difficult to set aside a higher amount of security deposits.

If the rules are relaxed, the costs will come down, which may ultimately benefit the market, he added.

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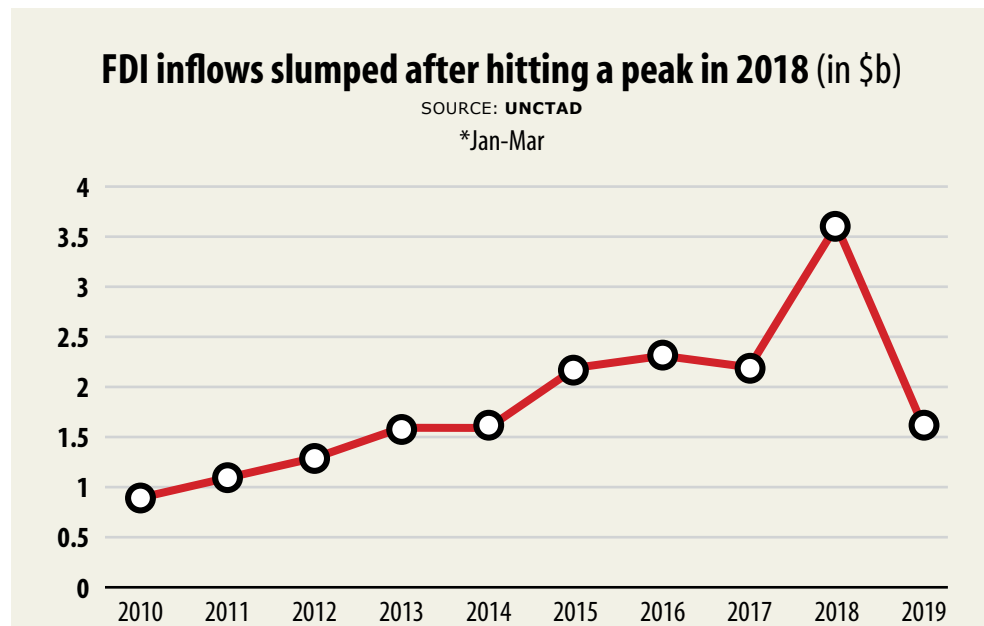
Japanese companies very keen on Bangladesh: envoy



STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh government needs to take good care of Japanese companies operating here to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) from the island country as many business entities are waiting to bring in investment, said Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh ITO Naoki yesterday.

Currently, 310 Japanese companies are operating in different sectors in Bangladesh. Very often they complain about not getting the



same facilities provided to local companies by the government.

For instance, when the government disburses any loan facility or cash incentives

on export, foreign companies do not enjoy the same benefits enjoyed by the local companies.

"We have a long list of Japanese companies that have already invested in Bangladesh and

many are waiting to invest here," Naoki said.

He was addressing a virtual meeting on "Implications of COVID-19 on FDI inflow to Bangladesh: Challenges and Way

Forward" organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI).

"The level of interests by Japanese companies to invest in Bangladesh has not been changed. They are ready to come to Bangladesh for investment."

The ambassador also said some 55 per cent of Japanese FDI was received by 10 members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) while the total FDI, Bangladesh received only 0.09 per cent last year.

Easing the business terms and conditions for Japanese companies, bringing about regulatory reforms and taking good care of the existing Japanese companies are needed for attracting more Japanese investment here.

The Japanese envoy also said it is important to turn the special economic zone (SEZ) for Japanese investors in Araihaazar in Narayanganj into the number one zone in Asia and an important zone from among those in ASEAN countries.

Outward investment by Japanese investors declined 33 per cent year-on-year to \$113 billion between January and June this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, said Yuji Ando, country chief of Japan External Trade Organisation.

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UK economy recovering, for now, as public borrowing mounts

REUTERS, London

Britain's economic recovery from the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic has gathered pace, data showed on Friday, but government borrowing rose past the 2 trillion pound (\$2.64 trillion) mark and fears of future job losses are mounting.

Retail sales rose above pre-pandemic levels in July and August's Purchasing Managers' Index data showed the fastest growth in almost seven years, beating economists' expectations in both cases.

But Britain's economy still faces a long recovery after shrinking by a record 20 per cent in the second quarter, the largest decline of any big country, and businesses are shedding jobs, raising questions over how long consumers will continue their spending spree.

"This uptick in retail consumption may help ease concerns over the fragility of the UK economy -- but not for long," said Alistair McQueen, head of savings and retirement at insurance company Aviva.

Britain entered lockdown in late March and shops in England only fully reopened on June 15. Bars and restaurants followed suit on July 4.

Retail sales in July were 1.4 per cent above year-ago levels and 3.0 per cent above their level before the pandemic, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics.

August's preliminary composite PMI, which covers most of Britain's private sector other than retail, rose to its highest level since October 2013, after striking a record low in April.

But a growing proportion of employers said they planned to shed jobs and were making staff redundant rather than bringing them back from a government-subsidised furlough scheme that expires in October. "Scarring from the pandemic and lingering doubts about the sustainability of recovery resulted in a need to cut overheads," said Tim Moore, economics director at IHS Markit, which publishes the PMI data.

PMI surveys for the euro zone -- where countries exited lockdown earlier than Britain -- showed the recovery stuttering, suggesting



the impact of pent-up demand that drove an expansion in July is already fading.

Even within retail, different businesses have had contrasting fortunes.

Grocery sales are 3 per cent up on the year and online sales are 50 per cent higher than before the pandemic, while sales volumes at clothing and footwear stores are 25 per cent lower than last year.

Stores such as Marks & Spencer, Boots, John Lewis, Dixons Carphone and WH Smith have announced plans for thousands of job cuts.

The government has spent more than 35 billion pounds so far on its job support scheme, the largest single measure to tackle the economic impact of the pandemic, but has only offered relatively small incentives for businesses to bring staff back.

The Bank of England forecasts unemployment will reach 7.5 per cent by year-end, almost double its most recent reading.

Friday's data laid bare the impact of increased

public spending and a slide in tax revenues on the public finances.

Government borrowing so far this financial year is 150.5 billion pounds, almost seven times higher than in the same period in 2019 though below the 178.8 billion pounds which government budget forecasters predicted last month.

Over the course of this year, the Office for Budget Responsibility expects the budget deficit to reach 322 billion pounds or 16 per cent of GDP.

Public sector net debt exceeded 2 trillion pounds in July for the first time, and is its highest since 1961 as a share of gross domestic product.

Finance Minister Rishi Sunak has indicated that some taxes will need to rise over the medium term.

"Today's figures are a stark reminder that we must return our public finances to a sustainable footing over time, which will require taking difficult decisions," he said.

Dollar beats euro for first week since mid-June

REUTERS

The US dollar on Friday gained against the euro for the first week since mid-June after data showed a strong uptick in US, business activity, while the single currency was held down as an August batch of European business surveys pointed to a stuttering economic recovery.

US business activity snapped back to the highest since early 2019 this month as companies in both the manufacturing and services sectors saw a resurgence in new orders even as new COVID-19 cases remain stubbornly high across the country.

The Markit PMI flash readings show the US is outperforming Europe, said Edward Moya, senior market analyst at OANDA in New York. The data contrasted with weakness in the euro zone, as the pent-up demand unleashed last month by the easing of coronavirus lockdowns dwindled.

"Clearly the PMI numbers this morning suggest that Europe is losing a little momentum here and that we're seeing some turbulence in other areas of the global economy. So that is weighing on the

performance gap between the US and its major counterparts," said Karl Schamotta, chief market strategist at Cambridge Global Payments.

The euro dipped to a one-week low of \$1.175 against the greenback earlier, before rising back to \$1.179, down 0.61 per cent on the day. The greenback escaped a ninth consecutive weekly decline that would mark the longest losing streak since the summer of 2010 and a run that has only happened five times since 1990.

The recovery in the dollar began on Wednesday after the Federal Open Market Committee released minutes from its last meeting, the tone of which was more dovish than expected. The minutes prompted dollar bears to buy into the heavily shorted currency, fuelling its biggest one-day surge in more than two months.

Bears have reaped rich returns from shorting the greenback in recent weeks as the United States has struggled to tame the coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented policy stimulus unleashed by the Fed had darkened the outlook for the safe-haven dollar.

UK retail sales surge past pre-Covid peak in July

REUTERS, London

British retail sales surged past their pre-coronavirus level in July, the first full month that shops selling non-essential goods were open since the country went into lockdown in March.

Separate government borrowing data showed public debt rose above 2 trillion pounds (\$2.65 trillion) in July for the first time and reached 100.5 per cent of gross domestic product - its highest as a share of GDP since 1961.

The unexpectedly robust retail sales figures showed the strength of consumer demand even as other parts of the economy are struggling to recover from recent hefty losses.

Retail sales volumes rose by 3.6 per cent from June - above all forecasts in a Reuters poll of economists - and were 1.4 per cent higher than in July 2019, the Office for National Statistics said.

That represented a sharp recovery from double-digit falls in April and May.

Compared with February, before Britain was broadly affected by the pandemic, sales were 3.0 per cent higher.

"This uptick in retail consumption may help ease concerns over the fragility of the UK economy - but not for long," Alistair McQueen, head of savings and retirement at Aviva, said.

Britain's retail sector has enjoyed a much faster bounce back than almost all other parts of the economy hit by the coronavirus lockdown. But there have been contrasting experiences for different types of retailer.

Supermarkets and other food shops have benefited as British people eat at home. Online sales have boomed, and household goods stores have seen strong demand.

Other areas have suffered, with clothing and footwear sales still 25 per cent down on a year ago.

Companies such as Marks & Spencer, Boots, John Lewis, Dixons Carphone and WH Smith have announced plans for thousands of job cuts.



Eurozone business growth slows as virus rise crimps demand

AFP, Brussels

Eurozone economic activity slowed in August as a new rise in cases of the coronavirus in parts of Europe blunted a recovery, IHS Markit said Friday.

The firm's closely-watched PMI index fell to 51.6 points from 54.9 points in July but was still above the key 50 points level which indicates growth.

"The Eurozone's rebound lost momentum in August, highlighting the inherent demand weakness caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," said

Andrew Harker, economics director at IHS Markit.

"The recovery was undermined by signs of rising virus cases in various parts of the euro area, with renewed restrictions impacting the service sector in particular," he added.

The data provider said that Germany, the eurozone's biggest economy, was largely unaffected by the slowdown with business confidence its strongest in two years.

France, however, failed to replicate the strong rebound of the previous month with only a modest rise in new orders for companies.

The rest of the eurozone -- which includes Spain and Italy -- were marginally in contraction territory, IHS Markit said, noting that staff were being cut across the continent.

Harker said the eurozone was at a "crossroads". Growth will either "pick back up in coming months or continue to falter following the initial post-lockdown rebound."

"This would depend on how successfully a second wave of the virus can be suppressed and whether Europeans will have the confidence to recharge the economy, he said.

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"সেতুর ইজারা কোটেশন বিজ্ঞপ্তি"
(৪র্থ আহবান)

০১	ইজারা কোটেশন	: একমুদ্রিত-০২/২০২০-২০ (৪র্থ মাসের)
০২	ইজারার বিবরণ	: ২০২১-২২, ২০২২-২৩, ২০২৩-২৪ অর্ধবছরে ফরিদপুর সড়ক বিভাগের অধীন পৌরসভা-ফরিদপুর-মাদুরা-বিনাই-অখার-ফুন্দা-মংলা(বাগাচা) সড়কের ৬৬তম কি.মি. এ অবস্থিত "সেতুর" উপর দিয়ে পারাপারার্থে বিভিন্ন ধরনের যানবাহন হতে টোল আদায়ের নির্দিষ্ট ইজারা প্রদান (০২/০৭/২০২১ হতে ০৩/০২/২০২৪ পর্যন্ত)
০৩	ইজারা চুক্তির মেয়াদ	: ৩ (তিন) অর্ধবছর (০২/০৭/২০২১ হতে ০৩/০২/২০২৪ পর্যন্ত)
০৪	ইজারা কোটেশনসমূহ	: ০৩০০/-
০৫	বন্দর টাকার পরিমাণ	: উন্নত সুযোগে ১০% (পঞ্চদশ বণ্ড) ব্যাংক ড্রাকট পে-মেন্টের মাধ্যমে
০৬	ইজারা কোটেশন বিক্রয়ের শর্তাবলি	: ০২/০২/২০২০ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ বিকাল ৫:০০ পর্যন্ত
০৭	মুদ্রিত অবস্থায় ইজারা কোটেশন প্রদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	: ০৭/০২/২০২০ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ দুপুর ১২:৩০ পর্যন্ত
০৮	ইজারা চুক্তি বাস্তবায়নের শর্তাবলি	: মাট ও মালিকের সম্মতি প্রাপ্তি নগরিক, সরকারী, সেরকারী, খ্যাতনামিত সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকার
০৯	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন জয়ের জন্য পাঠানো হবে	: বিভাগীয় কর্মসূচী, ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা জেলা প্রশাসক, ফরিদপুর নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফরিদপুর মাদারীপুর পোশালাঞ্চ শ্রীয়াতশুয়া রাজবাড়ী/পুত্রাঙ্গোনি: বিভাগ-১, সড়ক চক্র, ডেপুটি, ঢাকা উপজেলা নির্বাহী কর্মসূচী, মুন্সারী, ফরিদপুর উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ-১, ১/১ ম সরকারখানা উপ-বিভাগ, ফরিদপুর
১০	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন মুদ্রিত অবস্থায় প্রদান করা হবে	: (ক) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফরিদপুর রাজবাড়ী (খ) অতিরিক্ত প্রধান প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক চক্র, পোশালাঞ্চ (গ) স্ত্রীয়াতশুয়া প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক সার্কেল, ফরিদপুর (ঘ) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ফরিদপুর
১১	ইজারা কোটেশন ঘোষণার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	: স্থান:নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফরিদপুর তারিখ: ০৭/০২/২০২০ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ সময়: বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকা
১২	ইজারা আহবানকারী যেকোন সময় যেকোন কোটেশন/সকল কোটেশন বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

Nagui
20.08.2020
(খ. ম. নকীকুল বারী)
পরিচিতি নং: ৬০২২২০
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (চরমাস), সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, ফরিদপুর।

GD-1311e

Airbnb bans parties at rental properties amid pandemic

AFP, New York

Citing public health concerns amid the coronavirus, home-sharing company Airbnb on Thursday imposed a worldwide party ban at its rental properties and capped occupancy at larger homes to 16.

The ban on parties and events will be "in effect indefinitely until further notice," the company said on its website, adding that guests "may be legally pursued by Airbnb if they violate our policy."

Airbnb began cracking down last year as party houses were causing problems with neighbors in some communities.

In November, the company banned "party houses" after a deadly shooting at a Halloween party with more than 100 guests at a California rental.

Airbnb said Thursday that 73 percent of its global listings already banned parties and unauthorized festivities were always prohibited.



The company has historically allowed hosts to permit guests to host smaller gatherings such as birthday parties.

After the coronavirus was declared a global pandemic, Airbnb removed "event-friendly" from its search and required users to adhere to local restrictions on gatherings in light of social distancing protocols.

But as local officials have cracked down on bars and social clubs, some activities have migrated to Airbnb homes, the platform said.

"We think such conduct is incredibly irresponsible -- we do not want that type of business and anyone engaged in or allowing that behavior does not belong on our platform," the company said.

Airbnb recently said it had seen bookings begin to "bounce back" and unveiled an initiative to promote short-range travel amid a broad slowdown in tourism.

Amid the signs of an uptick in demand, the company on Wednesday said it has confidentially filed with US regulators for an initial public stock offering.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
SIRAJGANGA.
ee_sir@eedmoe.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice: No: DEE/EE/Sir/2020-21/NF/Secondary = 17 Lots
Date: 23.08.2020

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of stated below:

Tender ID	Description of Work	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Fees for Tender Documents
484665	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Chawbari Dr. Salam Jahannara Degree College Kamarland Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.00	8.9.2020 10.30
484666	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Sholapara High School Tarash Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.30	8.9.2020 10.30
484667	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Gulra Bazar Di-Mukhi High School Tarash Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.30	8.9.2020 10.30
484668	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at E.D.N High School Raygonj Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.30	8.9.2020 11.00
484669	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Jatyo Tarun Sangha Bara Pangashi College Ullapara Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.40	8.9.2020 11.00
484670	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Bagmara B.S School & College Ullapara Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 11.50	8.9.2020 11.00
484671	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Protab Girls High School Ullapara Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.00	8.9.2020 11.30
484672	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Purnimagati High School Ullapara Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.10	8.9.2020 11.30
484673	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Pancharashi Union Ali Ahmed High School Ullapara Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.20	8.9.2020 11.30
484674	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Khamragram Degree College Chawbari Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.30	8.9.2020 12.00
484675	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Sen Vangabari High School Belkuchi Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.40	8.9.2020 12.00
484676	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Khas Satharia High School Shajadpur Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 12.50	8.9.2020 12.00
484677	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Nurun Nahar Samad Girls High School Shajadpur Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 13.00	8.9.2020 12.30
484678	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Mawana Saif Uddin Ehsa Degree College Shajadpur Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 13.10	8.9.2020 12.30
484679	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Dugli School & College Shajadpur Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 13.20	8.9.2020 12.30
484680	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Shohid Ahsan Habib High School Sadar Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 13.30	8.9.2020 13.00
484888	Manufacturing & Supplying New Furniture at Baghabari High School Shajadpur Sirajgonj.	7.9.2020 15.00	8.9.2020 13.40	8.9.2020 13.00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender shall be accepted in the National e-GP portal and as affidavit copies shall be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

8" X 3 Column
(Md. Altaf Hossain)
Executive Engineer
Ph: 0751-62165
e-mail: ee_sir@eedmoe.gov.bd

GD-1312



Quazi Ashiq Ur-Rahman, centre, CEO of Rancon Motor Bikes Ltd; Mohammad Shams Uddin, left, head of marketing, and AKM Tauhidur Rahman, right, head of sales, attend the digital launch of Bandit 150, latest motor bike of Suzuki, on Friday. The event was broadcasted live on the Facebook page of Suzuki Bangladesh.

EU, US announce surprise trade deal on lobsters

AFP, Brussels
US lobster exports will enter Europe tariff-free, as Washington and Brussels announced a limited trade deal on Friday that will be seen as a first result in efforts to de-escalate trade tensions. The joint announcement by US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and EU Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan came as surprise with a

number of trade feuds still brewing between both sides. "We intend for this package of tariff reductions to mark just the beginning of a process that will lead to additional agreements that create more free, fair, and reciprocal transatlantic trade," they said in a statement. Transatlantic trade tensions exploded in 2017 when President Donald Trump followed through on

his protectionist agenda, slapping tariffs on steel and aluminium exports from Europe and other partners.

Matters only grew worse from there, with a decades-long battle over subsidies for Airbus and Boeing also leading to tit-for-tat tariff exchanges.

A campaign by European nations to apply a digital tax on US tech giants has also drawn threats of duties on European exports including French wine.

But the biggest fear was that Trump would deliver on his threats to slap tariffs on European car exports, most notable from Germany, the EU's biggest economy.

"We see this as a first step in de-escalation of ongoing EU-US disagreements," said an EU source.

The deal announced on Friday is very limited in scope and would mainly apply to US lobster exports which would now land in European dinner plates with zero tariffs.

EU tariffs on US lobster had been eight percent, and exports to the EU were about \$111 million in 2017.



Japanese companies very keen on Bangladesh: envoy

FROM PAGE B1
That indicates that the companies are struggling to survive incurring losses in this situation, he said.

Japanese investors always complain about the tax and business environment issues in Bangladesh. Ando said motorcycle production is a very important sector for investment by Japanese investors in Bangladesh.

Currently, some 5,00,000 motorcycles are produced here in Bangladesh, he said, adding that the number could be increased a lot as the demand is there.

Almost all big US companies have their operations in Bangladesh and many more were interested to invest here, said JoAnne Wagner, deputy chief of mission of the US Embassy in Bangladesh.

Agricultural food processing industries are very interesting areas of investment in Bangladesh for American investors.

Labour rights improvement, safety and corruption are issues of concern for US investment in Bangladesh, she added.

Immediate reforms are needed in customs and transfer of profit by the foreign companies and curbing corruption for bringing more FDI, said Paban Chowdhury, executive chairman of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA).

Although China allowed duty-free access to 97 per cent of Bangladeshi goods, the value addition by Bangladesh needed to be 40 per cent.

"So it might not be very simple and easy to enjoy the full benefits from the Chinese duty exception offer."

The country also needs more seaports, Chowdhury said, while citing Vietnam's 44 seaports to further his point.

"We need a congenial business environment," said Syed Ershad Ahmed, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham).

Sometimes, the contradictory policies of industries and commerce ministries affect the business.

"Sometimes, we are harassed by the National Board of Revenue. Protection of intellectual property rights and port management are very important issues for Bangladesh now," Ahmed added.

Vietnam received the highest amount of FDI from Japan, said Abul Kasem Khan, chairman of the Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD).

"China's duty-free offer can be a

game-changer for Bangladesh in case of attracting FDI."

Fast-tracking of the special economic zones is needed and Bangladesh needs to invest \$300 billion for improving its infrastructure, he added.

While presenting a keynote paper, M Masrur Reaz, chairman of Policy Exchange, said the global FDI, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, would plunge 40 per cent in 2020 and by another 5 per cent to 10 per cent in 2021.

Global FDI will fall short of the \$1 trillion-mark for the first time since 2005. Moreover, developing countries of Asia may face lower investment flows of up to 45 per cent, he said.

Bangladesh needs to improve in a few areas for gaining competitiveness like innovation, infrastructure, market efficiency, technological readiness and business sophistication.

"We have a \$350 billion investment gap in infrastructure. Private investment to GDP ratio should be 26.6 per cent."

However, Bangladesh has been maintaining impressive economic performances and high potential to get better FDI inflow.

Bangladesh has many strengths for foreign investors to leverage like high growth rate, sound macro-economic management, demographic dividend, liberal policies, strategic geographic location, affordable and flexible labour market and preferential market access.

But to woo more FDI, some critical areas need focus such as compliance, skilled labour force, easy cross-border movement of goods and coherence between trade and investment policies.

To improve the investment climate, Reaz suggested policy actions and reforms like access to finance, regulatory reforms, a faster pace of mega infrastructure development, simplification of the tax regime, developing FDI policy and export diversification.

The FDI to GDP ratio in Bangladesh is 1.2 per cent, which is less than that of India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Cambodia, said DCCI President Shams Mahmud, while moderating the discussion.

Out of the total FDI stock, the country received the highest \$3.8 billion FDI in gas and petroleum sector where the US is the largest investor with \$3.6 billion, followed by

the UK, South Korea, the Netherlands, China and Japan.

Fast customs clearance facility is more important for investors, said Ruhul Alam Al Mahub, managing director of Samsung-Fair Distribution.

Infrastructure development, building confidence among local investors, policy consistency, removal of bureaucracy and political stability were key to attracting FDI, he added.

Land registration is an important issue that needs to be addressed, said ASM Mainuddin Monem, deputy managing director of Abdul Monem.

He emphasised on better coordination among the BIDA, BEZA and land ministry and called for a congenial policy regime that ensures a level playing field for private economic zone owners.

The pandemic would open up opportunities of foreign investment relocation, Monem added.

Investment needs to be encouraged in the energy and infrastructure sectors, said Asif Ibrahim, chairman of the Chittagong Stock Exchange and a former DCCI president.

The government's plan of establishing 100 SEZs will boost FDI. Public-private partnerships and resolving the policy constraints will lead to a newer height.

The recent move by the government to allow non-resident Bangladeshis to invest in mutual funds is a step in the right direction.

Terming the Bangla Bond a great initiative, he said such innovative ideas would help entrepreneurs raise funds.

A reduction of tax for investors would ease their arrival, but on the other hand, Bangladesh's tax to GDP ratio is the lowest in the region, said Salman Fazlur Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to the prime minister.

"We need to widen our tax net to ease the burden on the existing taxpayers. We will reform the bankruptcy law and companies act soon," he said.

The adviser said Japan has offered to modernise the Kamalapur Railway station to bring about a multimodal transportation system.

Rahman admitted petty corruption in government mechanisms and corruption in the political parties at the mid-level.

For instance, corruption has been taking place in land registration and while getting licences from different government offices, he said.

Textile Today to launch antiviral masks developed using Swiss technology

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bangladesh Textile Today, a Bangladesh-based global textile media and knowledge network, and APS Group have jointly developed functional masks using HeiQ Viroblock, a Swiss technology capable of deactivating viruses by up to 99.99 per cent.

After testing the effectivity of the mask in an internationally recognised laboratory, it was found that the fabric of the mask is 99.78 per cent effective in deactivating microbes even after 20 wash at 30 degree Celsius.

The mask is produced in Bangladesh based innovation driven company APS Group under the collaboration of Textile Today Innovation Hub.

As the masks are made of knitted structures, these are comfortable, reusable and mostly biodegradable, according to the statement.

The masks are cost effective, a calculation showed that daily cost of using the mask is only about Tk 2.67. Textile Today has signed an agreement with APS Group for branding, promotion, sales and distribution of the above mentioned ranges in Bangladesh market.

The manufacturing facility is FDA and CE certified and has been producing and exporting high quality garments to top global brands.

The technology belongs to Swiss innovator HeiQ, which is a leader in textile innovation, Bangladesh Textile Today said in a statement.

The HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 is a formulation that contains a minute amount of recycled silver active ingredient and fatty liposome vesicle components.

The technology has been proven to be cosmetic grade and suitable for application close to face contacts.

The masks are also has been tested in Bangladesh government approved laboratory and proved to block Bacteria close to 98 per cent, which reaches the mask equivalent to Type II and Type IIR grade medical or surgical mask.

The report also showed that the mask's virus filtration capacity is about 86 per cent or more taking the mask equivalent to FFP 2 grade respiratory mask.



Tareq Amin, founder and CEO and Bangladesh Textile Today, and Md Hasib Uddin, chairman of APS Group, exchange the signed documents of a deal to launch antiviral masks developed using HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 technology by the Swiss innovator HeiQ.

Rupali's secondary offering plan back on track

FROM PAGE B1

Rupali was supposed to offload the shares by May. But the issue got stuck because of the pandemic, which brought the economy to a standstill and forced the government to keep the country under a strict lockdown at least from 26 March to 30 May before easing resections from June.

Now that economic activities are returning to a version of normalcy, the issue has been hauled up again. And on 13 July, the board of Rupali gave its approval to offload more than 6.3 crore new shares in phases, depending on the situation in the market and share prices.

It was also decided that the shares would be offloaded through the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) and Rupali Bank Securities, a subsidiary of the bank.

A committee has already been formed to work on the listing of the banks, which will be coordinated by the state-owned merchant bank ICB. Its subsidiary ICB Capital Management and respective banks' subsidiary merchant banks would jointly act as issue managers.

As Rupali has capital shortfall as per Basel-III guidelines, the proceedings from the share sale would be injected into the bank.

On Thursday, Rupali's share traded at Tk 30.6 on the Dhaka Stock Exchange. But the letter said the net asset value of the share is Tk 41.1, according to the bank's 2019 financial report.

The company issued 5 per cent stock dividend in 2019, 10 per cent in 2018, 24 per cent in 2017, 10 per cent in 2016, 15 per cent in 2015, 15 per cent in 2014, 15 per cent in 2013, 10 per cent in 2012, 20 per cent in 2011, and 10 per cent in 2010, data from DSE and Rupali Bank showed.

The government has formed a committee led by Abdullah Harun Pasha, additional secretary of the Financial Institutions Division, to oversee the process of listing the state-run lenders.

Banks have formed committees to take the IPO process forward.

A senior official of Agrani Bank said it had already formed a committee and the issue would be fast-tracked.

"We were busy with disbursing the funds under the stimulus packages," he added.

Shibli Rubayat Ul Islam, chairman of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, welcomed the move.

"It is good news for the stock market. We want to approve the

fund-raising at several stages so that Rupali's fundraising doesn't impact the turnover of the secondary market," Islam added.

Offloading shares of government-owned companies will be a blessing for the stock market because investors would be allowed to invest in profitable companies, said a top official of a merchant banker.

Besides, the bourse has not seen the floatation of many good stocks in recent times.

If the government lists low-performing companies or the ones that are suffering from losses such as Sonali, then the market will be impacted, the merchant banker added.

Some of the listed government companies are Atlas Bangladesh, Bangladesh Services, Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, Dhaka Electric Supply Company, Eastern Cables, Eastern Lubricants, ICB, Jamuna Oil, Meghna Petroleum, National Tubes and Padma Oil.

Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, Shyampur Sugar Mills, Titas Gas, Usmania Glass Sheet Factory, Zeal Bangla Sugar Mills and Renwick Jaineswar and Co are also listed.

Current digital divide far too great to achieve Vision 2021

FROM PAGE B4

If the current crisis persists, as many as 5.5 million traditional jobs could be lost within the next 20 years.

However, this could be balanced out by increased employment opportunities in the ICT and the other related sectors, he said.

Just 12 years ago, there was a total of only 10 female entrepreneurs in all of Bangladesh, said Farhana Rahman, vice-president of the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services.

Now though, the number of businesswomen in the country is increasing almost daily.

"This is a result of the Digital Bangladesh initiative," he said, adding that despite all the advancements, it is still difficult for women to secure bank loans for their businesses.

Students from poor households lack access to affordable online learning, said Selim Raihan, executive director of Sanem.

Amid the coronavirus outbreak, students have been forced to continue

their lessons from home but the challenges faced in the process are varied among the economic classes.

Raihan also said that the government needs to step up its measures to ensure quality access to modern technology for a vast majority of the population.

Sayema Haque Bidisha, professor of economics at the University of Dhaka and research director of Sanem, moderated the webinar, where Sayed Ali, deputy secretary of the youth and sports ministry also spoke, among others.

Brokers can soon buy more stocks without keeping security

FROM PAGE B1

"We want to ease the difficulties the stockbrokers face, but at the same time, we have to keep in mind the investors' interests," said a senior official of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission.

A decision will be made on the proposals of DSE very soon, he added. DSEX, the benchmark index of

DSE, rose 90.8 points or 1.9 per cent week-on-week to stand at 4,794.1.

Among the large-cap sectors, non-bank financial institutions posted the highest positive change with 8.19 per cent gain in the week.

The daily average turnover increased 8.54 per cent to reach Tk 1,179 crore.

Beximco Pharmaceuticals topped

the turnover chart with Tk 68 crore a day on average followed by Beximco, Orion Pharmaceuticals, IFIC Bank and Brac Bank.

Savar Refractories was on the top of the gainers' list, rising 54 per cent during the week, followed by Zeal Bangla, BIFC, Orion Pharmaceuticals and Exim Bank First Mutual Fund.

Current digital divide far too great to achieve Vision 2021

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government's plans for a 'Digital Bangladesh' by 2021 still seems far from fruition due to the disparity in access to information and communication technology (ICT) between low and high-income households, according to a study by the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (Sanem).

Besides, there is also a significant digital divide between genders in the country, the organisation said in a statement.

The study styled, 'Dynamics of gender and youth inclusiveness in technology in Bangladesh', was released yesterday at a webinar jointly organised by Sanem and ActionAid Bangladesh.

Mahtab Uddin, a research fellow at Sanem and economics lecturer at the University of Dhaka, disclosed the findings of the study.

cent of the young men in households belonging to the poorest income bracket own a smartphone compared with 92 per cent in the top income bracket.

Meanwhile, 24 per cent of the women in the lowest income bracket own the communication device as opposed to 73 per cent in the high-income bracket.

Therefore, it is evident that the disparity in access to ICT services among males and females in Bangladesh is 44 per cent in the poorest income decile and 19 per cent in the richest income decile.

The study pointed out three major aspects. First, the percentage of men that own smartphones is relatively the same across all wage categories.

Second, the number of young females from poor households that own a smartphone has remained the same at about 34 to 37 per cent

The prevailing bias against women is an obstacle for the mass adaptation of modern technology among young women, said Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, the deputy minister for education.

"If we do not develop our social values, the use of technology among females will not increase."

Thousands of general graduates from public universities are added to the labour market each year but it is not possible to find employment for each and every one of them.

Therefore, these graduated should undertake technical education to diversify their skills and find a place in the job market.

Chowdhury also said that most politicians have no clue when it comes to automation and modern technology.

This, in turn, acts as a barrier for the youth to adopting these technologies, as was the case between 2001 and 2006. But over the last decade or so, the use of ICT tools has grown exponentially, he added.

Vision 2041, which is a continuation of Vision 2021, cannot be attained without full utilisation of the country's demographic dividend, said Md. Ayatul Islam, joint secretary of the education ministry.

Enrolment in technical education has reached 18 per cent but the government has targeted to achieve 30 per cent penetration by 2030, he said.

The government has reserved 35 per cent of the allotted seats at public institutions for female students while stipends will be given to encourage their participation, he added.

Bangladesh will have the next 15 years to make the most out of its demographic dividend and so, the government must support young entrepreneurs, said Anir Chowdhury, policy adviser to the Prime Minister's Office's Access to Information programme. Female participation is also crucial for developing innovative research processes, he added.

While referencing the study, Chowdhury said the national unemployment rate is 4 per cent due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the graduate unemployment rate is about 39 per cent.

READ MORE ON B3

Traders stopped import-export business protesting double parking charges in Burimari land port

S DILIP ROY, from Lalmonirhat

Trade through the Burimari land port in Lalmonirhat has remained suspended since yesterday centring protests over a sudden doubling of parking fees, which the port officials denied bringing about.

Revenue generation at the port before the pandemic averaged at Tk 7 crore a month whereas afterwards, it has dropped to Tk 2 crore.

Vehicles entering the port for loading or offloading goods pay Tk 300 for a 24-hour stay.

But traders, truck drivers and workers there alleged that the port authorities started collecting the parking charge at a rate of Tk 600 per vehicle since yesterday without making any prior

announcement.

This led them to halt the import-export activities, they told The Daily Star.

"We are outraged that the port authorities have taken such a step. We are not interested in complying with an increase in charges without prior discussions," said Shamim Ahmed, a trader.

The parking rate has not been increased; rather, confusion has been created centring payment of extended stays, said Shaheen Alam, traffic inspector at the port.

If the charge is increased at the customs yard, traders and stakeholders will be informed in advance, he said.

The matter is being discussed with the port authorities, said Ruhul Amin Babul, convener of the Burimari Land Port Clearing and Forwarding Agents Association.



S DILIP ROY

Trucks stay parked outside the Burimari land port in Lalmonirhat yesterday following suspension of trade protesting an alleged doubling of parking fees since noon.



Only 50 per cent of urban households have access to the internet while the statistic is less than 30 per cent for homes in rural areas. However, just 10 per cent of the country's total female population have ever even used ICT services.

Moreover, in regards to internet speed, Bangladesh ranks 134th among 143 countries.

In his presentation, Uddin said that the government rightly adopted the Digital Bangladesh agenda in 2009. However, the fact that ICT tools have not become widely available across gender, age, region or income groups is a matter of concern.

A combined total of about 80 per cent of the male youth in rural and urban areas own smartphones while only 40 per cent of the country's females are afforded the same facility.

The study went on to detail that about 72 per

cent of young women that own smartphones is significantly low compared with their male counterparts.

And third, irrespective of their average income, the number of young women that own smartphones is significantly low compared with their male counterparts.

These issues could be mitigated if there were a substantial supply of ICT-related education and training. However, it was observed that participation rates in training are extremely low.

Also, a clear gender difference in participation is noteworthy as only 3 per cent of the female respondents to the survey said that they had engaged in ICT training compared with 5 per cent of males.

Bangladesh has about 71 technical training centres, 49 state-owned polytechnic institutes, 64 technical schools and colleges and 511 private polytechnic institutes that provide certified diploma courses on various trades.

Rawhide trade in Barishal only fetched losses this Eid

SUSANTA GHOSH, from Barishal

Rawhide collection saw a 30 per cent year-on-year drop this year in Barishal thanks to a drastic fall in the number of animals sacrificed during Eid-ul-Azha because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"Last year, we collected 65,000 pieces of cow skins during the Eid, which came down to 40,000 pieces this year," said Shahidur Rahman Shahin, secretary of the Barishal Hide and Skin Merchants Association.

Only 4,300 cows were sacrificed in the city this year, in contrast to 7,200 last year, said Rabiul Islam, conservancy officer of Barishal City Corporation.



The numbers of buyers and sellers were very thin this year in Chamarpaty and Padmabaty areas, a centre famous for rawhide trade in Barishal.

The animal skins were sold as per piece and not according to their sizes in square metres, according to Shahin.

A small cow's skin sold for Tk 200-250, the medium-sized ones at Tk 300-400 and the bigger ones at Tk 400 to 500, said Yusuf Ali, a regular rawhide trader of the market.

However, goat hide was sold at Tk 10 a piece and was even given away with the purchase of cowhide.

"My transportation cost is even higher than the price of the five goat hides I brought to sell," said Md Shahim, who came from Palashpur to

the market.

He blamed the fall in rawhide numbers and sales on the outbreak of coronavirus, which hit hard the financial health of the general mass.

Capital crisis, a lack of incentives given by the financial institutions and the arrears that are yet to be paid by the syndicated tannery owners of Dhaka are also to blame, Shahim said.

Muslims mostly donate the rawhides of their sacrificed animals to the mosques and madrasas, which are later sold in the market and the money is used in the religious places.

But this year, the mosques and madrasas have failed to even recoup

the labour and transportation costs they spent to collect the rawhides.

The buyers are offering prices as low as Tk 300 a piece, said Anwar Hossain, a teacher of a madrasa at Nabagram in Barishal Sadar, who came to the market with 250 skins of cows.

Abdur Razzak, another madrasa teacher of Natun Bazaar area of the city, said he had to sell the rawhides of 20 cows at prices hovering between Tk 200 to Tk 350.

"I have spent more on labour and transportation of the skins."

In 2014, each rawhide was sold at Tk 2,800 on an average.

This year, 13 people worked all day to collect 20 skins, from which Razzak fetched only Tk 7,000.

Flood destroys Tk 141cr worth of crops in Tangail

MIRZA SHAKIL, from Tangail

More than 1 lakh farmers of crops and vegetables in Tangail incurred a loss of Tk 141 crore due to the prolonged and devastating flood this year.

As many as 11 out of the 12 upazilas in the district were affected by the flood due to onrush water from the upstream and heavy rains.

The areas beside the Jamuna, Dhalleswari, Louhajang, Jhinai and Banshi rivers were the worst hit, and the scale of devastation is becoming clearer with the receding floodwater.

Fields of different crops of 18,126 hectares of land were inundated in the flood, of which crops of 13,292 hectares were fully damaged, said Md Shariful Islam, a sub-assistant agriculture officer at the office of deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Tangail.

The damaged crops are: Bona (broadcast) Aman paddy of 10,588 hectares, seedbeds of Ropa (transplanted) Aman paddy of 1,359 hectares and Aus paddy of 1,808 hectares.

Different vegetables of 1,464 hectares were also damaged along with jute of 765 hectares, oilseeds of 1,652 hectares, sugarcane of 65 hectares, banana of 45 hectares and lemon of 380 hectares.

The DAE officials said different crops and vegetables of 5,928 hectares of land were inundated at six upazilas in the district by the first phase of the flood until 11 July.

Of these, crops and vegetables of 3,840 hectares of land were damaged fully. Some 27,233 farmers incurred a loss of Tk 41.55 crore in this spell.

On the other hand, crops and



A vegetable patch inundated by floodwaters in Bangra area of Tangail's Basail upazila. Vegetables on some 1,464 hectares of land in the district has been completely damaged by recent floods.

vegetables on 12,198 hectares of land were inundated in the second phase of the flood until 13 August.

Of these, crops and vegetables of 10,051 hectares were fully damaged, incurring a loss of Tk 99.70 crore for 80,158 farmers.

Both the coronavirus outbreak and the deadly flood hit the farmers hard.

Meantime, Agriculture Secretary Mohammad Nasiruzzaman visited

the flood-affected Nagarpur upazila in the district on 6 August.

"Many farmers have been affected by the floods this time. Many of them were unable to harvest their crops properly," he said after having chats with the locals.

The government has decided to distribute seeds and saplings for free among the affected farmers, he said.

"We will try to compensate by

listing the affected farmers in the aftermath of the floods, providing them with seeds and saplings so that they can grow crops again."

However, several farmers in the district said giving seeds and saplings at free of cost will not be enough for them to recover the losses.

They stressed the need for distribution of cash incentives as soon as possible.



AMRAN HOSSAIN

Meanwhile, in Hemayetpur of Manikganj's Singair, a woman collects what is left of a papaya plantation on four bighas of land. The farmer spent Tk 4 lakh in setting up the plantation last year and was hoping to make Tk 20 to Tk 30 lakh from sales this year. He shows what is left of his dreams, all the while trying to come to terms with reality. The photos were taken recently.