



Planning Minister MA Mannan speaks at a web conference on "Banking support and global connections for SME's" on August 30. SM Zillur Rahman, vice president and head in Bangladesh of World Association for SME's, Bangladesh, organised the event.



Pawat Palasarn, mechanical and plant manager of ITD Bangladesh Company Ltd, receives the keys of six units of JAC (T6) from Jashim Uddin Sapon, general manager and head of operation of Motor Vehicle Division of Energypac; Abdullah Al Maruf, head of corporate sales, and Shamal Das, head of service, at a programme recently.

Elderly, disabled and widows to get safety net allowances through MFS

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"We think it is a very timely initiative from the government side. I believe that due to this initiative, the distribution of the social safety net allowances will be transparent. Besides, the beneficiaries will be able to get their allowances very easily and safely on time."
The step will accelerate the digitalisation of the Department of Social Services, Mishuk added.
There is no better way than MFS carriers to disburse social safety net funds among this group of people, said Shahadat Khan, chief executive officer of SureCash.
"If you digitalise this service, you will come to know the exact number of beneficiaries and whether the targeted beneficiaries are getting the support," he added.
The Department of Social Services disbursed Tk 2,640 crore among 44 lakh poor elderly in the last fiscal year with each receiving Tk 500 per month. It plans to disburse Tk 2,940 crore among 49 lakh elderly in the current fiscal year, according to its website.
The department disbursed Tk 1,020 crore among 17 lakh widows in the last fiscal year. This fiscal year, it has got a budget of Tk 1,230 crore to pay out among 20.5 lakh beneficiaries.
It released Tk 1,390 crore among 15.5 lakh people with disabilities in fiscal year 2019-20. The government has raised the budgetary allocation for the group to Tk 1,620 crore in the current fiscal year and the number of beneficiaries to 18 lakh.
Recently, the government has taken a move to disburse different government allowances through MFS operators to reduce the hassles faced by beneficiaries and ensure transparency.
In April, the government allocated Tk 1,250 crore for the 50 lakh poor families whose breadwinners were rendered unemployed because of the coronavirus

pandemic and most of them were disbursed through the four MFS carriers.
The government distributed cash support among 35 lakh beneficiaries rendered poor.
When the initiative was rolled out, Nagad, bKash, Rocket and SureCash were each given the responsibility to transfer the funds to 17 lakh, 15 lakh, 10 lakh and 8 lakh account holders.
Nagad distributed Tk 324.5 crore among 12.9 lakh beneficiaries, while bKash channelled about Tk 234 crore among 9.3 lakh beneficiaries. Rocket disbursed Tk 177.4 crore among 7.1 lakh recipients and SureCash Tk 120.8 crore among 4.8 lakh beneficiaries, according to a finance ministry report.
"The recent disbursement of the prime minister's special Covid-19 assistance fund through MFS operators has established it the most transparent way of disbursing the government social safety net allowances directly to the beneficiaries," said Shamsuddin Haider Dalim, head of corporate communications at bKash.
The national identification card-based verification has enabled the identification of the right beneficiary and ensured direct disbursement avoiding any middleman interference.
"We applaud this timely decision of the government. bKash has been giving utmost importance to this government initiative to help achieve the vision of Digital Bangladesh," Dalim added.
Currently, Bangladesh runs more than 150 social protection programmes under more than 20 ministries or divisions that create inefficiency and mistargeting, according to Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.
The government allocated Tk 95,574 crore in the social safety net programmes, which is 16.8 per cent of the entire budget and 3 per cent of the GDP. The allocation was Tk 81,865 crore in last year's revised budget.

Bangladesh praying for trade benefits post LDC graduation

FROM PAGE B1
It is important to ascertain how the loss of such treatment will impact graduating LDCs, said Roberto Azevedo, director-general of the WTO, recently in a report on the "trade impacts of LDC graduation".
The issue has assumed special significance with a quarter of the LDCs on the path to graduation and the associated loss of benefits tied to this status, he said.
The release of this report comes amid the COVID-19 health crisis, which is threatening the lives and livelihoods of people around the world, and having an enormous impact on economies large and small. In early April, WTO economists projected a steep fall in trade in 2020, with the main question being the sheer depth of the decline.
The economic dislocation threatens to reverse hard-won socioeconomic development gains in the LDCs and could potentially delay graduation for some countries.
"As we monitor the impact that COVID-19 is having on all members, it will be critical to keeping a close eye on the evolving situation in graduating LDCs," Azevedo said in the report.
It is worth noting that the analysis in this paper focused on how the graduation would affect LDCs' trade relations, whether that graduation happens as planned or at a later date.
One of the key findings of this study is that the graduating LDCs have diverse economic profiles, with marked differences in export structure, as well as in their utilisation of -- and reliance on -- preferential market access.
The study explores ways to address these challenges.
It is heartening to note that the cause of graduating LDCs has received due attention from the international community, and governments at the UN and in other fora are exploring measures to assist graduating LDCs to ensure smooth transitions.
The LDC Group in the WTO is pursuing proposals in relevant WTO bodies.
There are instruments and procedures available under WTO rules that offer graduating LDCs paths to engage with members and seek recourse should they face any difficulty in their participation in the WTO, the report also said.
Primarily, all the LDCs should demand deferment of the graduation by at least three years as the global economy is severely affected by the pandemic, said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow

at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.
If the deferment is possible, it will be better. If not, all the developing and developed countries, including those within the EU, should continue the same trade benefits at least for five years past the graduation, Rahman told The Daily Star over the phone.
For instance, the aid for trade under the WTO's Enhanced Integrated Framework and the Technology Bank support for the LDCs have been granted for five years following graduation.
So, those initiatives will definitely bring benefits for the LDCs that are going to graduate, he said.
Rahman also suggested the continuation of benefits provided to the LDCs by the WTO on pharmaceuticals up to 31 December 2032 so that Bangladesh's emerging pharmaceuticals industry can grow and expand.
"We want the developing and developed countries to continue providing zero-duty benefit," said Md Abdul Momen, a professor at the Institute of Business Administration of the University of Dhaka.
The pandemic has intensified the demand, said Momen, also a director of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, while representing the platform at a meeting on LDC graduation organised by the commerce ministry last month.
All the developed and developing countries should continue the zero-duty benefit for Bangladesh for at least 10 years so that the graduated countries could sustain their development.
For instance, only the EU will allow a three years' grace period to up to 2027. "We demand that all the countries extend it for 10 years beyond 2027."
This is because the EBA initiative introduced under the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) in 1968 helped Bangladesh in economic development, employment generation and women empowerment, Momen added.
Developing and developed countries except those under the EU usually do not provide a grace period, said MA Razaque, a research director at Policy Research Institute and a noted trade economist.
But this time it is different because of the pandemic's impact on the global economy. Bangladesh and other LDCs should raise their voices so that all the developing and developed countries extend the tenures of the preferential trade benefits considering the economic fallout from coronavirus, he added.

Turkey's economy shrinks nearly 10pc in Q2

REUTERS, Istanbul
Turkey's economy contracted by 9.9 per cent in the second quarter as a coronavirus lockdown brought activity to a near standstill, according to data on Monday that showed its worst year-over-year performance in a decade.
While less precipitous than expected, the drop in gross domestic product (GDP) was still historic compared to the first quarter at a seasonally and calendar-adjusted 11.0 per cent, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute.
Turkey's \$770 billion economy is used to more than 5 per cent growth driven by booming construction financed by cheap foreign credit. But a 2018 currency crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and new lira weakness has brought two sharp slumps in as many years.
Many larger economies, however, fared worse in the second quarter than Turkey and it also outpaced some peers including Mexico, whose economy shrank more than 17 per cent on a quarterly basis.
The data had little impact on the lira, which was slightly weaker at 7.3400 against the dollar.
In the first quarter, Turkey's economy grew by 4.4 per cent year-on-year, according to a slight revision from the initial figure. It was boosted by a lending spree just before the pandemic struck Turkey in March.
The financial sector stood out with 28 per cent growth in the second quarter, while the large industry and services sectors shrank 16 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Beginning in March, Ankara shut schools and some businesses including many factories, closed borders and adopted weekend stay-home orders. Much of the economy was reopened in June, though new virus cases have edged back up in recent weeks.
"The rest of the year will depend on the pandemic (and) especially the recovery of demand in private consumption," said Tera Yatirim economist Enver Erkan. "Positive growth this year looks difficult." In a Reuters poll of 14 economists, the median estimate was for a 11.8 per cent year-over-year contraction in GDP, with estimates ranging from declines of 7.1 per cent to 13.1 per cent.

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আউটসোর্সিং পদ্ধতিতে জনবল সরবরাহের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ীয় বাংলাদেশ নিরাপদ খাদ্য কর্তৃপক্ষ ড্রাইভার, অফিস সহায়ক, নিরাপত্তা প্রহরী ও পরিচ্ছন্নতা কর্মী পদে আউটসোর্সিং পদ্ধতির মাধ্যমে লোক নিয়োগ করা হবে। সে লক্ষ্যে অগ্রহী ও অভিজ্ঞ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। পত্রিকায় বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের দিন থেকে ২৮-০৯-২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নগদ ৫০০/- টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) মূল্যে বাংলাদেশ নিরাপদ খাদ্য কর্তৃপক্ষ (নিউ ইন্সটন, ৭১-৭২, প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ভবন) ১৩ তলায় অবস্থিত উপসচিব, বাংলাদেশ নিরাপদ খাদ্য কর্তৃপক্ষ এর দপ্তর থেকে দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে। আগামী ২৯-০৯-২০২০ তারিখ ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত বাংলাদেশ নিরাপদ খাদ্য কর্তৃপক্ষ ও খাদ্য ভবনে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তব দরপত্র জমা দেয়া যাবে। তাছাড়া এ দিনই বেলা ৩ ঘটিকায় দরপত্রদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) বাংলাদেশ নিরাপদ খাদ্য কর্তৃপক্ষের সম্মেলন কক্ষে (কক্ষ নং- ১৩২০) দরপত্র খোলা হবে। বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ রয়েছে।

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জিডি-১৩৬০

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Agricultural Extension
Office of the Project Director
Safe Crop Production through Eco-Friendly Approach
Khamarbari, Dhaka-1215
www.dae.gov.bd

Memo No. 12.01.0000.040.07.004.2020/211 & 212 Date: 24/08/2020

Tender Notice No. 04/2020-21
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

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

e-Tender ID	Description of goods	Tender last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time	Tender opening date & time
487142	Farmers Field School Materials as per price and delivery schedule for Goods (Form e-PG3-3A)	20-Sep-2020, 17:00	21-Sep-2020, 14:00	21-Sep-2020, 14:00
487147	IPM Club Support Materials as per price and delivery schedule for Goods (Form e-PG3-3A)	23-Sep-2020, 17:00	27-Sep-2020, 14:00	27-Sep-2020, 14:00

- This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- To submit e-Tender registration in National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocurement.gov.bd>).
- The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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GD-1359

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GD-1356