

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▼ 1.00%	▼ 1.93%	\$1,923.01	\$42.30	▲ 0.21%	▼ 0.26%	▲ 0.77%	▲ 2.64%	BUY TK 83.95	98.17	108.50	12.27
4,809.70	8,259.40	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	40,593.80	23,558.69	2,552.42	3,358.47	SELL TK 84.95	101.97	112.30	12.90

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Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 13, 2020, ASHWIN 28, 1427 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Job recovery gains momentum

BBS survey finds; experts warn against complacency

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and
MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

People are increasingly returning to jobs they had lost to the coronavirus pandemic despite the persisting health risks and the wage growth failing to keep pace with the rebounding economy.

The number of unemployed people had risen by 10 times to 22.23 per cent in July as the impacts of the crisis battered the economy, from 2.3 per cent in March.

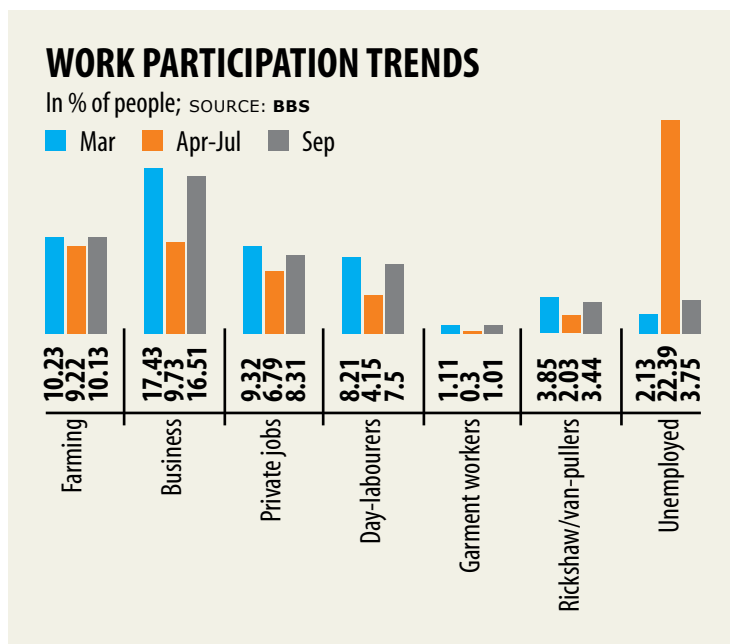
It came down to 4 per cent in September as people have started to take part in economic activities, according to a survey of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) on the impacts of the pandemic on livelihood.

"The survey has proven that there is a dynamic labour market in Bangladesh, which is a positive sign. We are gradually recovering from the impacts of the Covid-19," the statistical agency said in a report.

The gain in the job sector came after the government eased restrictions from June, ending the two-month-long nationwide lockdown although the deadly virus has not come under control yet.

The number of businesses returned to the pre-pandemic level of 17 per cent last month, recovering from July's 10 per cent.

Similarly, 8 per cent of the workforce was engaged as day-



labourers before the health crisis hit the country on March 8. It halved in July only to improve to 7.5 per cent in September.

Styled the Perception Survey on the Impacts of Livelihood, the BBS chose on a random basis 2,040 mobile phone numbers for the study. Of them, 989 or 48.48 per cent took part in the survey, which ran from September 13 through September 19.

The conversation with the participants lasted 8.31 minutes on an average. This was the first telephone interview-based survey in the history of the state-run

statistical agency.

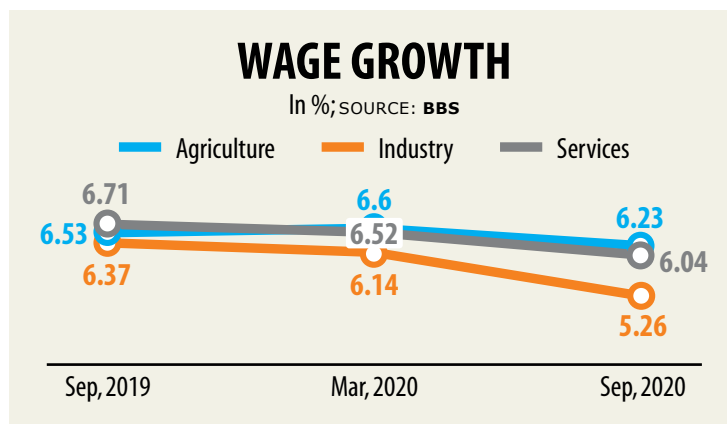
Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, said year-on-year wage growth in production and services exceeded the headline inflation rate in September.

In production, it even exceeded the food inflation. Nominal wage growth in construction fell short of both food and non-food inflations.

BBS data showed that incomes of more than 84 per cent of day labourers were adversely affected by the pandemic-induced economic disruptions. While their incomes recovered, they were still worse off as incomes in August were down by more than 20 per cent relative to March.

"This is not entirely consistent with 6.2 per cent nominal wage growth in services, where the vast majority of non-agricultural labourers work, and more than 4.5 per cent nominal wage growth in construction and production."

The problem is likely to be in



wage rather than the survey data," Hussain said.

Speaking on the unemployment data, the economist said one still has to wonder what accounts for the ability of the average household to cope with declining incomes as reported in the survey when nominal wages have generally kept pace with the overall inflation and employment recovered so rapidly.

Public assistance can only partially explain this since 21.3 per cent of households reported receiving some form of assistance whereas 68.4 per cent reported being financially affected by the pandemic in April to July.

"Having said that, it should also be pointed out that it is not uncommon to find impressions from the rapid survey data not matching with the routinely collected price and wage data from all parts of the country."

"The BBS must be commended for the effort and the reduced lag in reporting price and wage data," Hussain said.

Rizwanul Islam, a former special adviser for employment sector at the International Labour Office, Geneva, said: "Rather than being complacent, we need to keep a close eye on the process of economic recovery and continue

to adjust policies to ensure that it does not become jobless."

The number of farm households was unaffected despite the crisis and was unchanged at 10 per cent in July, BBS data showed.

Some 63.42 per cent of households had to cut consumption of quality food during the April to July period. It was unchanged for 32.73 per cent households.

In order to survive, 8.89 per cent had to rely on the social safety nets, 6.52 per cent on open market sales by the government for basic products, 17.93 per cent on private borrowing and 43.11 per cent on handouts from relatives.

Some 46.22 per cent households wiped out savings and 11.26 per cent had either sold properties or kept them as mortgaged.

The wage growth in the agriculture sector fell to 6.6 per cent in March. It stood at 6.23 per cent in September, down from 6.53 per cent a year ago, BBS data showed.

The wage growth in the industrial sector was 5.26 per cent last month, down from 6.14 per cent in March this year and 6.37 per cent in September last year.

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Make sure economic recovery is not jobless



RIZWANUL ISLAM

Use of telephone interview for a survey of income, expenditure and employment is rather ambitious, and I am wondering why a government organisation like the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics had to resort to this method - even taking into account the difficult environment created by the Covid pandemic.

The response rate in such interviews is usually low, and the present survey is no exception - only 48.48 per cent. The sample size is very small - 989 respondents compared to 46,076 households for the 2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. Results from a survey with such a small sample and implemented by telephone should be taken carefully.

The questions on income and expenditure seek the respondents' "stated income". They can provide only an approximate idea about the real situation.

The question on unemployment also asks whether the respondent considers himself/herself as unemployed. Different respondents may interpret the question differently. So, the outcome has to be treated with caution.

If one takes into account the rate of inflation during 2016-2020 (5.5 per cent per year), the average household income for March 2020 turns out to be just about the same as that of 2016 (the latter adjusted for inflation). Does it mean that there was no increase in the real income of households during this period? That would not be consistent with the rate of GDP growth achieved during those years which was around 7.5 per cent on an average.



The labour market has been badly hit by the present economic crisis and the employment situation is quite precarious.

STAR/FILE

The rate of unemployment in March 2020 is reported as 2.3 per cent. The labour force surveys during the past two decades (since 2000) never showed the unemployment rate of less than 4 per cent.

What is more interesting is the decline in the unemployment rate from 22.39 per cent during April-July 2020 to 3.75 per cent in September. This sharp decline defies logic because it is quite well-known that economic recovery has just started, and various accounts indicate that the level of economic activities is still way below the pre-pandemic level.

It can be potentially dangerous if policymakers take the findings on unemployment seriously, because in that case, one may conclude that there is no need to do anything for boosting employment. It is being widely acknowledged that the labour market has been badly hit by the present economic crisis and the employment situation is quite precarious.

We also know from the experience of economic crises in various countries that labour market recovery follows economic recovery with a lag. Hence, rather than being complacent, we need to keep a close eye on the process of economic recovery and continue to adjust policies to ensure that it does not become jobless.

The writer is a former special adviser for employment sector at the International Labour Office, Geneva.

Hand sanitiser standards in the offing

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has buoyed demand for hand sanitisers and hand rubs in the country, encouraging a big number of firms to bring out the disinfectants in the market.

A senior official of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) said they gave no-objection certificates (NOCs) to 15 firms to make hand sanitisers for a temporary period of six months apart from allowing about 70 pharmaceuticals to make hand rubs.

"We gave permission considering the Covid-19 situation and to ensure increased availability of the disinfectants," said DGDA Director Md Ayub Hossain over the phone.

However, not all firms have got the NOCs from the DGDA to make hand sanitisers, particularly for alcohol-based ones, since there was no clear guideline in the first place, said industry insiders.

Now, the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) says it has formulated standards for hand sanitisers and was waiting for the final approval.



"We expect to finalise the standards by the end of this month," said Nilufa Hoque, director for standards at the BSTI.

The BSTI took the initiative to develop

the standards as demand for disinfectants surged and consumers saw the arrival of numerous brands on the shelves of stores.

Industry insiders said hand sanitisers

were one of the least sought items even in January this year and the total size of the market for the product was around Tk 3 crore in 2019.

It became one of the most sought-after items just after the first detection of coronavirus case in the country on March 8.

In tune with the spiralling demand, several local and multinational companies came up with the hand sanitisers and disinfectants in their range of business.

The size of the market for hand sanitisers is expected to reach around Tk 100 crore by the end of the year, said a top official of a leading company.

Hoque said apart from preparing the standards for alcohol-based hand sanitisers, the standards institution would initially offer a type of licence that firms could voluntarily avail to boost the confidence of the customers of hand sanitisers.

Jesmin Zaman, head of marketing of Square Toiletries, which sells the "Sephil" brand of hand sanitisers, said the development of a standard for hand sanitisers would give a guideline to manufacturers and benefit consumers.

Leather turning into a big draw for foreign investors

Industry insiders say

REFAJET ULLAH MIRDHA

The leather sector in Bangladesh is turning into a hotspot for foreign investment due to the country's low manufacturing costs, availability of cheap raw materials and its eligibility for trade benefits on exports, said industry insiders.

New investors from Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam have been contacting local leather goods and footwear manufacturers either to make investments in joint ventures or in companies they could establish themselves.

The export incentive on crust leather is 7.5 per cent while its 15 per cent on leather goods, which is also a major factor drawing foreign direct investment (FDI) to this sector.

Crust leather is the term applied to leather which is dried after tanning but has not yet been dyed.

Foreign investors are also interested in

Bangladesh's domestic markets because of the rising number of middle-income customers and lifestyle changes for rapid urbanisation which have mainly pushed up the use and sale of leather goods and footwear.

Currently, total investment in leather and leather goods and footwear is more than \$1 billion, of which some \$700 million is from domestic investors while the remaining \$300 million is from foreign investors who are engaged in the export of manufactured goods.

"Of the foreign investment, most of the amount came from Germany, Taiwan, China, India and Italy," said Saiful Islam, president of the Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh.

"I have been receiving a lot of queries from foreign investors as they are interested to invest in Bangladesh," he said.

READ MORE ON B3



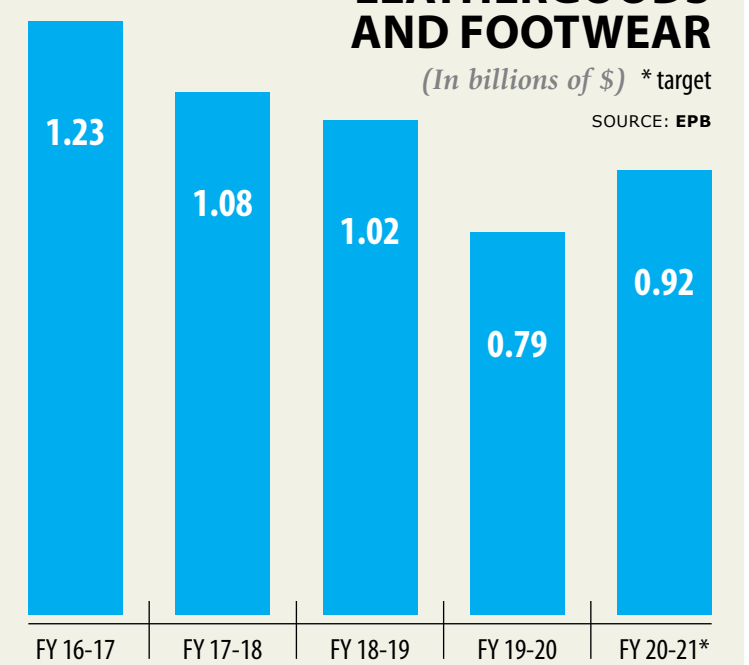
KEY POINTS

- Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam want to invest in Bangladesh
- Export incentive for crust leather is 7.5% and for leather goods 15%
- Total investment so far more than \$1b
- Local entrepreneurs invested \$700m
- Foreign companies invested \$300m
- Govt approved 2 private ETBs at Savar leather estate
- Exporters get 40% lower price for absence of LWG certification

EXPORT OF LEATHER, LEATHERGOODS AND FOOTWEAR

(In billions of \$) * target

SOURCE: EPB



India announces economic stimulus to boost demand by \$10b

REUTERS, New Delhi
India on Monday announced steps to stimulate consumer demand, including advance payment of a part of the wages of federal government employees during the festival season and more capital spending as it tries to bolster the pandemic-hit economy.



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman arrives at her office before leaving for parliament to present the federal budget in New Delhi, India.

The government will allow its employees to spend tax-exempt travel allowances on goods and services, Nirmala Sitharaman, India's finance minister told a news briefing. She said the government will also shore up investment by spending extra 250 billion rupees (\$3.41 billion) on roads, ports and defence projects, and offering 120 billion rupees in interest-free 50-year loans to state governments for spending on infrastructure before March 31, 2021.

All these measures are likely to create an additional demand of 730 billion rupees (\$9.96 billion), Sitharaman said, adding the proposals would stimulate demand in a "fiscally prudent way." Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which imposed a tough lockdown to stem the spread of the coronavirus in March, is pushing ahead with a full opening to try to boost the economy ahead of the usually high-spending festival season, which runs from October to March. India's total coronavirus cases have crossed 7.12 million, second only to the United States, with deaths reaching 109,150. The Reserve Bank of India left key policy rates unchanged on Friday, while retaining an accommodative monetary stance to support an economy that is projected to contract by almost 10 per cent in the current fiscal year. The latest package would not require any extra borrowing by the federal government, Tarun Bajaj, economic affairs secretary at the Ministry of Finance, told reporters. India's federal government said last month it would stick to revised borrowing target of 12 trillion rupees (\$163.78 billion) in the current fiscal year ending March, against an earlier estimate of 7.8 trillion rupees.

US sanctions turn up heat but Huawei serving European 5G clients

REUTERS, Zurich

Chinese telecom giant Huawei is finding it harder to counter US sanctions designed to choke off its access to semiconductors but can continue to serve European 5G network clients, a senior European executive told an Austrian newspaper. The world's biggest maker of mobile telecommunications equipment and smartphones is still "looking for a solution" to help millions of Huawei phone users after Google was banned from providing technical support for new Huawei phone models using mobile operating system Android.

"Since the US sanctions last year, US manufacturers of semiconductors are no longer allowed to supply us so our previous US partners can no longer work with us. Since August it has become even more difficult," Abraham Liu, Huawei's vice-president for Europe, told the Kurier paper.

He said Washington was "blackmailing" chipmakers into shunning ties with Huawei, which denies US allegations that Huawei equipment could be used by Beijing for spying. "Nevertheless, we are confident that we can continue to serve our European customers in the 5G sector because of many preparations and upfront investments with the most advanced technology," Liu was quoted as saying without elaborating.

As for private customers, cell phone owners, we see great difficulties. There are 90 million European Huawei users. Google is no longer allowed to work with Huawei, so Google will no longer publish updates for Huawei smartphones with the Android operating system," he said. "We are still looking for a solution."

Amid US pressure to exclude the Chinese firm from supplying key telecoms equipment, Orange and Proximus last week picked Nokia to help build 5G networks in Belgium. EU members have been stepping up scrutiny of so-called high-risk vendors. This subjects Huawei's governance and technology to critical examination and is likely to lead other European operators to strip it from their networks, analysts say.



A smartphone with the Huawei and 5G network logos is seen on a PC motherboard in this illustration picture.

Collapse of global tax talks could cost \$100b, OECD says

REUTERS, Paris

The global economy could shed more than 1 per cent of output if international talks to rewrite cross-border tax rules break down and trigger a trade war, the OECD said on Monday, after countries agreed to keep up negotiating to mid-2021. Nearly 140 countries agreed on Friday to extend talks after the pandemic outbreak and US hesitation before the presidential election squashed hopes of reaching a deal this year.



Outside view of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development headquarters in Paris.

Public pressure is growing on big, profitable multinationals to pay their share under international tax rules after the COVID-19 pandemic strained national budgets, the countries said in an agreed statement. The aim is update international tax rules for the age of digital commerce, in particular to discourage big Internet companies like Google, Facebook and Amazon from booking profits in low-tax countries like Ireland regardless where their customers are. In the absence of a new international rulebook, a growing number of governments are planning their own digital services taxes, which prompted threats of trade retaliation from the Trump administration.

In the 'worst-case' scenario, these disputes could reduce global GDP by more than 1 per cent," the OECD, which has been steering the global tax talks, estimated in an impact assessment. Inversely, new rules for digital taxation and a proposed global minimum tax would increase global corporate income tax worldwide 1.9 per cent to 3.2 per cent, or about \$50 billion to \$80 billion per year. That could reach \$100 billion when including an existing US minimum tax on overseas profits, amounting to 4 per cent of global corporate income tax, the OECD said.

Hyundai to expand Kona EV recall to North America, Europe over battery fire risk

REUTERS, Seoul

Hyundai Motor Co is set to triple the number of recalled Kona electric cars over battery cell fire risks with plans to recall around 51,000 vehicles in North America, Europe, China and other markets, Yonhap news agency reported on Sunday. The recalls would come after the South Korean automaker announced last week a voluntary recall plan for 25,564 Kona EVs at home starting Oct. 16.

Hyundai said in a statement on Monday it "is in the final stages of filing a voluntary recall notice with the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) for US Kona EVs and will start the process of informing owners of these vehicles." Hyundai will recall 37,366 vehicles and 11,137 vehicles in Europe and North America, respectively, according to Yonhap. The Hyundai statement did not mention the other markets, the total number of additional electric vehicles (EVs) it intends to recall or the dates of the recalls. South Korea's transport ministry said last week Hyundai will voluntarily recall its Kona EVs as a possible short circuit due to what may be faulty manufacturing of its high-voltage battery cells could pose a fire risk.

LG Chem Ltd, which supplies batteries for Kona EVs, said last week faulty battery cells were not the cause of fires in Kona EVs, and the exact cause had not been determined. It said a re-enactment experiment conducted jointly with Hyundai had not led to a fire, so the fires could not be attributed to faulty battery cells. LG Chem declined on Monday to comment beyond what it said last week.

Recalled Kona EVs in South Korea will undergo software updates for all affected models and battery replacements of select models after inspections. KB Investment& Securities said in a report on Monday it could cost Hyundai as much as 600 billion won (\$522.10 million) if they offer battery replacements for the nearly 77,000 affected vehicles identified worldwide so far.

Shares of Hyundai Motor and LG Chem fell 0.8 per cent and 2.0 per cent, respectively, on Monday while the broader KOSPI market was up 0.3 per cent as of 0430 GMT.

Sylhet City Corporation
Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet
www.scc.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.07.0000.018.99.025.19.305 Date: 12/10/2020

e-Tender Notice-03/2020-21

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives.	
2. Agency	Sylhet City Corporation.	
3. Budget and source of funds	Reducing Water Logging, Supplying of Pure Water & Construction of Infrastructure in Sylhet City Corporation area.	
Tender ID No.	Name of the work	Last date of tender submission
504133 (OTM)	Installation of 01 No. Production Tubewell at Ward No. 19 of Sylhet City Corporation.	29/10/2020
4. Name, designation & address of PE	Engr. Md. Ali Akbar, Executive Engineer, Sylhet City Corporation. 0821-714036	
5.	This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	
6.	The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.	
7.	Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).	

Executive Engineer
Sylhet City Corporation

Can Bangladesh challenge Vietnam in Japan's ICT market?

FROM PAGE B4
Some of these parks are in the development phase while others are already in operations.

The government also plans to develop one park exclusively for Japanese companies and Japanese investors. It is well-known that the present government has also provided various facilities to promote and scale up the ICT industry. IT and ITES companies are enjoying full tax exemption facilities for until 2024.

Not only that, but the government has also been providing 10 per cent cash incentive for IT and ITES companies since 2017. The facility is even applicable for the foreign companies invested in Bangladesh. On top of that, companies can also enjoy 100 per cent repatriation facilities for both profit and capital. Bangladesh is also an attractive destination for foreign investment and as outsourcing destination because of its cheap infrastructure.

According to a report of the A.T Kearney Global Service Index, Bangladesh is the number 1 country in terms of cost competitiveness and 26th best location regarding financial attractiveness.

The costs of developing infrastructure in Bangladesh is approximately 40 per cent lower than in India, Vietnam and the Philippines. Therefore, it is now time to promote these facilities offered by Bangladesh as we always lag behind in branding and promotion.

Bangladesh could also be in a more advantageous position than Vietnam as local companies can acquire additional workers if a project scales up.

To this end, credit goes to both public and private universities as thanks to their combined efforts, Bangladesh now produces 20,000 skilled ICT resources every year.

The government has also introduced several projects and training courses to build up skilled resources for the Japanese market. One of the projects is the Bangladesh-Japan ICT Engineers' Training Programme, where students are taught Japanese language and etiquettes along with technologies.

Some students have already graduated from the course and secured jobs in the Japan market and are doing really well. But the number of students producing per batch is not even close to the demand of our market.

Another point is that Bangladesh needs to produce an adequate number of graduates that are skilled in emerging technologies in order to take a hold of this attractive market.

In summation, it can be said that it's the action of today that will decide what our position will be in the Japanese market in the coming decades.

If the government and private industries can work hand in hand to take the right decisions at the right time, Bangladesh will be the thriving player in this market in coming days and we can achieve our export target way before the deadline.

The author is the managing director of Dream71 Bangladesh and a director of the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
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Chattogram Zone, Agrabad, Chattogram
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Memo No. 35.01.1528.011.99.017.20-592 Date: 12/10/2020

Corrigendum Notice

Name of Service: Providing Consultancy Services for Review of Pavement, Bridge, Culvert Design and Supervision of Construction works for widening the Barayerhat-Heanko-Ramgarh Road (R-151 & R-152) under Chattogram Road Division.

EOI Ref. No.: Eol/CZ-02/CTG/Consultancy/LOC/2020-2021 Dated: 24/09/2020
This is to notify all concerned that due to unavoidable circumstances following amendments have been made into the REOI, Memo No. 461/CZ Dated: 24/09/2020.

Sl.	Field Name	Amendments	
		Existing	Corrected
1	EOI closing/ submission date & time	With all supporting documents, the EOI must be submitted at or before 12:30pm on 26/10/2020 in sealed envelopes.	With all supporting documents, the EOI must be submitted at or before 12:30pm on 28/10/2020 in sealed envelopes.

Md. Abdul Wahid
ID No. 005109
Additional Chief Engineer, RHD
Chattogram Zone, Chattogram

GD-1623

ডেইরী উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রকল্প
বাংলাদেশ প্রাণিসম্পদ গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
সভার, ঢাকা

তারিখ: ১২/১০/২০২০খ্রিঃ

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ প্রাণিসম্পদ গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (BLRI), সভার, ঢাকা কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নধীন "ডেইরী উন্নয়ন গবেষণা" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পে নিম্নে বর্ণিত পদে প্রকল্পে মেয়াদকালীন সময়ে জন সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে "জাতীয় বেতন স্কেল-২০১৫" অনুযায়ী সাতকোটি বেসনে সরাসরি নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তসমূহে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও জাতীয় বেতন গ্রেড	পদের সংখ্যা	বয়সসীমা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা
০১	প্রধান বৈজ্ঞানিক কর্মকর্তা (ডেইরী হার্ড লেথ) বেতন গ্রেড-৪	১ (একটি)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৪০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদ চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞান বিষয়ে পিএইচডি/ডিএসসি স্নাতকোত্তর গবেষণা প্রকল্প বাস্তবায়ন এবং উপাত্ত বিশ্লেষণ ও প্রতিবেদন তৈরীর প্রমাণসহ ০৭ বছরের চাকুরীর অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে; অথবা (খ) কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদ চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞান বিষয়ে এমএসসি ডিগ্রিসহ ১০ বছরের চাকুরীর অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে; (গ) শিক্ষাজীবনে সর্বল পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণি থাকতে হবে; (ঘ) স্বীকৃত জার্নালে ০৮টি গবেষণামূলক প্রকাশনা থাকতে হবে।
০২	বৈজ্ঞানিক কর্মকর্তা (ডেইরী টেকনোলজি) বেতন গ্রেড-৯	১ (একটি)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদপালন বিষয়ে বিএসসি (অনার্স) ডিগ্রি; তবে ডেইরী বিজ্ঞান বিষয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রিধারীদেরকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে; (খ) শিক্ষাজীবনে সর্বল পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণি থাকতে হবে।
০৩	প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা বেতন গ্রেড-৯	১ (একটি)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদপালন বিষয়ে বিএসসি (অনার্স)/কৃষি অর্জনীতি বিষয়ে বিএসসি (অনার্স)/পদ চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞান বিষয়ে ডিগ্রি; তবে সর্ভশ্রেষ্ঠ বিষয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রিধারীদেরকে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে; (খ) শিক্ষাজীবনে সর্বল পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণি থাকতে হবে।
০৪	হিসাবরক্ষক বেতন গ্রেড-১৪	১ (একটি)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	কোন স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে বি.কম বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় কমপক্ষে ২য় বিভাগ/শ্রেণিতে উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। সর্ভশ্রেষ্ঠ ক্ষেত্রে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
০৫	ল্যাবরেটরী টেকনিশিয়ান বেতন গ্রেড-১৬	১ (একটি)	অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ বছর	কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে ২য় শ্রেণির উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। সর্ভশ্রেষ্ঠ ক্ষেত্রে অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।

শর্তাবলীঃ

- ১। আবেদনকারীকে সরকার নির্ধারিত সরকারি দপ্তরে শূন্যপদে নিয়োগের জন্য "চাকরির আবেদনের মডেল ফর্ম" A4 সাইজ কাগজে পূর্ণপূর্ণপ্রার্থী আবেদন করে, (৫x৫) সে.মি. সাইজের সত্য তোলা ৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত রঙিন ছবিসহ আগামী ০৫/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে "প্রকল্প পরিচালক, ডেইরী উন্নয়ন গবেষণা প্রকল্প, বাংলাদেশ প্রাণিসম্পদ গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (BLRI), সভার, ঢাকা-১৩৪১" বরাবর ডাকযোগে বা কুরিয়ার সার্ভিসের মাধ্যমে অথবা সরাসরি বা হাতে হাতে আবেদনপত্র অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে মধ্য পৌঁছাতে হবে। নামের উপরে পদের নাম অবশ্যই উল্লেখ করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত সময়ে পর কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না। আবেদনপত্রের নমুনা বাংলাদেশ প্রাণিসম্পদ গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউটের ওয়েবসাইট www.blri.gov.bd এবং জনসংস্পর্ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট www.mopa.gov.bd এ পাওয়া যাবে।
- ২। প্রার্থীর বয়সসীমা ০৫/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখে পদের বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে বর্ণিত বয়সসীমার মধ্যে হতে হবে। বয়স গ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে এসএসসি/সমমানের সনদপত্রের মূলকপি মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। প্রার্থীর বয়সের ক্ষেত্রে এফিডেভিট প্রমাণযোগ্য নয়।
- ৩। সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদের মূলকপি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, চারিত্রিক সনদ, স্ব-স্ব এলাকার ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর হতে নাগরিকত্ব সনদ মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় উপস্থাপন করতে হবে।
- ৪। সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি ও স্বায়ত্তশাসিত সংস্থায় চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীদেরকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে।
- ৫। আবেদনপত্রের সাথে কোন কাগজপত্র দেয়ার প্রয়োজন নেই, তবে ১০ (দশ) টাকার ডাকটিকেট সন্নিবিষ্ট নিজ ঠিকানা লিখিত ১০"x৪.৫" সাইজের একটি ফেরত খাম প্রেরণ করতে হবে।
- ৬। বাংলাদেশ প্রাণিসম্পদ গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট সহ এ জাতীয় সমস্ত প্রকল্পে চাকুরীর বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা ও প্রয়োজনীয় শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
- ৭। জটিলপূর্ণ/সম্পূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বা নির্ধারিত সময়ে পরে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
- ৮। বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা নেই এমন প্রার্থীদের আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই। নির্ধারিত প্রার্থীকে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন স্থানে চাকুরী করতে ইচ্ছুক থাকতে হবে। নিয়োগ পরীক্ষায় উপস্থিত হওয়ার জন্য কোন টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।

ড. মোঃ আবদুল জলিল
প্রকল্প পরিচালক

GD-1622

UK urges businesses to prepare for end of Brexit transition

REUTERS, London
Britain's government on Sunday urged businesses to prepare for the end of the Brexit transition period, saying that they need to take action whether or not a trade deal with the European Union is clinched.
Prime Minister Boris Johnson

has said Britain won't extend the transition period, which ends on Dec 31, and that progress must be made to bridge significant gaps between the two sides in the coming days if a deal is to be struck.
The business ministry argues that most of what businesses need to do is the same regardless of the outcome

of the negotiations and has planned a series of sector specific webinars in October.

"With just 81 days until the end of the transition period, businesses must act now to ensure they are ready for the UK's new start come January," said business minister Alok Sharma, who will write to businesses regarding the changes.

"There will be no extension to the transition period, so there is no time to waste."

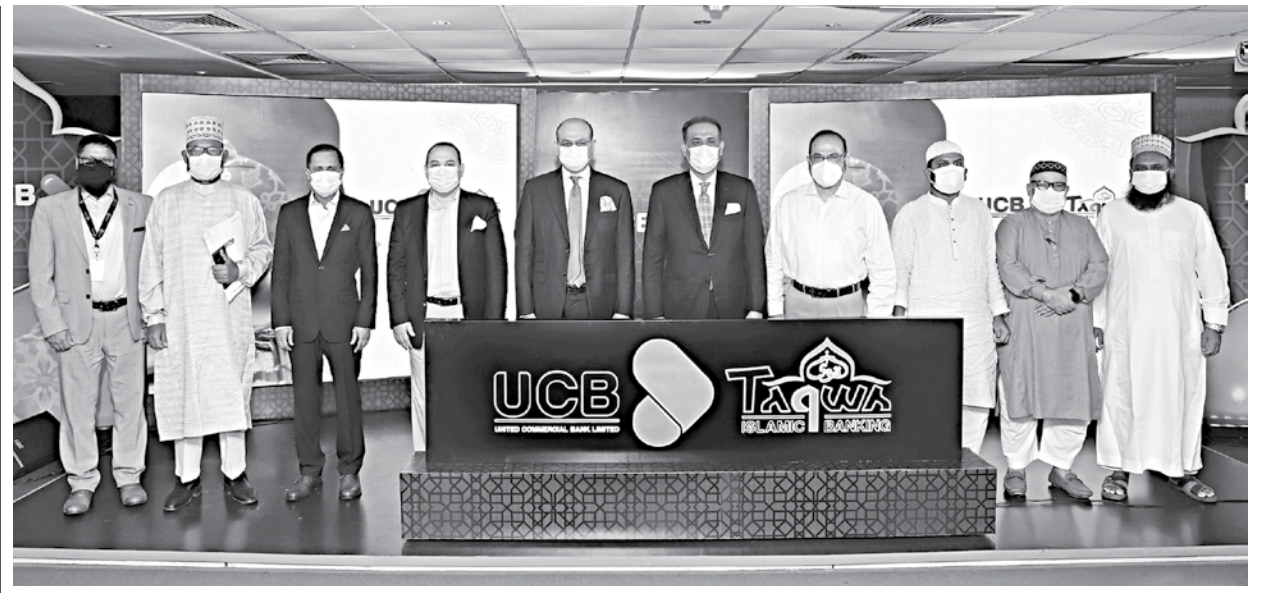
Businesses needed to do things like ensure staff register for residency rights and prepare for customs procedures when trading with the EU, the government said.

The United Kingdom formally left the EU on Jan. 31, but more than four years since voting 52 per cent-48 per cent for Brexit in a 2016 referendum, the two sides are haggling over a trade deal to take effect when informal membership ends on Dec. 31.

The two chief negotiators, the EU's Michel Barnier and Britain's David Frost, say they are inching towards a deal ahead of an Oct. 15 deadline, but that important gaps remain on fishing, level playing field issues and governance. Both sides have planned for a no-deal scenario.



REUTERS/FILE
Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson arrives to attend a news conference at the European Union leaders summit dominated by Brexit, in Brussels, Belgium.



UCB
Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury inaugurates United Commercial Bank's Islamic banking window, Taqwa, at its corporate head office in Dhaka yesterday. Bazal Ahmed, vice chairman of the bank, and Mohammed Shawkat Jamil, managing director, were present.

RBI appeals to Supreme Court to allow NPA classification

REUTERS, Mumbai
The Reserve Bank of India has appealed to the country's top court to let banks classify loans as nonperforming, saying a ban imposed to help borrowers in the COVID-19 pandemic could greatly harm the nation's financial system.

The central bank, in a filing to the Supreme Court late on Friday, warned that failure to immediately lift an interim stay on banks classifying any loan as a non-performing asset (NPA) would also undermine the central bank's regulatory mandate.

The court granted the stay last month, responding to a plea filed by an Indian optician, later joined

by a wide range of borrowers whose income or revenue was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The court is set to rule on the matter on Tuesday. The ruling could have far-reaching consequences not only for millions of borrowers, but also for banks and the country, as state-run banks dominate the sector.

To help borrowers weather pandemic-related stress, the RBI has let banks offer a moratorium on loan payments for up to six months and permitted a one-time restructuring of accounts.

The RBI's measures ensured that accounts that were standard prior to the implementation of the nationwide lockdown in late March, would not be classified as NPAs if the borrowers

made use of the moratorium, which allowed repayments to be delayed until the end of August but with the loans continuing to accrue interest.

The central bank's appeal followed a request by the court for further details from the RBI and government on their plans to help the borrowers.

The RBI responded by detailing the wide range of measures it has put in place to address stress in various sectors. It warned against any further leeway. "Every regulatory forbearance has its trade-offs in terms of adverse incentives and unintended consequences," the RBI said. "All the issues that were advanced by the petitioners have been adequately addressed."

Daimler, Swiss Re launch mobility insurance venture

REUTERS, Frankfurt
Swiss Re and carmaker Daimler announced a joint automotive and mobility insurance venture on Monday, seeking to tap into a wealth of new data generated by highly automated vehicles to help insurers to calculate risk.

partners to better underwrite the risk," said Pravina Ladva, Swiss Re's digital transformation officer.
Swiss Re already offers to price risk by looking at the number of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) fitted to a car, calculating a car's capability under various traffic conditions considering safety as well as the cost of repairs.

creating new insurance challenges in the area of pricing and claims handling.

Movinx will position itself as a so-called Managing General Agent (MGA) to help insurers introduce new products across a range of currently fragmented markets, using a new jointly owned risk technology platform.

The first insurance products and services are planned to launch in France in 2021. In the coming years, further market entries are planned across Europe, in the Americas and in Asia.

"We want to offer products for people who use car sharing for minutes, or long-term insurance, or cover for rental, or subscription. Movinx will start with a motor insurance focus and explore mobility elements to enhance the respective solutions," Daimler's Telschow said.

The joint venture will be open for cooperation with car manufacturers or mobility service providers, the two companies said in their statement.

The reinsurer and Daimler, parent of the Mercedes-Benz passenger car brand, set up Movinx, a Berlin-based intermediary they will co-own equally, the companies said in a statement.

As connected and autonomous cars generate live data about traffic flows, vehicle reflexes and driver behaviour, the companies expect new opportunities will arise to customise automotive and mobility insurance products.

"Even before cars come off the manufacturing line, we know the specific features and how that car would react in an emergency situation and we can provide a score to insurance

Daimler, which has spent decades refining advanced driver assistance systems, sees an opportunity for monetizing its know-how about vehicle safety.

Ingo Telschow, chief executive of Daimler Insurance Services, said his company was "going deeper into the value chain of insurance business, having more influence on product development and pricing."

Aside from technological advances in the area of automated and connected vehicles, customer behaviour is also shifting from long-term ownership to short-term usage,

EU trade chief calls on US to drop tariffs in Airbus-Boeing dispute

REUTERS
The European Union's new trade chief has told the US to withdraw tariffs on more than \$7 billion of EU products or face additional duties on exports to Europe, as he urged a settlement to the dispute over Airbus SE and Boeing Co, the Financial Times reported on Sunday.
Repairing the transatlantic relationship would be EU's top priority, and the US should withdraw its Airbus-related tariffs as a confidence-building measure, the EU's new trade chief Valdis Dombrovskis told the FT.

"Of course, if the US is not withdrawing their tariffs we have no choice but to then introduce our tariffs," he was quoted as saying.

Washington was awarded the right by the World Trade Organization (WTO) last October, to impose tariffs on \$7.5 billion of annual EU imports in its case against Airbus. Washington then imposed 25 per cent duties on products ranging from single-malt whisky to olives and cheese and 10 per cent tariffs on most European-made Airbus jets.

In mid-February, the US government said it would increase tariffs on aircraft imported from the EU to 15 per cent from 10 per cent, ratcheting up pressure on Brussels in a nearly 16-year dispute over aircraft subsidies.

The EU for its part, has been cleared by the WTO to impose tariffs on US products worth \$4 billion to retaliate against subsidies for American planemaker Boeing, sources told Reuters last month, with the award expected to be published within weeks.

Job recovery gains momentum

FROM PAGE B1
In the services sector, it fell to 6.52 per cent in March and recovered to 6.04 per cent in September. It is still lower than 6.71 per cent registered in September in 2019.

the respondents was reduced to zero, while 62 per cent of the low-income earners lost work opportunities. The pandemic left 28 per cent of the respondents economically inactive, it said.

is engaged in sectors directly impacted by the Covid-19. Compounded with pre-existing vulnerabilities and the absence of formal safety nets, households tend to manage income shocks with their own resources, it said last week.

"Going forward, the government's Covid-19 response will remain a paramount priority, including testing, quarantining and treating patients and providing economic relief to the poor and vulnerable," the WB said.

In June, Brac said 95 per cent of the people surveyed across the country suffered a loss of income due to the shutdown and social distancing measures enforced by the government in late March to contain the spread of the Covid-19.
Household income of 51 per cent of

In Bangladesh, labour markets are a key channel through which welfare is affected, as labour incomes comprise more than 80 per cent of household income for the poorest 40 per cent of households, according to the World Bank.
A large share of Bangladeshi workers



MIDLAND BANK
Ahsan-uz Zaman, managing director of Midland Bank, attends the bank's "Business review meeting 2020 for retail distribution" through a digital platform recently.

Leather turning into a big draw for foreign investors

FROM PAGE B1
Interest spiked when the government recently allowed tanneries at the country's Savar Tannery Industrial Estate (STIE) to set up their individual effluent treatment plants (ETPs).

certifications from the global body for the leather goods sector.

This leaves them with no choice but to sell goods to some non-compliant Chinese factories and accept prices that are 40 per cent lower than the international norm.

The use of ETPs ticks one of the boxes for global standards, added Islam, also managing director of Picard Bangladesh.
Coupled with the cheap rates of an abundant source of raw materials, foreign investors see prospects of good business, he said.

So far, the government has allowed two tanneries to construct their own ETPs for delays in the establishment of a central one for the STIE.

Currently, some 123 out of 155 tanneries at the STIE are operational. Due to poor adoption of global standards set by Leather Working Group, Bangladeshi exporters have failed to avail compliance and environmental

added.
Ahmed also expressed concern over the difficulties in monitoring of privately-run ETPs at the STIE by government officials.

M Abu Eusuf, professor of the Department of Development Studies at the University of Dhaka, also believes that this sector would immensely benefit from the arrival of foreign investment.

Bangladesh has revised its export target for leather goods to \$3 billion by the end of next year. If the foreign investment comes, achieving the target would be easier. Vietnam has already proved this, he said.

Currently, international brands like ABC-Mart, Adidas, Aldo, Esprit, Hugo Boss, H&M, Kate Spade, Kmart, Michael Kors, Marks & Spencer, Nike, Steve Madden, Sears and Timberland source leather goods and footwear from Bangladesh.



CPTU
Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty, secretary to the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division, attends the opening ceremony of a four-day training on citizen portal and social media relating to public procurement at the conference room of Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU) in the capital yesterday.



UNION BANK
Ahsanul Alam, chairman of Union Bank, attends the bank's "3rd Quarter Business Conference-2020" at The Westin Dhaka yesterday. Managing Director ABM Mokammel Hoque Chowdhury was also present.

Maf Shoes to invest Tk 1,118cr to set up new factory

The sister concern of TK Group will establish the unit inside Bangabandhu Shilpa Nagar

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Maf Shoes, a sister concern of TK Group, is set to invest Tk 1,118 crore to establish an export-oriented footwear manufacturing unit alongside other backward linkage industries at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN) in Chattogram.

"We want to increase our exports and provide backward linkage products to local footwear manufacturers," said Mohammad Shahadat Ullah, executive director of Maf Shoes.

"For this reason, we have decided to invest in export-oriented factories for synthetic sports shoes, sports-gears and other associated backward linkage facilities at BSMSN," he added.

Maf Shoes will set up a total of 10 manufacturing units related to footwear and its backward linkage industries, he said.

The proposed project will create 5,500 job opportunities, Ullah said.

Of the Tk 1,118 crore investment, 30 per cent will come through equity while the remaining 70 per cent will be funded by banks.

Two private banks have already assured that they would finance the new labour-intensive footwear factory.

Maf Shoes has already submitted an investment proposal to the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza), seeking a 50-acre plot for the new facility, which will be the company's third footwear manufacturing unit.

"We will give them the land they wanted as the company will produce both export-oriented and import substitute products at the same time," Paban Chowdhury, executive chairman of Beza, told The Daily Star.

Renowned footwear retailers want to explore sources other than China for their products, leading to increased competition in the global footwear market, which has encouraged Maf Shoes to go ahead with its plans, he added.

The global market size for synthetic footwear is about \$150 billion but there is still huge

potential for growth in the sector, which could turn into the second largest export earning sector for Bangladesh with proper and timely policy support from government.

Ullah also said the government has brought the sports and synthetic footwear sector into focus, making it the most preferred sector under the latest export policy.

accounts for 20 per cent.

On average, the company has grown by 20 per cent annually for the last five years, he added.

The company exported 1.14 crore pairs of sport shoes in 2019 while the figure was 91 lakh in 2018.

However, Ullah expects to export 1.25 crore pairs this year and 2

umbrella, engaging 8,500 workers in the process.

Maf Shoes is one of the most reliable and dedicated sourcing partners of Decathlon, a leading sportswear retailer based in France.

Maf Shoes covers 15 per cent of Decathlon's global market demands and has also started making shoes for another global footwear giant, Deichmann from Germany.

Currently, most raw materials Maf Shoes uses in its products are sourced from China, Vietnam, South Korea etc.

But due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the company loses at least eight weeks on each shipment, allowing its global competitors to reach an advantageous position, Ullah said.

To create ample production facilities that will be suitable for the next 15 years equipped with proper backward linked facilities like circular knitting, warp knitting, rubber outsole, etc, Maf Shoes will manufacture these products at its new units.

The company will also step into other sports-gear segments like swimming goggles, swimming caps, kickboards and the like.

In October 2019, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced the continuation of financial incentives in the leather sector for at least the next five years to help the country achieve its targeted export earnings from the leather goods and footwear industry.

She made the announcement while inaugurating the Bangladesh Leather Footwear and Leather Goods International Sourcing Show.

The PM said that as part of export diversification, the leather goods industry has been identified as a priority sector for Bangladesh's economy and national industrial development strategy.

"For this, various initiatives have been taken to develop the leather and leather footwear industries," she said, adding that barely a decade ago, most of the country's export earnings from this sector mainly came from shipments of leather as a raw material.



A GLIMPSE OF THE PLAN

- Total investment: Tk **1,118cr**
- Jobs to be created: **5,500**
- Manufacturing units: **10**
- Total land: **50 acres**
- Own funds: **30%**
- Bank finance: **70%**
- Products: footwear and backward linkage

The authorities concerned have even proposed special facilities like tax rebates for the sector.

Moreover, a 4 per cent export cash subsidy was recently introduced for this highly labour-intensive sector to make it suitably incentivised to attract more export orders.

Maf Shoes, a pioneer in synthetic or non-leather sports footwear products in Bangladesh, is a 100 per cent export-oriented company with the highest solo investment, Ullah said.

Bangladesh annually earns about \$300 million from sports shoe exports, of which Maf Shoes

crore pairs next year.

"We began commercial export in 2011 with only \$0.17 million. Last year, we exported \$57 million and despite pandemic affect, we are projecting \$70 million in export receipts for this year," he said.

Maf Shoes is already in the process of establishing their second unit at the Nasirabad industrial zone at cost of Tk 137 crore. The facility is set to go into commercial production in March next year.

The company produces a wide range of footwear for all age groups and provides complete manufacturing solutions under one

Changes in rules make it difficult for importers to enjoy duty benefit

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Importers are facing difficulty in availing duty benefit under the South Asian Free Trade Area after a recent change in rules that are compelling them to offer the hard copy of a key trade document or a bank guarantee to qualify.

The Safta agreement, which came into force in January 2006, has a common rule of origin to determine the eligibility of a country for the preferential tariff treatment.

The customs authorities in Bangladesh relaxed the rules on the submission of the certificate of origin (CoO) for the import of raw material under the Safta because of the pandemic. The decision on the acceptance of the electronic copy was taken at a meeting of the commerce ministers of the Saarc countries in April.

In a circular on July 29, the National Board of Revenue said it would accept the electronic copy of the CoO in absence of paper documents and the benefit will remain effective until December 31.

Accordingly, the customs authorities started accepting electronically issued CoOs from May. But on September 29, the customs authorities issued another circular, saying the importers would have to provide bank guarantee along with the electronic copy of the CoO to be eligible for the duty benefit if they cannot manage the hard copy.

The decision came at a time when normalcy has not returned to international trade as the pandemic is still wreaking havoc across the globe.

Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director of Premier Cement, said his company faced trouble in submitting the hard copy of the CoO to qualify for the duty benefit while importing fly ash from India.

He said due to the pandemic, India has stopped issuing the hard copies of certificate of origin for exports from April. Instead, it is providing an electronic certificate.

"We will suffer financially if we have to

pay the 5 per cent customs duty."

It would also be difficult to provide a bank guarantee for each consignment as importers would have to spend an extra in the form of margins and commissions to secure bank guarantee, he said.

"It is also time-consuming," said the entrepreneur, calling on the government to reconsider the decision.

Bangladesh imports 6.5 million tonnes of fly ash from India per year.

Abdul Matlub Ahmed, president of the India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said if Bangladesh does not accept the electronic copy of the CoO, India will not accept it either.

As a result, traders will not receive the duty benefit and will have to pay an extra custom duty instead, he said.

Importers are struggling as bank guarantee against every import has been made mandatory

Importers are also facing another challenge because of a misunderstanding among the field-level officials of the NBR about the latest circular, said a senior official of the revenue administrator.

There should not be any misunderstanding between the importers and customs officials as traders will continue to enjoy the benefit if they follow the rules, he said.

He said importers would have to give the bank guarantee if they could not submit the hard-copy of the CoO.

An amendment to the Safta agreement would be needed if the bank guarantee requirement is to be scrapped, the NBR official said.

Ambrosia Restaurant in Ctg dodges Tk 17 lakh in VAT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A team of the VAT Audit, Intelligence and Investigation Directorate has filed a case against Ambrosia Restaurant in Chattogram, as the eatery has dodged about Tk 17 lakh in value added tax on sales from July 2018 to July 2020.

"The actual sales of the restaurant during July 2018 to July 2020 was Tk 3.69 crore and it was supposed to pay a VAT of Tk

55.33 lakh," Moinul Khan, director general of the directorate, told The Daily Star.

"But it paid only Tk 38.09 lakh."

A team of the directorate during a surprise visit to the restaurant on September 7 seized some documents and found huge discrepancies between the sales and the amount of VAT paid.

So the VAT audit team filed a case yesterday to compel the restaurant to pay the VAT, Khan said.

Can Bangladesh challenge Vietnam in Japan's ICT market?



RASHAD KABIR

Starting in the early 90's, Bangladesh's IT industry was reborn in 2009, when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina declared the Digital Bangladesh programme on December 12 in 2008.

From that day onwards, a country whose economy is heavily dependent on the RMG sector and remittance from non-resident Bangladeshis, started to think of a new sector which could be the main pillar of economy by 2030.

This sector would have to be an industry that consists of innovation and brain work rather than conventional physical labour.

There is no doubt that the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) will bring challenges to the garment sector in the coming days due to the introduction of robotics and AI at the factory level.

This means that Bangladesh will no longer be able to leverage the advantage of low-cost labour.

Considering these factors, the government is now seriously thinking about increasing the IT and ITES exports and developing more skilled human resources in this sector.

The government has already declared a target to export \$1 billion IT and ITES products by 2018 and \$5 billion by 2024.

To achieve this target, Bangladesh has to be very strategic and focused. Japan could be a very good market for the local IT and ITES industry in the coming decade. The Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), the apex trade body for the local IT and ITES industry, is considering Japan as the most promising market.

BASIS, in collaboration with the ICT division, started to work in the Japan market in 2015.

Bangladesh participated in the Japan IT week every year since 2015, arranged a number of seminars and B2B sessions both in Bangladesh and Japan and last year, BASIS also celebrated a special day titled 'Japan Day' during the BASIS SoftExpo, with a focus on strengthening the ICT relationship between these two countries.

Aside from all this, this year BASIS launched a special desk called the 'BASIS Japan Desk', which is the first country-based trade focus desk in the country's history.

BASIS also has a plan to establish another desk in Japan that will be called 'Bangladesh Desk', a proposal for which has already been sent to the ministry concerned.

The main reason Bangladesh is considering Japan with special care and importance is the diplomatic relationship and also the demographic dividend of the two countries, from which Bangladesh can leverage the advantage.

Ever since Bangladesh gained independence, Japan has been the biggest development partner for the country. The Metrorail project, Matarbari coal power plant project, extension



COLLECTED

The young, energetic and enthused talent pool can be a game changer for Bangladesh.

of a third terminal at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and many other mega projects are being implemented through Japanese investment.

The government has also declared a special economic zone in Arahazar Narayanganj solely for Japanese investors and companies.

But aside from diplomatic relations, the opportunity that is going to be created in the Japan IT market in the coming days is due to demographic dividend and Bangladesh is in a very good position to grab this opportunity using its young population and diplomatic relation.

In Japan, the average age of 70 per cent of the population is 65, whereas it is just the opposite in Bangladesh.

In average, 70 per cent of our population is below 35 while 50 per cent is below 25.

This young, energetic and enthused talent pool can be a game changer for Bangladesh. Statistics from the Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) suggests that by 2025, there will be a shortage of 425,000

engineers in the Japanese market.

Now the question is can Bangladesh take this opportunity?

The biggest competitor for Bangladesh in Japan is definitely going to be Vietnam. Due to the early moves in Japan market and also due to the language advantage, Vietnam is currently in a better position than Bangladesh in this regard.

To work in Japan, language is the main barrier as Japanese people are often not fluent in English and prefer to deal with companies who have Japanese language speaking skills.

In Vietnam, children learn Japanese language from the school level. With rapid progress in IT development in the past, Vietnam ranks highly in the world map of IT.

It holds the number one spot in the field of global outsourcing software services and also ranks first in the mobile application economy index of ASEAN countries. In fact, most Japanese companies who are doing off-shore development has experience of working with Vietnamese companies in one way or the other.

To work in Japan, language is the main barrier as Japanese people are often not fluent in English and prefer to deal with people who have Japanese language speaking skills. In Vietnam, children learn Japanese language from the school level.

But when we deal with conventional technology like web application development, mobile application development or customised software development, there is not that much of a difference in quality and skills between a Bangladeshi engineer and a Vietnamese engineer.

But when speaking of advanced technology like artificial intelligence, block chain, big data, IOT or robotics, the skills of a Bangladeshi engineer will definitely be in advantageous position compared to a Vietnamese one.

It has been seen historically proven that children in countries of south east Asia are very skilled in logic and number problems by dint of birth. Technologies of the 4IR like artificial intelligence, block chain or robotics are nothing but a game of logic and numbers.

Besides, the government has also taken several initiatives to increase foreign investment in the country. Bangladesh has a plan to develop 28 hi-tech parks all around the country.

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