

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▲ 0.80%	▲ 1.00%	\$1,880.95	\$50.30	▼ 3.00%	▼ 0.18%	▼ 0.09%	▲ 0.76%	BUY TK 83.95	101.29	111.17	12.65
5,115.19	8,883.01	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	45,553.96	26,714.42	2,846.52	3,420.57	SELL TK 84.95	105.09	114.97	13.30



# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY DECEMBER 22, 2020, POUISH 7, 1427 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

## Construction set to be costlier as rod prices soar



**AT A GLANCE**

Price of MS rod (60 grade) rose to **Tk 64,000** per tonne

The price was **Tk 54,000** a month ago and **Tk 61,500** a year ago

Price of steel scrap soared by **\$100** per tonne in a month

Now its price is **\$480** in global market

In April the price declined to **\$270**

Millers say steel prices may rise further in coming days

**JAGARAN CHAKMA**

Steel prices jumped 17 per cent in the last one month as millers hiked the rates in the wake of spiralling scrap prices in the international market, which will make the implementation of public construction projects and home building costlier.

The retail price of 60-grade MS (mild-steel) rod rose to Tk 64,000 per tonne, up from Tk 54,000 a

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month ago and Tk 61,500 during the corresponding period last year, data from state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh showed.

The price of steel scrap increased by \$100 per tonne in international markets recently, said Manwar Hossain, president of the Bangladesh Steel Mill Owners Association.

"But suppliers can't deliver the steel scrap adequately due to the supply chain disruption. There is a shortage of scrap in the global market," he said. Hossain called the latest increase in the price of the rod as price correction.

MS rod price was Tk 60,000 per tonne on average before the pandemic. It declined to Tk 50,000 per tonne in the June-November period, when millers sold finished products for cash to stay afloat, Hossain said.

According to him, the price of rod would increase further in the coming days because of the rise in the price of steel scrap.

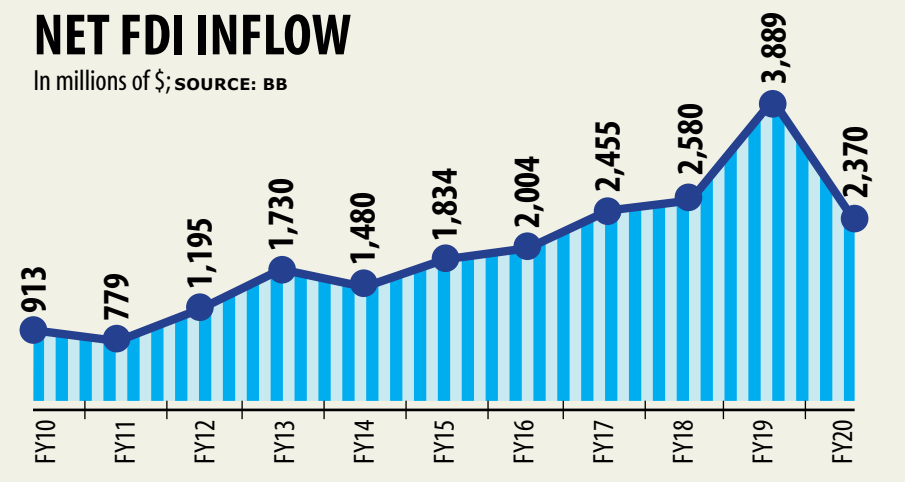
Mir Nasir Hossain, a former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said the hike in the price of MS rod would put a negative impact on the infrastructure and construction sectors as steel is a key component.

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## FDI edges down for first time in 7yrs

### NET FDI INFLOW

In millions of \$; SOURCE: BB



**AKM ZAMIR UDDIN**

Foreign direct investment to Bangladesh dropped last fiscal year, the first decline in seven years, because of the pandemic-induced slowdown in business and regulatory barriers.

Net FDI nosedived 39 per cent year-on-year to \$2.37 billion last fiscal year, data from the central bank showed.

The about-face in the FDI came just a year after it surged to its highest on record, riding mainly on Japan Tobacco Inc's acquisition of Akij Group's tobacco business for \$1.47 billion. In 2018-19, net FDI stood at \$3.88 billion.

Although the financial meltdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic has taken a

toll on the FDI flow, the whole situation should not be judged by the ongoing economic hardship alone, analysts say.

"FDI flow across the globe has declined in recent periods due to the financial crisis, which started in March," said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Global FDI flows are forecast to decrease by up to 40 per cent in 2020, from their 2019 value of \$1.54 trillion, according to the World Investment Report 2020 of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released in June.

This will bring the global FDI below \$1 trillion for the first time since 2005.

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## Major commodity processors more into crushing oilseeds

Imports triple to 30 lakh tonnes in 3 years

**SOHEL PARVEZ**

Local firms are gradually expanding their oilseed crushing capacities, not just to get more oil but to also cater to a growing demand for soybean meals among feed manufacturers, industry leaders said.

Two big commodity importers and processors -- City Group and Meghna Group of Industries (MGI) -- have enlarged their abilities over threefold in the past one year.

Another major commodity trader, TK Group of Industries, is building facilities to foray into the annual soybean meal market of roughly 15 lakh tonnes for the making of poultry, fish and animal feed by dedicated mills.

"We expect to start crushing in our mills by June," said its director for finance, Md Shafiqul Ather Taslim.

It is the fourth firm to adopt the mashing operations to retain competitiveness in the soybean oil market through the resulting cut in production cost.

At the same time, there is also a market for soybean meals, he said. The TK mill will have a daily seed pressing capacity of 2,500 tonnes.

This will take the combined ability of local mills to 18,500 tonnes, according to industry operators.

Earlier in October last year, City Group enlarged their proportion to 7,000 tonnes from 2,000 tonnes.

The MGI augmented to 5,500 tonnes earlier this year from its previous 2,500 tonnes.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in its latest report on oilseeds said four countries, including Bangladesh and Pakistan, either took to squeezing soybean or expanding capacities in the past 15 years.

As a result, Bangladesh's oilseed imports jumped to 30 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2019-20 from nearly 10,000 tonnes three years ago, USDA data shows.

"This has reduced imports of soybean meal," said Mostafa Kamal, chairman and managing director of MGI. He said the entry of more mills into the business would create jobs.

Bangladesh imports most of its requirement of oilseeds, such as soybean, as local production is insignificant.

This gives further lift to soaring imports.

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A farmer sprays pesticides in his soybean field to control pests. The photo was taken from Char Hasan village of Subarnachar upazila in Noakhali.

STAR FILE

## E-commerce payment made easier for buyers abroad

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Bank yesterday brought ease to e-commerce payment methods meant for buyers abroad, a development that would draw more attention to Bangladeshi products from overseas consumers.

Cross-border exports under e-commerce were earlier allowed only against payments received over the internet before shipment.

From now on, local exporters will be allowed to realise the payment after shipping the goods, according to a central bank notice.

This means foreign payment service providers, which are dedicated to settling transactions between overseas consumers and local exporters, will get relief from having to enable payments before the release of products by exporters, said a central bank official.

But such merchant service providers, which are third parties to help merchants accept payments, will have to maintain an adequate balance with local banks such that local exporters can smoothly receive payments against purchase of their goods.

The payment service providers enable merchants in accepting credit and debit payments as well as fund transfers through internet banking.

They provide both a merchant account and a payment gateway, ensuring that businesses can collect and manage their payments in a simple and efficient way.

Bangladeshi products may further attract more foreign buyers in the global market due to the latest relaxation, said the central bank official. As per the central bank rule, banks can allow such exports from e-commerce websites for individual sales of up to \$500 or equivalent under cash on delivery and payment on shipment.

## Robi's stock market debut on Thursday



### ROBI IPO: BY THE NUMBERS

- Debut: Dec 24
- Amount raised: Tk 523 cr
- Shares: 52.37 cr or 10pc of total shares
- Face value: Tk 10
- Subscription: oversubscribed by 5.74 times

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Robi Axiata's initial public offering (IPO) is set to hit the secondary market on Thursday.

The company raised Tk 523.7 crore from the stock market by offloading 52.37 crore shares for Tk 10 apiece, eclipsing Grameenphone's Tk 486.1 crore floatation back in 2009.

Of this amount, around Tk 136 crore came from the telecom operator's employees while the remaining Tk 387.7 crore was raised from the market. Although it was the biggest IPO in the country's history, it was oversubscribed 5.74 times following a great hype among investors in the run up.

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## Crystal Ins shares see surprise rise in demand

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

An abnormal surge in the stock price of newly listed companies is still a common scenario in the local market, where these overvalued shares ultimately leave an impact on the investors.

Crystal Insurance, which debuted yesterday, is no exception as the company's stocks saw four times higher demand than its free float shares.

On the first day of trading, the insurer saw a purchasing demand of 5.48 crore shares even though its free float was 1.6 crore shares.

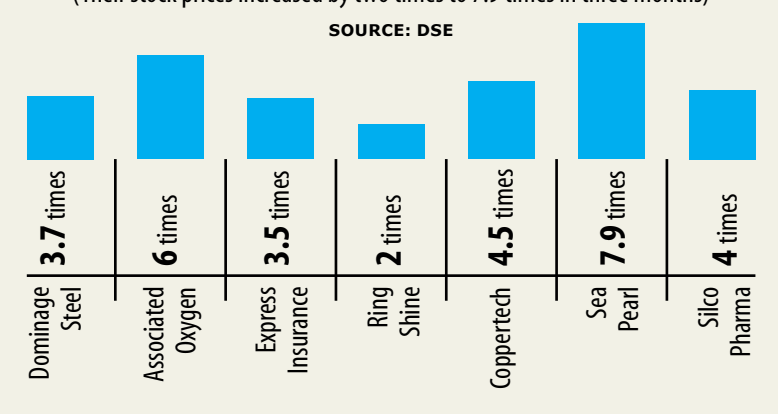
Besides, only one trade was executed yesterday, when a single initial public offering (IPO) winner sold 500 shares at Tk 15 each, according to DSE data.

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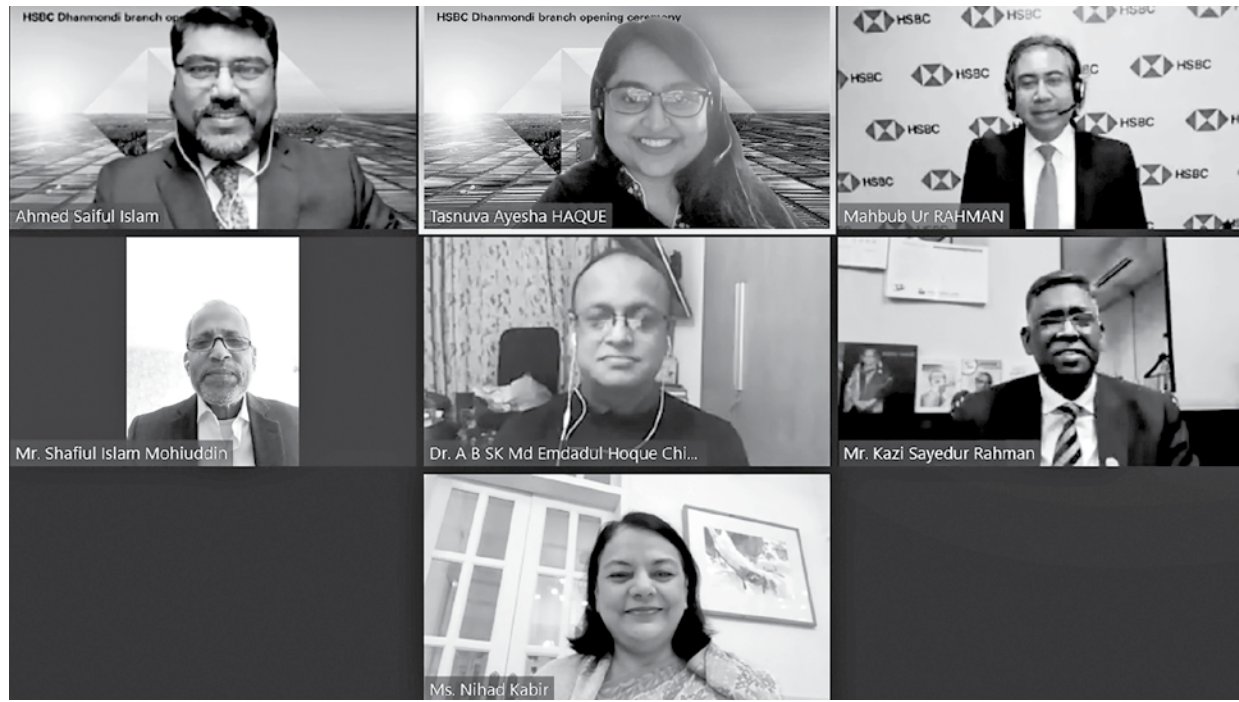
### PRICE RISE OF RECENT DEBUTANTS

(Their stock prices increased by two times to 7.9 times in three months)

SOURCE: DSE







**Md Shafiqul Islam Mohiuddin, a lawmaker; Nihad Kabir, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka; Kazi Sayedur Rahman, a deputy governor at Bangladesh Bank; and Md Mahbub ur Rahman, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh, attend the inauguration of an HSBC branch on the 10th floor of Bay's Park Height at Dhanmondi in Dhaka through a digital platform recently.**



**Hafizur Rahman Khan, chairman of Runner Automobiles, presides over its 20th annual general meeting through a digital platform yesterday. The company approved 10 per cent cash dividend for the year ending on June 30, 2020. CEO Reazul Chowdhury was present.**



**Mohammed Shawkat Jamil, managing director of United Commercial Bank, opens its 199th branch at Thakurgaon yesterday.**



**MM Monirul Alam, CEO of Guardian Life Insurance, and Mohammad Faizur Rahman, CEO of United Hospital, exchange documents recently of an agreement facilitating life insurance for the hospital employees.**

# Tesla's rise made 2020 the year the US auto industry went electric

REUTERS, Detroit  
Tesla Inc and Wall Street made 2020 the year that the U.S. auto industry decided to go electric.  
Tesla's market capitalization surged above \$600 billion, making the once wobbly startup founded by billionaire Elon Musk worth more than the five top-selling global vehicle making groups combined. The exclamation point came on Friday when Tesla rose to a record high in frantic trading ahead of the stock's much anticipated entrance into the benchmark S&P 500 index.  
For 2021, all signs point toward the industry accelerating its shift toward electrification, a turning point as historically momentous as the launch of Ford Motor Co's moving assembly line for the Model T or General Motors' 2009 bankruptcy.

Tesla's ascent came the same year that activist hedge funds and other investors ratcheted up pressure on corporations to fight climate change. Evidence is growing that more investors have concluded the century-long dominance of internal combustion engines - "ICE" in industry slang - is headed toward a close within a decade.  
From London to Beijing to California, political leaders also embraced plans to start phasing out internal combustion engine-only vehicles as early as 2030. Pressure to cut greenhouse gas emissions undermines the logic for significant new investments in ICE engines. Thousands of manufacturing jobs are currently tied to internal combustion in the United States, Britain, Germany, France, Japan and other countries.  
Other powerful forces also shook

the auto industry's status quo this year. The COVID-19 pandemic stripped away the sales and profits that incumbent automakers had counted on to fund methodical transitions to electric vehicles. China's rapid recovery from the pandemic exerted an even more powerful gravitational pull on industry investment.  
This was the year GM Chief Executive Mary Barra and other top industry executives began to echo Tesla's Musk, saying electric vehicle battery costs could soon achieve parity with internal combustion technology. Still, it remained to be seen whether consumers, particularly in the United States, are ready to say goodbye to petroleum-fueled pickup trucks and SUVs.  
The best-selling vehicles in the United States remain large, petroleum-burning pickup trucks.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
তথ্য মন্ত্রণালয়  
জাতীয় গণমাধ্যম ইনস্টিটিউট  
১২৫/এ, দারুস সালাম, এ. ডব্লিউ. চৌধুরী রোড, ঢাকা-১২১৬

নম্বর: ১৫.৫৫.০০০০.৩০১৫.১২.১১৬.২০.১২৪১

০৫ পৌষ ১৪২৭ বঙ্গাব্দ  
২০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

**নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

তথ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ধীন জাতীয় গণমাধ্যম ইনস্টিটিউটের রাজস্ব খাতের নিম্নবর্ণিত ০৮(আট)টি শূন্য পদ পূরণ করার লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশি নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

ক্রম	পদের নাম	গ্রেড ও বেতনস্কেল (জারবে: ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী)	পদ সংখ্যা	যোগ্যতা	যে সকল জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন
১.	মেকানিক	গ্রেড-১৫ (৳ ৯৭০০-২৩৪৯০/-)	১	মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ এবং ১ (এক) বছর মেয়াদী রেডিও বা টিভি ট্রেন্ডকোর্স এর সার্টিফিকেট থাকিতে হইবে।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, নরসিংদী, ফরিদপুর, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, জামালপুর, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
২.	কাঠমিস্ত্রী	গ্রেড-১৫ (৳ ৯৭০০-২৩৪৯০/-)	১	জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ অথবা ৮ম শ্রেণী পাস।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
৩.	অফিস সহকারি কাম কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক	গ্রেড-১৬ (৳ ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-)	১	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে অনূন্য দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ বা সমমানের জিপিএতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা; এবং (গ) নির্ধারিত ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
৪.	গাড়িচালক	গ্রেড-১৬ (৳ ৯৩০০-২২৪৯০/-)	২	(ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; (খ) হালকা গাড়ি চালানার বৈধ হালকা ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স; (গ) অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন চালকগণ আধিকার পাইবেন।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
৫.	নিরাপত্তা প্রহরী	গ্রেড-২০ (৳ ৮২৫০-২০০১০/-)	২	জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ অথবা ৮ম শ্রেণি পাসসহ সুস্বাস্থ্যের অধিকারী। আনসার বা ভিডিপি ট্রেনিং প্রাপ্ত প্রার্থীদের আধিকার দেওয়া হইবে।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
৬.	পরিচ্ছন্নতা কর্মী (ঝাড়দার)	গ্রেড-২০ (৳ ৮২৫০-২০০১০/-)	১	জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ অথবা ৮ম শ্রেণি পাস।	১-৪ নং ক্রমিকের পদে ঢাকা, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, নারায়নগঞ্জ, কিশোরগঞ্জ, টাঙ্গাইল, ময়মনসিংহ, নেত্রকোণা, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নাটোর, সিরাজগঞ্জ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ, গাইবান্ধা, কুড়িগ্রাম, নিলফামারী, ঠাকুরগাঁও, বাগেরহাট, সাতক্ষীরা, ভোলা, পটুয়াখালী, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ ও হবিগঞ্জ জেলার প্রার্থীরা আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

আবেদন ফরম পূরণ এবং পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাবলী অবশ্যই পূরণ করতে হবে।

- ২০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০ খ্রি: তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স ১৮-৩০ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। তবে ৩ নম্বর ক্রমিকের বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা ৪০(চল্লিশ) বৎসর পর্যন্ত শিথিলযোগ্য ("বিভাগীয় প্রার্থী" অর্থ এরূপ কর্মচারী যিনি সংশ্লিষ্ট অধিদপ্তর বা পদগত বা দপ্তর এর রাজস্ব খাতে সৃষ্ট পদে অনূন্য ২(দুই) বৎসর স্থায়ী বা অস্থায়ীভাবে চাকুরিরত)। এছাড়া প্রতিবন্ধী ও মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কোটার প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা ৩২ বছর পর্যন্ত শিথিলযোগ্য। বয়স প্রমাণের ক্ষেত্রে কোনো প্রকার এফিডেভিট গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
- সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি সংস্থায় চাকরিতে নিয়োজিত প্রার্থীগণ নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষকে অবহিত করে আবেদন করবেন এবং মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় অনাপত্তিপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
- নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের বিদ্যমান বিধি-বিধান ও কোটা এবং পরিবর্তিত (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) বিধি-বিধান ও কোটা অনুসরণ করা হবে।
- মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের মূলকপি সহ সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদ, বিশেষ কোটা (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) ও প্রশিক্ষণ সনদপত্রের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। এছাড়া মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দার প্রমাণ হিসেবে ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদ এবং আবেদনকারী মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা হলে আবেদনকারী যে মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা এ মর্মে সংশ্লিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর/পৌরসভার মেয়র/পৌরসভার কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদের মূল কপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।
- মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় অনলাইনে পূরণকৃত **Application Form** সহ জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, বিশেষ কোটা (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) ও প্রশিক্ষণ সনদপত্রের ০১(এক) স্টেট সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে। এছাড়া জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দার প্রমাণ হিসেবে ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদ এবং আবেদনকারী মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা হলে আবেদনকারী যে মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা এ মর্মে সংশ্লিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর/পৌরসভার মেয়র/পৌরসভার কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদের ০১(এক) স্টেট সত্যায়িত ফটোকপিও দাখিল করতে হবে।
- বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত পদের সংখ্যা, হ্রাস-বৃদ্ধি, বাতিল বা প্রত্যাহার করার ক্ষমতা নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।
- প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে প্রার্থীদের লিখিত, ব্যবহারিক ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ করা হবে। পরীক্ষার স্থান ও সময়সূচী পরবর্তীতে জানানো হবে। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো প্রকার অর্থ বা দৈনিক ভাতা (টিএ/ডিএ) প্রদান করা হবে না।
- ক্রটিপূর্ণ/অসম্পূর্ণ আবেদন কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
- নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।
- অনলাইন আবেদনপত্র পূরণ সংক্রান্ত নিয়মাবলী ও শর্তাবলী:

ক. পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি <http://nimc.teletalk.com.bd> এই ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ করতে পারবেন।  
আবেদনের সময়সীমা নিম্নরূপ:

- Online-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমা দান করার তারিখ ও সময়: ২২/১২/২০২০ খ্রি: তারিখ, সকাল ১০:০০ টা।
- Online-এ আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ১১/০১/২০২১ খ্রি: তারিখ, বিকাল ০৫:০০ টা। উক্ত সময়সীমার মধ্যে User ID প্রাপ্ত প্রার্থীগণ Online-এ আবেদনপত্র Submit-এর সময় থেকে পরবর্তী ৭২ (বায়ান্তর) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে এসএমএস এ পরীক্ষার ফি জমা দিতে পারবেন।

খ. Online-এ আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থী তার স্বাক্ষর ৬০ KB এর মধ্যে (দৈর্ঘ্য ৩০০ x ৫৫ পিক্সেল) স্ক্যান করে নির্ধারিত স্থানে Upload করবেন।

গ. Online-এ আবেদনপত্রে পূরণকৃত তথ্যই যেহেতু পরবর্তী সকল কার্যক্রমে ব্যবহৃত হবে, সেহেতু Online-এ আবেদনপত্রে Submit করার পূর্বেই পূরণকৃত সকল তথ্যের সঠিকতা সম্পর্কে প্রার্থী নিজে শতভাগ নিশ্চিত হবেন।

ঘ. প্রার্থী Online-এ পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্রের একটি রঙিন প্রিন্ট কপি পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যে কোনো প্রয়োজনে ব্যবহারের নিমিত্ত সংরক্ষণ করবেন।

ঙ. SMS প্রেরণের নিয়মাবলি ও পরীক্ষার ফি প্রদান: Online-এ আবেদনপত্র (Application Form) স্বাক্ষর/স্বাক্ষরিত পূরণ করে নির্দেশনা মতো ছবি এবং স্বাক্ষর Upload করে আবেদনপত্র Submit করা সম্পন্ন হলে কম্পিউটারে ছবিসহ Application Preview দেখা যাবে। নির্ভুলভাবে আবেদনপত্র Submit করা সম্পন্ন হলে প্রার্থী একটি User ID, ছবি এবং স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত একটি Applicant's copy পাবেন। উক্ত Applicant's copy প্রার্থী download পূর্বক রঙিন প্রিন্ট করে সংরক্ষণ করবেন। Applicant's কপিতে একটি User ID নম্বর দেয়া থাকবে এবং User ID নম্বর ব্যবহার করে প্রার্থী নিম্নোক্ত পদ্ধতিতে যে কোনো Teletalk pre-paid mobile নম্বরের মাধ্যমে ০২(দুই) টি SMS করে পরীক্ষার ফি বাবদ ক্রমিক ১-৪ এ উল্লিখিত পদে আবেদনের ক্ষেত্রে ১১২/- (একশত বারো) টাকা এবং ক্রমিক ৫-৬ এ উল্লিখিত পদে আবেদনের ক্ষেত্রে ৫৬/- (ষাট) টাকা অতিরিক্ত ৭২ (বায়ান্তর) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে জমা দিবেন। এখানে বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখ্য যে, "Online-এ আবেদনপত্রের সকল অংশ পূরণ করে Submit করা হলেও পরীক্ষার ফি জমা না দেয়া পর্যন্ত Online আবেদনপত্র কোন অবস্থাতেই গৃহীত হবে না।"

প্রথম SMS: NIMC<space>User ID লিখে Send করতে হবে 16222 নম্বরে।  
Example: NIMC ABCDEF  
Reply: Applicant's Name, Tk ..... will be charged as application fee. Your PIN is 12345678. To pay fee Type NIMC<space>Yes<space>PIN and Send to 16222.  
দ্বিতীয় SMS: NIMC<space>Yes<space>PIN লিখে করতে হবে 16222 নম্বরে।  
Example: NIMC YES 12345678  
Reply: Congratulation Applicant's Name, payment completed successfully for NIMC Application for post XXXXXXXXXXXX User ID is (ABCDEF) and Password (XXXXXXXXX).

চ. প্রবেশপত্র প্রাপ্তির বিষয়টি <http://nimc.teletalk.com.bd> ওয়েবসাইটে এবং প্রার্থীর মোবাইল ফোনে SMS-এর মাধ্যমে (শুধু যোগ্য প্রার্থীদেরকে) যথাসময়ে জানানো হবে। Online আবেদনপত্রে প্রদত্ত প্রার্থীর মোবাইল ফোনে পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যান্ত্রীয় যোগাযোগ সম্পন্ন করা হবে বিধায় উক্ত নম্বরটি সাবস্ক্রিপ্ট সচল রাখা, SMS পড়া এবং প্রাপ্ত নির্দেশনা তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে অনুসরণ করা বাঞ্ছনীয়।

ছ. SMS-এ প্রেরিত User ID এবং Password ব্যবহার করে পরবর্তীতে রোল নম্বর, পদের নাম, ছবি, পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থানের / কেন্দ্রের নাম ইত্যাদি তথ্য সংবলিত প্রবেশপত্র প্রার্থী Download পূর্বক রঙিন Print করে নিবেন। প্রার্থী প্রবেশপত্রটি লিখিত পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের সময়ে এবং উত্তীর্ণ হলে ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষার সময়ে অবশ্যই প্রদর্শন করবেন।

জ. শুধু টেলিটক প্রি-পেইড মোবাইল ফোন থেকে প্রার্থীগণ নিম্নবর্ণিত SMS পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করে নিজ নিজ User ID এবং Password পুনরুদ্ধার করতে পারবেন।

- User ID জানা থাকলে, NIMC<space>Help<space>User ID & Send to 16222.  
Example: NIMC Help User ABCDEF & send to 16222.
- PIN Number জানা থাকলে, NIMC<space>Help<space>PIN<space>PIN No & Send to 16222.  
Example: NIMC Help PIN 12345678 & send to 16222.

(মো: সোহেল রানা)  
উপ-পরিচালক (প্রশাসন)  
ও সদস্য সচিব, বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি



Star's head of marketing honoured as Asia's outstanding youth marketer

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Md Tajdin Hassan, head of marketing at The Daily Star, has received YWN Marketing Excellence Award 2020 from Asia Marketing Federation under an "Asia's top outstanding youth marketer of the year" category.



Md Tajdin Hassan

Jury members selected recipients throughout November 2020. The physical awarding is expected to be held around February 2021 in Singapore.

"I was the one gifted with this award, but a strong team of journalists, a bunch of creative professionals and an empowering leader play very crucial roles for this success," said Hassan.

"I pray this gives me more inspiration to give more to my organisation, my community, and the world as much it gave me pride and joy."

Hassan was recently awarded Joy Bangla Youth Awards 2020 for leading "Mission Save Bangladesh", a social platform that raised \$200,000 during the pandemic and helped more than 0.1 million people with daily groceries.

He was also presented an award for audience, social media and community engagement by the World Association of Newspapers & News Publishers. Hassan has been featured in The Washington Post, Yahoo News, INMA and GXpress.

He completed his MBA from the Institute of Business Administration under the University of Dhaka.

Coca-Cola, Kewkradong Bangladesh clear debris from Saint Martin's

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Coca-Cola Bangladesh and Ocean Conservancy's country coordinator Kewkradong Bangladesh have successfully concluded a 10th Annual International Coastal Cleanup on the beaches of the country's only coral island, Saint Martin's Island.

Despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, approximately 520 volunteers from different professions came together to collect more than 870 kilograms of marine debris this year. As part of its global commitment to create a "World Without Waste" by 2030, Coca-Cola has been supporting the initiative in Bangladesh since 2011.

Kohinoor Chemical gives 10pc stock, 35pc cash dividends

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Kohinoor Chemical Co (BD) yesterday approved 10 per cent stock and 35 per cent cash dividends for the year ending on June 30, 2020.

The announcement came at its 33rd annual general meeting held on a digital platform.

The audited financial statements for 2019-2020 were presented and unanimously approved by shareholders.

Chairman Mohammad Obaidul Karim, Managing Director Md Rezaul Karim, Director Md Ebadul Karim and independent directors Quazi Mamun-ul Ashraf and Lt Col (ret'd) Kamal Ahmed, were present.

FDI edges down for first time in 7yrs

FROM PAGE B1

In March, the International Monetary Fund said that investors had withdrawn \$83 billion from developing countries since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, the largest capital outflow ever recorded.

"Along with the latest economic slowdown, Bangladesh has been struggling to attract desired FDI for years because of red tape," Rahman said.

The government had targeted to attract FDI to the tune of \$32 billion under the seventh five-year plan stretching from FY16 to FY20.

"But the country managed to attract less than \$10 billion, which is frustrating beyond a doubt," he said.

"This means there have been many other issues along with the pandemic for the sharp decline in FDI last fiscal year."

The government is still far from resolving the dispute settlement mechanism, implementing one-stop services, and providing required logistics and trade facilitation to foreign investors, according to the economist.

Poor services have been discouraging foreign investors for years to make Bangladesh as their investment destination, he said, adding that the barriers should be resolved promptly.

FDI in the field of equity capital declined 39 per cent year-on-year to

\$728 million, Bangladesh Bank data showed.

"The regulatory environment in Bangladesh is weaker than in peer countries, and it is emerging as a major roadblock to attracting equity capital," said Mamun Rashid, an investment analyst.

Some unnecessary regulations have also created complexity to make a smooth investment in the country as well, he said.

Restrictions on movement across the globe to tackle the spread of the deadly flu have also turned out as a key obstacle for the expansion of FDI, Rashid said.

Chief executives of global companies are now unable to visit their probable investment destinations due to the restriction, he said.

In addition, the country's FDI is shifting its pattern.

In the past, foreign investors preferred investing in power plants, private hospitals, banks, and non-bank financial institutions.

"Now, they are thinking of investing in fintech, pharmaceutical industries, LNG plants, and agro-based manufacturing units," Rashid said.

Intra-company loans dipped to \$132 million in contrast to \$1.33 billion in FY20. Reinvestment of earnings by existing foreign companies grew around 11 per cent to \$1.51 billion.

"A good number of foreign investors are still shying away from the country to choose it as their investment destination," said Muallem A Choudhury, a director of Brummer & Partners (Bangladesh) Ltd, which advises foreign businesses looking to invest in the country.

The lock-in period for a foreign investor in the country is three years, which is excessively higher than in many other competing nations, he said.

The lock-in period means investors, who hold 10 per cent shares in a company or directorship, are not allowed to sell shares within the stipulated period.

This means the exit from Bangladesh is difficult, Choudhury said. "The lock-in period for foreign investors should be reduced to one year."

Brummer & Partners, which started its journey in 2009, has so far attracted \$200 million in equity capital from foreign businesses to the country, he said.

The volume of domestic consumption is large, given the size of the population. Still, per capita income has not reached to a satisfactory level, Choudhury said.

Per capita gross domestic product in Bangladesh was \$1,816 in 2019. Bureaucratic complexity should be avoided as it irritates foreign investors, Choudhury said.

Construction set to be costlier as rod prices soar

FROM PAGE B1

"The implementation of the annual development programme will be affected significantly. Local construction companies will fall in trouble as procurement entities don't adjust prices for the projects with tenure less than 18 months," he said.

Similarly, procurement entities don't keep the provision of revising the budget of projects whose implementation tenure is more than 18 months, although the latest public procurement rules support it. The condition of price adjustment is, however, kept in case of the involvement of foreign companies, the entrepreneur said.

Until October, millers ran mills at half of their production capacity because of lower demand and lower prices owing to the fallouts of the pandemic. Manufacturers are now facing a shortage of raw materials, although the peak season started in November.

As much as 90 per cent of the raw materials are imported from the US, Canada, Italy, the UK and Australia, which are yet to see a pickup in economic activities.

"In the last six months, the steel makers' losses amounted to around Tk 6,000 crore," said Hossain.

An unhealthy competition also prevailed in the domestic market as everybody wanted to make cash through the selling of stocks of finished products, he noted.

Md Shahidullah, secretary-general of the Bangladesh Steel Manufacturers Association and managing director of Metrocem Steel, said they are now importing scrap for around Tk 40,000 per tonne. It was Tk 32,000 just two months ago.

Manufacturers need to spend Tk 20,000 per tonne on average to produce finished products, taking the

production cost to Tk 60,000.

"So, the price rose," he said.

The steel industry in Bangladesh is worth Tk 55,000 crore.

There are about 40 active manufacturers with a combined capacity to produce nine million tonnes of steel a year. Of them, Abul Khair Steel, GPH Steel, BSRM and KSRM meet more than half of the annual demand of eight million tonnes.

Tapan Sengupta, deputy managing director of BSRM, said the price would increase further as the price of steel scrap is on the rise.

According to him, scrap is selling at \$480 per tonne now, but it was \$270 in April.

"The price of steel scrap rose as China is importing steel whereas the country had exported finished products before the pandemic. If China imports the scrap, nobody can say how much the price will increase," he said.

He said manufacturers had to adjust the cost, causing the price to go up. However, the price is still at a tolerable level in Bangladesh compared to other countries.

The government's infrastructure projects account for 35-40 per cent of the total steel consumption in Bangladesh, up from 15 per cent a decade ago.

Kamal Mahmud, vice-president of the Real Estate & Housing Association of Bangladesh and managing director of Skiro Builders, said the hike in steel price would increase the cost of projects by 15 per cent.

"This will affect the construction industry. The sudden increase of rod price will affect not only the infrastructure and construction sectors, but also the development work in the country."

He alleged that steel and cement makers hike the price during the peak season every year.

"We have to buy rods despite the price increase."

Major commodity processors more into crushing oilseeds

FROM PAGE B1

In the past 10 months to October this year, oilseed imports soared 36 per cent year-on-year to 26.81 lakh tonnes, shows data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Biswajit Saha, director, corporate and regulatory affairs of City Group, said the increase in imports was a result of the expansion of crushing abilities to derive soybean and sunflower oils apart from supplying soybean meals.

"Consumption of soybean oil has increased," he said, adding that soybean oil accounts for a third of the annual consumption of edible oil in the country.

"The market for soybean meal is also growing gradually," he said, adding that the daily demand for the feed ingredient was 13,000 tonnes.

Saha also said that local mills now face increased competition from imported soybean meals as no duty was levied. He demanded it be imposed to protect local seed crushing mills.

Md Ahsanuzzaman, general secretary of the Feed Industries Association of Bangladesh, said the entry of more players should increase competition in the soybean meal market, which stands at around 15-20 lakh tonnes annually.

At the same, the import benefit for both soybean and its associated meals should continue to ensure that feed makers get their ingredients at a competitive rate, he said.

Robi's stock market debut on Thursday

FROM PAGE B1

Being a multinational company, investors have huge expectations on the country's second largest telecom operator, said stock investor Zahidul Islam.

"Although its profits are still very low compared to its paid-up capital, we hope it will increase after the IPO funds are utilised," he added.

Robi's paid-up capital stood at Tk 4,714 crore while its turnover Tk 7,481 crore in 2019. Meanwhile, its net profit was around Tk 20 crore and earnings per share Tk 0.04.

Besides, the telecom operator posted a 77 per cent plunge in profits between July and September from that a year earlier.

With the IPO proceeds, it will expand its network coverage in order to grab more of the market share in the country.

Robi had 5.1 crore subscribers at the end of November, which is 30 per cent of the market, while Grameenphone has more than 7.76 crore active subscribers.

"We are proud to be on the verge of making our debut in the stock market with the country's largest ever IPO," said Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer of Robi.

"Our focus will now turn to make sure we deliver the most innovative digital lifestyle solution for our customers while safeguarding the interest of our valued local and foreign shareholders," he added.

The company will be traded in the N category with the trading code Robi.

The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission approved Robi's IPO on September 23, allowing it to raise funds from the stock market by issuing shares under the fixed price method.

Robi was the first operator to roll out 3.5G services in Bangladesh. It then introduced 4.5G services across all 64 districts in 2018.

Robi was also the country's first operator to test 5G service on its network.

The carrier started its journey in 1997 under the brand name Aktel. It then changed its name to Axiata (Bangladesh) in 2009 and then to the present Robi Axiata in 2010.

Crystal Ins shares see surprise rise in demand

FROM PAGE B1

This was due to a lack of sellers amid a high turnout of buyers, which led the company's trade being halted for the day.

Some of the IPO lottery winners are trying to buy the shares as they hope the stock value will see a significant rise soon, a stock broker said.

The issue of overvaluation was previously criticised by market analysts and so the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) implemented a new system where the value of newly listed stocks cannot rise more than 50 per cent in the first few days.

But still, a number of debutant companies saw their share values to be tripled even though their prices eventually drop a few months after listing.

For instance, Coppertech Industries' stock price rose to Tk 42 in the first few days following a face value of Tk 10. After just three months though, its value dropped to Tk 18.

People are rushing for newly listed companies without realising their track record and tendency to provide dividends, the broker said, adding that investors need to be more careful.

Actually, the investors hope that Crystal Insurance also will see the same rise that was seen for Express Insurance, according to Abdur Rashid, a stock investor.

Express Insurance was prevented from rising over 50 per cent in the first few days of listing but after that, it rose continuously

to hit Tk 35 within a few months.

"Until the tendency stops, newly listed companies will be overvalued and stock investors will continue to be impacted," Rashid added.

Gamblers help create fake demand and create a craze among investors, said a top official of a merchant bank.

"As they saw there were no sellers, they influenced the demand on the trading board at the Dhaka Stock Exchange and the IPO winners became more hopeful seeing the higher demands," he said.

If the BSEC takes action after seeing proof of this through its surveillance system, then the real manipulator will be caught and the issue will be reduced, he added.

"We have already initiated a circuit breaker so that debutant stocks cannot rise abnormally in the first two days," said BSEC Spokesperson Rezaul Karim.

Earlier, there was no circuit breaker for share values in the first days of listing but now, a debutant company's stock price is limited to a 50 per cent rise for the first two days. After that, it is bound to follow the normal circuit breaker of 10 per cent deviation.

"If the investors don't realise this, then how can it be controlled," he said, adding the tendency of abnormal price hikes slightly reduced after the circuit breaker was implemented.

When issue size will be higher, then people's expectation will be reduced and the process will be eased, Karim said.

Advertisement for Sylhet Customs and VAT Commission. Includes logo, contact information, website, and a table of services with fees. The table lists various services like registration, valuation, and clearance with their respective charges and processing times.

Advertisement for Padma Oil Company Limited. Includes company logo, name, and address. The main part is a 'Tender Notice' for the repair of Refueller No. 4518. It details the tendering process, including the deadline, location, and contact information for the company.



# Build a suitable culture to treat customers as king

ACI Logistics Executive Director Sabbir Hasan Nasir shares his thoughts at The Daily Star's The Chief Executive Show powered by Marico

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

'Customer is king' is a mantra which is easy to say but very difficult to apply in real life.

To prioritise the motto in any organisation, the chief executive or the top brass have to lead from the front to build a suitable culture.

This was the main takeaway from a recent interview with Sabbir Hasan Nasir, executive director of ACI Logistics.

With a vision to set up retail outlets all across the country, ACI Logistics launched Shwapno in 2008.

It has since become Bangladesh's largest grocery chain with Nasir leading it towards the horizon since December 2011.

Pragmatism, vision, goal orientation and adaptability are the key traits needed to achieve personal and professional esteem, according to the executive director.

As said by Warren Buffet,

## THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE SHOW

creating trust with customers by providing quality products.

"When a top leader practically shows that quality is his number one priority, others become bound to follow," he said, adding that customer complaints cause anxiety.

And when the top brass becomes anxious, it is felt in every sector of the organisation until things eventually get better.

This is why Nasir believes that achieving operational excellence is a daily endeavour, considering the scope for human error.

So to make its operations more effective and efficient, Shwapno arranges weekly meetings to dissect customer complaints and find solutions.

"Other than apologising to an aggrieved customer, we offer



Sabbir Hasan Nasir

He also believes he was very fortunate to have started his professional career as a research assistant to Professor Jamal Nazrul Islam, a veteran physicist and cosmologist.

A year later though, Nasir shifted to the corporate world in search of financial stability and became an intern at the Bata Shoe Company, where he was later promoted to senior efficiency officer.

During his time at Bata, Nasir completed an evening MBA degree from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at the University of Dhaka.

He then worked in various capacities for Tetra Pak Asian Emerging Market, Dekko Accessories, Golfrate H&PC Limited in Angola and Shapla Initiative.

In June 2006, Nasir became CEO of the country's leading furniture company, Otobi.

But before joining ACI Logistics, Nasir had started his own consulting firm called, 'Road Map Limited', in 2011.

As Shwapno's executive director, Nasir kept developing himself to adapt with the fourth industrial revolution.

He strongly believes that geopolitical and macroeconomic data are important aspects for business.

"We live in a globally connected economy," he said.

Along with keeping himself updated, Nasir also ensures that Shwapno's employees are similarly skilled.

"Among more than 4,200 employees, around 2,800 are store based and are the key focus for skills training as it is here

where customers interact with us," Nasir said.

Around 72 per cent of all the vegetables and 52 per cent of the fish sold by Shwapno at its various outlets are directly sourced from farmers.

So, the sourcing team members must have the skills to properly interact with the growers.

This is how Shwapno became the country's first member of the Global GAP (Good Agricultural Products) in Southeast Asia.

Besides, the brand's office support employees are also trained to be agile and understand Kanban, which is a workflow management method.

"The skill upgradation process is happening all the time," Nasir added.

Shwapno stayed open amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and Nasir even encouraged his frontline employees to believe that they are serving the nation in this time of crisis.

While maintaining proper health safety protocols for all employees, Shwapno did not layoff a single worker due to

the Covid-19 fallout and there were no salary cuts either, the executive director said.

Shwapno found other opportunities amid the crisis as well by collaborating with delivery services like Foodpanda to expand its touchless grocery delivery service.

It also initiated the 'Phone e phone e bazaar', so that customers who avoid ecommerce platforms could place orders via a simple phone or video call.

For communicating, Nasir has one simple tip: be yourself, there's nothing to worry.

"Just give all of yourself and that's the secret," he said.

Even though Nasir has already achieved a lot in his professional career, he never gave up his passion for music.

In the past couple of years, his music career flourished as he released several tracks.

"I could never be anything orthodox because I am basically an artist. Primarily, I am a musician, but as the music industry has many obstacles, I found my living in business management," Nasir said.

"But still, I kept my artist soul with me," he added.

*"When a top leader practically shows that quality is his number one priority, others are bound to follow it."*

it takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.

"And I strongly believe in this," Nasir said.

To maintain the company's reputation, Nasir focuses on

gifts and make him or her a part of our fact-finding team as an adviser," Nasir said.

Shwapno was named a 'Superbrand' by Superbrands Bangladesh for two consecutive years in 2019 and 2020.

Shwapno was also declared

one of the top 10 overall brands last year, which was the fourth consecutive year it won the 'Best Brand Award' by Kantar Millward Brown and the Bangladesh Brand Forum.

The journey to the top was not an easy one though as by the time Nasir had taken the helm, Shwapno was struggling to stay afloat with 33 of its 70 outlets having closed down.

But under his stewardship, the grocery chain roared back to life.

There are currently 143 Shwapno outlets across 22 districts.

Ever since Agora became the country's first supershop in the late 90s, the industry has evolved and now accounts for

1.6 per cent of the country's \$16 billion retail market.

Meanwhile, Shwapno holds a 49 per cent share of the supermarkets' market share.

Having led the brand to all these achievements, Nasir believes that it was fate that shaped him.

During his formative years, Nasir had a passion for music and even formed a band when he was a 10th grade student at the Saint Joseph High School in Khulna.

After completing his HSC, Nasir was persuaded by his father to join the department of mechanical engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology (BUET).



## GLOBAL BUSINESS

# China's stunning export comeback has factories scrambling for workers

REUTERS, Beijing

China's manufacturing recovery, fuelled in part by demand from COVID-constrained consumers abroad, has soared past expectations this year, so much so that factories are now struggling to fill a shortage of blue-collar workers to clear mounting orders.

The country's output of industrial robots, computer equipment, and integrated circuits has roared back from its coronavirus paralysis - production for the year to November is up 22.2 per cent, 10.1 per cent and 15.9 per cent, respectively.

Much of the manufacturing boom has come from foreign demand, with export growth topping expectations for eight of the last nine months.

The remarkable turnaround comes as China has mostly eradicated the virus and contrasts with the sluggish comebacks seen in major industrialised peers, where factories are still struggling with pandemic disruptions and the hit to demand.

China's global export share increased to over 13 per cent in the second and third quarters from 11 per cent last year, according to Nomura, the highest for any quarter since at least 2006 when the investment bank started compiling the data.

While emergency stimulus in the United States and Europe pumped money into consumers' wallets, the fight to contain the virus in those markets fired up demand both for China-made PPE goods and gadgets for westerners stuck at home.

Government data shows that in November there were more people employed in the industrial sector in Jinhua city, which includes the eastern export hub of Yiwu, than there had been at any time since end-2017.

"We laid off about 50 workers in the first half, and now with orders soaring, we're short of staff and not able to further ramp up production," said Deng Jinling, who owns a thermal flask factory



Employees, wearing masks, work on a production line manufacturing display monitors at a TPV factory in Wuhan, China.

in Yiwu, selling to the Middle East, United States and Europe.

"We tried hiring dozens of temporary workers but they're not good enough," said Deng.

Some workers she laid off have found jobs back home and are not willing to travel back just a few months before the upcoming Lunar New Year holidays in February.

But with clients chasing her heels, Deng bought two automated production lines at the end of November to boost efficiency.

"We've never thought about doing this before, but this year has been so busy and we've exhausted

our options," she said. "One automated production line is the equivalent of 10 workers."

A private index by Renmin University tracking demand for blue-collar labour hit a record in the third quarter. Some factory managers have hiked wages by 25 per cent to 10,000 yuan (\$1,530) per month, well above the average starting wage for graduates, according to local media.

For China's bicycle industry, 2020 is the best year in a decade, with consumers abroad craving exercise and ways to avoid public transport, said Liang Xiaoling,

general manager at Guangzhou-headquartered Trinx Bikes.

"Our capacity maxed out in September and October, and we hired a lot of temporary workers to catch up with the demand," said Liang, adding that orders are now stretching into 2022.

His factories now employ about 100 extra temporary workers on top of 1,000 or so regular staff.

Although manufacturing investment was slow to recover, falling 3.5 per cent over the first 11 months, strong export demand helped it rebound in the last quarter.

Investment jumped 12.5 per

cent year-on-year in November, up from 3.7 per cent in October, according to research from analysts at CICC, an investment bank.

Zhang Qinming, who owns a company manufacturing speakers for European and American markets, says demand is 25 per cent higher than in previous years.

He's been paying his normal staff overtime to keep up and has also hired temporary workers for about 18-19 yuan an hour, 20 per cent more than his full-time workers. As a last resort, he's leased other factories to take the load.

## NEWS In Brief

### UK retail sales pick up ahead of Christmas

REUTERS, London

British retail sales recovered in December as restrictions on shops were eased and consumers bought food and other essentials ahead of Christmas, but the outlook for January was the worst since the summer, a survey showed on Monday.

The Confederation of British said its monthly retail sales balance rose to -3 in December from -25 in November, its highest level in three months.

But the outlook for January was much more negative with a reading of -33.

"It says something about the challenges the retail sector has faced during 2020 that stable sales volumes in the run-up to Christmas were seen as a good result for the time of year," CBI economist Ben Jones said.

"The new year looks set for an unpromising start, with retailers anticipating a sharp fall in sales in January."

The survey was conducted between Nov. 23 and Dec. 14, covering the end of a second English coronavirus lockdown, when non-essential shops were closed - and the return to tiered restrictions.

### Gold jumps on US stimulus deal cheer

REUTERS

Gold climbed to a six-week high on Monday, driven by news that US congressional leaders reached agreement on a COVID-19 aid package, while lockdowns in the United Kingdom soured appetite for riskier assets and added to the metal's support.

Spot gold rose 0.9 per cent to \$1,896.56 per ounce by 0745 GMT, having earlier hit its highest since Nov. 9 at \$1,906.46. US gold futures gained 0.8 per cent to \$1,904.20.

The \$900 billion US stimulus deal reached on Sunday comes as the pandemic accelerates, infecting more than 214,000 people in the country each day.



Gold bar and coins are on display at a store of Hatton Garden Metals in London, Britain.