

Ekram Hussain, managing director of TVS Auto, Bangladesh, and R Dilip, executive vice president for international business, TVS Motor Company, attend the launch of TVS Apache RTR 160 4V motorcycle with Bluetooth enabled TVS SmartXconnect* through a digital platform.

Big blow for the big industry

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Besides, amid the threat of a second wave of Covid-19 infections, exporters received 30 per cent fewer work orders for next season (December to March) compared to the pre-pandemic levels.

What followed were heated protests at major industrial hubs such as Ashulia, Gazipur, Savar, Narayanganj and Chattogram, where terminated workers took to the streets with a demand to get their jobs back.

At the same time, PPE production breathed new life into the sector as the demand for such items has gone through the roof amid this time of crisis.

"It has been extremely difficult for us to battle the coronavirus fallout as the economic uncertainty worldwide had a negative effect on us," said Rubana Huq, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The BGMEA chief highlighted three important issues that could prove crucial for the sector's future growth and sustainability.

First, the sector needs product diversification, including the production of man-made fibres.

Second, the workforce needs to be reskilled so that they can cope with the advent of modern technology.

Third, Bangladesh needs to be branded as a shining example for the global garments sector, Huq said.

Around 300 small-and-medium garment factories were shut down in Dhaka and Narayanganj, affecting the jobs of roughly 48,000 workers, according to BGMEA data.

Of the closed factories, not a single one has reopened yet, said BGMEA Director Md Rezwan Selim.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the exact number of displaced workers but Selim, who is responsible for monitoring labour affairs, said the majority of these workers had been re-employed following the return of work orders and capacity expansion at certain factories.

The small and medium enterprises (SME) did not get funds from the government's stimulus packages in a timely manner due to the stringent

conditions placed on the benefit and also because they were engaged in subcontracting, according to Selim.

Around 1,200 SMEs are in big trouble as they either lack the work orders or financial strength to deal with the lower price pressure from buyers because of the absence of funds from the stimulus packages.

The Covid-19 fallout also forced the garment sector to adopt new policies for the first time in its four-decade history.

For instance, factory owners disbursed about Tk 3,000 crore to their workers every month through various mobile financial services (MFS) in a bid to maintain social distancing.

"Making sure that the workers were paid through MFS was an important achievement since registering so many people with the system within such a short period of time was truly remarkable," said MA Razzaque, chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID).

Although the stimulus package for wage support in the export industry was an effective policy response, perhaps more proactive support measures could be considered for the informal sector workers and other vulnerable groups, he added.

If the world economy recovers fast in 2021, then Bangladesh's garment sector would benefit from it as well.

"I would also like the Biden administration to smooth over our existing trade disputes while the World Trade Organisation could renew its commitment for multilateralism," said Razzaque, also the research director of the Policy Research Institute (PRI).

2021 will be a significant year for Bangladesh as it will celebrate its 50th year of independence and qualify for graduation from a least developed country (LDC).

Razzaque went on to say that 2021 should be a year where promoting the country's export competitiveness will be a top priority.

"A clear LDC graduation action plan should be formulated alongside a much bigger push for export diversification in 2021," he said.

Meanwhile, the global outlook depends on how fast developed countries in the west manage to vaccinate their population.

"I also hope foreign direct investment will also pick up," Razzaque added.

On the export front, Bangladesh's garment shipments fell to \$0.37 billion in April, the lowest monthly total in the country's history since 1978, when the first consignment of formal woven shorts were shipped.

However, exports started recovering following the arrival of a stimulus package totalling Tk 10,500 crore for paying the wages and allowances of garment sector workers.

According to the Transparency International Bangladesh, the textile and garment sectors have received about Tk 62,887 crore as stimulus funds from the government and private organisations.

In the January-November window of 2020, Bangladesh's total garment exports stood at \$24.83 billion, a 17.64 per cent year-on-year fall from \$30.15 billion, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

However, shipments of knitwear items are on the rise following a change in the global fashion sense amid Covid-19, when most people prefer comfy clothes to stay at home with.

Of the total earnings from garment shipments in July to November, \$7.13 billion came from knitwear items, which registered 4.8 per cent year-on-year growth.

Meanwhile, woven items fetched \$5.75 billion, a decline of 8.29 per cent, according to EPB data.

Kutubuddin Ahmed, chairman of Envoy Group, said he has no plan to expand his business next year as he is now trying to make his business more sustainable by recycling yarn and other wasted clothing items.

"We thought that the business would return to normalcy by December but then the second wave started in the UK and all business with the country got subsequently halted. We may be optimistic but the reality is different."

Sukuk era begins

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So, banks prefer the sukuk, which offers a higher fixed profit rate, as a safe haven for their investment, a central banker said.

Thirty-seven banks, including eight Islamic lenders, and two individual investors took part in the auction.

State-run Sonali Bank was the top bidder as it placed a bid of Tk 2,000 crore.

In addition, banks are now sitting on excess liquidity because of lower credit demand due to the business slowdown. The excess liquidity in the banking sector stood at Tk 169,650 crore in September.

According to a central bank study, 28 per cent of the country's investors are reluctant to invest in the interest-bearing T-bills, bonds and other government securities.

Against the backdrop, both

conventional and Shariah-based banks heavily invested their fund in the tool, another central banker said.

The profit rate of the sukuk is higher than the five-year Treasury bond, which now offers an interest rate of 4.64 per cent.

The sukuk will mature in five years, and the government looks to implement the safe water supply project by June 30, 2025.

Credit growth takes another beating in Nov

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Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, said that the ongoing business slowdown

may worsen further unless the vaccine is not available in the first quarter of the next year.

The outstanding loans in the

private sector stood at Tk 1,120,902 crore as of November in contrast to Tk 1,114,322 crore the previous month.

Govt sets 8pc GDP growth target in five-year plan

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This meant that average economic growth in the Seventh Five-Year Plan came to stand at 7.13 per cent, down from its target of 7.4 per cent.

The seventh plan, spanning from 2016 to 2020, saw a per capita income of \$1,939. It was \$1,970 during the last fiscal.

However, with the private sector opening up, exports picking up and remittance flow turning robust, the government expects the pandemic's adverse effects to fade in the second half of the current fiscal year.

The recovery would also be driven by external demand, a rebound of domestic demand and the impact of the fiscal stimulus.

Internal resource mobilisation, maximisation of the potential of human resources and an increase in revenue collection are also priorities for the government to further the recovery.

According to the eighth plan's draft, Bangladesh would post 8.20 per cent in the current fiscal, 8.30 per cent in

the next fiscal and 8.51 per cent in the final year of the plan period, which is FY25.

During the plan period of 2020 to 2025, the government set a target to create 1.13 crore jobs, of which 32.5 lakh would be based externally.

Per capita poverty line would be brought down to 15.6 per cent from the current 20.5 per cent.

The plan aims to ensure inclusive and sustainable development, including quality education and a universal healthcare system. It also targets to create employment for people who lost their jobs for Covid-19.

It also puts emphasis on climate change risk mitigation and sustainable urbanisation.

Human resource development, especially with education being considered one of the prime drivers of empowerment, is a key objective of the plan and for which different strategies and approaches have been taken.

The plan will continue to work

on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).


The plan's implementation requires Tk 64,959.8 billion in FY 2021. Of it, Tk 12,301.2 billion (18.9 per cent) would come from the public sector and Tk 52,656.6 billion (81.1 per cent) from the private.

Out of the estimated Tk 64,959.8 billion, Tk 57,483.9 billion (88.5 per cent) is scheduled to come from domestic sources and Tk 7,475.9 billion (11.5 per cent) from foreign sources.

The plan also stressed on collecting internal resources. The tax-to-GDP ratio is projected to increase from the current 8.90 per cent to 12.30 per cent by the end of the year.

In order to achieve an increase in revenue and reduce dependence on trade tariffs, the plan recommends further reforming the revenue law and continuing efforts to modernise and strengthen the tax administration.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Upazila: Gurudaspur
District: Natore.
www.lged.gov.bd



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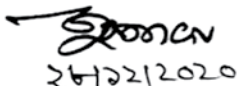
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e-Tender Notice No: 04/2020-2021 (Works)
(NOTM Method)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works, details are given below:-


Tender ID No	Package No.	Name of work	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
512896	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAT/GUR/2020-21/W1.01301	Construction of additional Class Room Kandail GPS under PEDP4 of Upazila: Gurudaspur District: Natore.	25-Jan-2021 17:00	26-Jan-2021 14:00	26-Jan-2021 14:00
513207	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAT/GUR/2020-21/W1.01302	Construction of additional Class Room Mokimpur GPS under PEDP4 of Upazila: Gurudaspur District: Natore.	25-Jan-2021 17:00	26-Jan-2021 14:05	26-Jan-2021 14:05
513237	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAT/GUR/2020-21/W1.01303	Construction of additional Class Room Mashinda GPS under PEDP4 of Upazila: Gurudaspur District: Natore.	25-Jan-2021 17:00	26-Jan-2021 14:10	26-Jan-2021 14:10
513238	e-Tender/PEDP4/NAT/GUR/2020-21/W1.01304	Construction of additional Class Room Sabgari GPS under PEDP4 of Upazila: Gurudaspur District: Natore.	25-Jan-2021 17:00	26-Jan-2021 14:15	26-Jan-2021 14:15

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Memo No. 46.19.0000.159.14.126.20-382

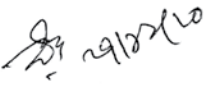
Date: 27/12/2020

Invitation for Tenders (Works)
e-Tender Notice No-02/2020-2021(Works)

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

Package No	Tender ID No.	Source of Funds	Description	Online Tender Notice Publication date	On-line Tender Closing Date
GCC/Z-08/T-02/2020-2021/01	528709	Own / Revenue found	A) Estimato of HBB Road From South Panishail Moure to Madobpur Mollaha House Via Panishail Mollah Bari. B)Estimat of HBB Road From Madobpur deep Tubule wall to Madobpur Bottola. C)Estimat of HBB Road From Kashimpur Zirani Road to Chondra Nabi Nagar road Hatil Furniture via Councilor Parvin house & Zuma Fashion(Word-01)(2) Improvement of Earthen & HBB Road From Madhobpour Deep Tubule wall to Riaz Master House.(Word No-01). (3) Construction of RCC Road From Zirani Bazer to Goalbari road GCC Last Border.(Word-01)(4) Construction of BC Road From Chondra Nabi Nagar road to GCC Last Border via Nobil Textile.(Word-01) (5) Improvement of Earthen Road From Chondra Nabi Nagar road to Baroybari Mosque via Sidur Rahaman House.(Word-01)	30-Dec-2020 17:00	Please see tender notice in e-GP
GCC/Z-08/T-02/2020-2021/02	528716	Own / Revenue found	(1) A) Estimato of HBB Road From Mr.Saidur Rahman Mondol House to Nager Halot via Monpura ParkSarabo Connecting road Via Lottifpur Center Mosque. B)Estimat of HBB Road From Bhovanipur rice mill to Andar Manik bottola Via lohakoir Mazar road & Eyad Alli fokir Madrasa & Sanowar house & Khan Knitwear. C)Estimat of HBB Road From Lottifpur Primary School to Sardagong Connecting road via Sock MillBunian knit Fashion Lottifpur Khan House & Bura market to Baitul Nayem Zame Mosque Via Hasem Khan House.(Word-02)	30-Dec-2020 17:00	-
GCC/Z-08/T-02/2020-2021/03	528718	Own / Revenue found	A) Estimato of HBB Road from Bhabanipur Primary School to Mother textile via Lutif primary School. B) Estimato of HBB Road from Kashimpur-zirane Road Molla Market To Hatimara Road via Baganbri Chowrasta.(Word-02.03) (2) A) Estimato of HBB Road from Hatimara Mawlanabari Mosque to Kashim Shop via H/O Gony Mia & Mir Akbor House to Kalu Mia H/O B) Estimato of HBB Road from Shibrampur Sanghar textile to Shibrampur High School.C) Estimato of HBB Road from Bhabanipur Bottola to Beximco Gate no-02 via Mamun Nagar.(Word- 01.02.03)	30-Dec-2020 17:00	-
GCC/Z-08/T-02/2020-2021/04	528719	Own / Revenue found	1 A Estimato of HBB Road from Kashimpur-Zirani road forest office to Kuddus Market.Salika DighiDr.Nasir house & Aynal Market.B Estimato of HBB Road from Sardagonj Gedu Rajer Bagan bari to Mission gate Motin Gat Via Barek NagarIshak Maulana housePathan House.Word-04 2 Estimato of HBB Road From Kashimpur- Sreepur Road BADC mour To Mother Textile In between Median & Drain.Word-04	30-Dec-2020 17:00	-
GCC/Z-08/T-02/2020-2021/05	528721	Own / Revenue found	A Estimato of HBB road from Kashimpur- Zirani road west para Mosque to Norshingpur road Eid ga field Via Sultan MarketShoildubi BottalaBagbari Govt.Primary School. B Estimato of HBB road from Barendra Tara Mosque to Narshingpur connecting road Via Asrayon prokolpoSurabari Sorkar bari culvert.C Estimato of HBB road from Shoildubi Dana factory to Narshingpur connecting road Via Chuna Factory.Word-0405	30-Dec-2020 17:00	-

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