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Thais may relocate textile, RMG units to Bangladesh

MCCI lists potential investment areas to the visiting team

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Considering abundant and cheap labour and low cost of infrastructure as well as a congenial investment climate in Bangladesh, Thailand has expressed interest to relocate its textile and ready made garments (RMG) industry here.

Thailand is also eager to invest in the energy sector.

"Thai entrepreneurs are looking for other investment destinations to expand or relocate their textile and RMG industry. To this end, Bangladesh could be a potential destination for them," Vittaya Praisuwan, executive adviser of Thai Board of Investment, said addressing a discussion organised by Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in Dhaka yesterday.

Praisuwan is leading a 15-member Thai delegation.

He said the Thai investment board recently organised a seminar on 'promoting Bangladesh towards Thai investors' in Thailand where a number of entrepreneurs attended.

Going back to Thailand, they will let the Thai entrepreneurs know about investment opportunities in Bangladesh and pursue them to come here, he said, adding that a delegation comprising only textile and RMG entrepreneurs from his country will visit Bangladesh very soon.

Speaking at the function, Thai

Ambassador in Dhaka Suphat Chitranukroh said Thailand is very much experienced in energy sector, especially in gas exploration. Referring to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between Petrobangla and a Thai company to conduct a study on energy exploration, he said, "We can help Bangladesh in this sector."

The Thai envoy said their entrepreneurs are interested in extending their cooperation in hotel services here.

Mingpant Chayavichitsilp, president of Thai-Bangladesh Business Council, said many Thai entrepreneurs want to expand their industries and they are looking for new places for setting up those either in joint venture or in 100 percent ownership.

Pointing to the fact that the Thai businesspeople have to make their consignment of goods from Bangkok through Singapore, which is very costly and time consuming, he said, "It would have been less costly if they could make consignment from Bangladesh as the country has its own ports such as Chittagong Port," he observed.

"It is a right time to do something here," he said, adding that Bangladesh businessmen can also come forward to invest in Thailand.

In his welcome speech, MCCI President Latifur Rahman said investments in sectors like textile, leather, paper and pulp, energy,

telecommunications, tourism, healthcare, agro-based and agro-supporting industries have excellent prospects.

"Leather processing and leather products are also a potential area of investment as Bangladesh has established itself as a source of quality leather and footwear," he said.

Terming Bangladesh one of the lowest consumers of energy, he said with the growth of the economy, the demand for energy is going up by over 800MW annually.

"The projected demand is due to reach 5000MW by the end of the current year. This will require US\$ 5-7 billion investments in generation and distribution of electricity. So the Thai government or entrepreneurs will find attractive opportunities in energy generation and distribution," Rahman said.

The MCCI chief said the infrastructure sector also provides wide opportunities. "Ports, railways, transport and communications can be of immense profit to Thai investments," he said.

In addition, he said, investments in areas like hand-tools, electronics, LPG cylinder, surgical instruments and computer software can be profitable.

Among others, Rafiqul Islam, managing director of Pragati Insurance Ltd, and Kamran T Rahman, deputy managing director of Pubali Jute Mills Ltd, spoke at the function.



Leader of the Thai Board of Investment delegation Vittaya Praisuwan addressing the members of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Dhaka, at a meeting in the capital yesterday. Thai Ambassador to Bangladesh Suphat Chitranukroh and MCCI President Latifur Rahman were also present.

Shahjalal Bank starts share trading on DSE

UNB, Dhaka

Shahjalal Islami Bank Limited, one of the leading private banks, yesterday made its share trading debut on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

The bank raised about Tk 94 crore through IPO (initial public offering), the largest in Bangladesh's capital market history.

The shares having a face value of Tk 100 was traded at a range between Tk 290 and Tk 265 to close at Tk 278 per share on the first day of trading.

DSE president Abdullah Bokhari, Senior Vice President Ahmad Rashid, CEO Salahuddin Ahmed Khan, Shahjalal Islami Bank Chairman Sajjatz Juma and Managing Director M Kamaluddin Chowdhury were present at the formal launching of the stock trading at DSE building.

EU wants WTO to move against India's import tax regime

PTI, London

The European Union has sought the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel to rule on India's tax regime for imported spirits and wines which they alleged is "discriminatory" and "in clear breach of WTO rules."

"India has maintained extremely high duties on imported spirits and wines for many years. They restrict European exports and are in clear breach of WTO rules," Peter Mandelson, the EU Trade Commissioner said.

"As we could not resolve our dispute in consultations, the EU sees no other way than to request

the establishment of a WTO panel. We are of course not closing the door to an amicable solution - but the ball is now in India's court," he said in a statement.

The Edinburgh-based Scotch Whisky Association on Tuesday welcomed the EU's decision and said, "Of particular concern to Scotch Whisky distillers is the 'Additional Duty' which is levied on imports in a discriminatory manner and protects domestic producers contrary to WTO rules. When the high Basic Customs Duty is added, imported spirits face an overall tariff burden of up to 550 percent."

Thai business team happy to see return of stability here

Says foreign affairs adviser

UNB, Dhaka

The foreign affairs adviser has said the visiting Thai investment delegation has expressed their happiness to see return of stability in Bangladesh and they are keen to invest here in a bigger way.

Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury told reporters yesterday after a meeting with the 15-member Thai delegation led by Director General of Thai Board of Investment Dr. Nitipoon Navaratna.

Navaratna said Thailand wants to invest in food processing, readymade garment, automobile and electronic sectors and to relocate its labour-intensive industries in Bangladesh, as the production cost in Thailand is high.

Talking to the reporters, Executive Adviser of the Thai Investment Board Vittaya Praisuwan said they discussed about Thai investment.

"There are possibilities and potentials in Bangladesh for expanding Thai investment and business," he said, adding that

already a number of private companies discussed the matter with their potential counterparts and business chambers in Bangladesh.

Isuwan hoped that more Thai companies would come forward in a bigger way with investment in this country.

The foreign affairs adviser said the Thai delegation comprising representatives of both private and public sectors expressed the willingness to relocate their labour-intensive industries here as Bangladesh has labour availability, big market and investment friendly policy.

"They are very happy to see the return of stability in Bangladesh," the adviser said, adding "we have assured all cooperation from our government to encourage the Thai investment."

Replying to a question, Chowdhury said some 31 Thai firms are operating in Bangladesh.

The bilateral trade is heavily tilted towards Bangkok. In 2006, Thai export to Bangladesh was US\$ 462.2 million while its import stood at a paltry \$34.9 million.

Banks urged to improve service quality to help migrant workers

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The banks and other institutions dealing with financial services should find out innovative ideas to improve their service quality so that the migrant workers are encouraged to remit through official channels, bankers and development experts suggested yesterday.

It is also important that the overseas workers and their families make the best use of their hard-earned money, the speakers said at the launching ceremony of Remittances and Payments Challenge Fund (RPPCF) at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

RPPCF is a component of three-year Remittance and Payments Partnership (RPP) Project, which will be implemented by Bangladesh Bank and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) with a grant of 7.5 million pounds (Tk 89.1 crore).

RPPCF will provide grants to private sector and NGO projects to meet the goals of RPP, which aims to help the remittance growth.

"Whatever we import, we have to pay with the remitted money. So, we should respect the remitters and provide best services for them," Bangladesh Bank (BB) Deputy Governor Ziaul Hassan

Siddiqui said in his speech as the chief guest.

BB Executive Director Khandakar Muzharul Haque said the DFID grant under RPPCF has created a scope for helping the poor migrants who work hard for their families.

"We hope that the banks and other institutions who will be awarded from the fund will evolve innovative ideas to channel out remittances," he said.

There are 4 million Bangladeshi migrants across the globe who send annually 5 billion dollars to the country.

Penny Davies, acting senior programme manager of Pro-poor Growth of DFID, said, "Through this fund, we hope to spur outstanding innovation in Bangladesh remittances. This will also provide a superb mechanism for combining the ambitions of the remittance industry with DFID's objectives."

She said DFID is a great believer in the effectiveness of Challenge Funds and we hope that Bangladesh's financial community will come forward with ideas on how to improve remittance flows in ways that benefit the poor.

RPPCF Manager Robert Smith, Project Manager Richard Moss also spoke at the programme.



Chairman of The City Bank Ltd Aziz Al-Kaiser inaugurates the Pragati Sarani branch of the bank in Gulshan, Dhaka yesterday. Senior officials are also seen at the opening ceremony of the bank's 82nd branch.



Students of an educational institute rejoice during a promotional campaign launched by Transcom Beverage for its lemon taste soft drink 'Teem' yesterday in Dhaka.

Govt to bolster ICT for better living standard

Says adviser as SoftExpo2007 kicks off

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government is committed to bolster the growth of ICT sector for improving the living standard of people by using information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool, Science and ICT Adviser Tapan Chowdhury said yesterday.

"For the development of the society ICT has a definite role to play and we are aware of the role of building a knowledge-based society", the adviser said while speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural function of a five-day exposition of IT and IT-enabled services.

Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) is organising the show styled 'SoftExpo 2007' at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

The adviser said in the era of globalisation private sector is the driving force for overall growth of a particular sector and the government has widened opportunity for ICT sector by linking the country

with submarine cable that will further accelerate the growth of this sector.

He also thanked the organisers for arranging such kind of fair that, he said, will create a common platform for students, teachers, experts, professionals and businesspeople.

Describing the performance of the information technology (IT) sector of the country, the BASIS leaders said the domestic IT market grew by 50 percent last year while the growth of software export was 150 percent.

They said dearth of skilled manpower in the sector and lack of adequate financing for the IT companies are the two major problems for taking the growth rate even higher.

"The universities of the country create around 2,000 IT graduates every year whereas the annual demand for skilled workforce in the sector is 4,000", said BASIS President Sarwar Alam.

The private sector alone cannot

flourish the IT sector without proper government help, Alam said stressing government-private joint efforts for gaining expected momentum in this potential sector.

A total of 125 local ICT companies are showcasing software, IT solutions and services, multimedia and animation, e-commerce and job portals, internet and data communication services, telecom services, and high-end hardware at the fair.

The show is open for all between 10am and 8pm everyday with an entry fee of Tk20.

Cellphone operator AKTEL is the main sponsor of the event while Microsoft Bangladesh and Business Promotion Council of commerce ministry are the co-sponsors. The Daily Star, Channel i and Radio Today are the media partners.

Fahim Mashroor, treasurer of BASIS, Kamshul Kasim, chief technical officer of AKTEL, and Firoz Mahmud, country manager of Microsoft Bangladesh, also spoke at the function.



Science and ICT Adviser Tapan Chowdhury visits a stall after inaugurating the five-day SoftExpo2007 that began yesterday at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

বাংলাদেশ তৈল, গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ করপোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা)

সেবা বিভাগ
৩, কাওরান বাজার বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২১৫

তারিখ: ২১-০৩-২০০৭

সূত্র নং ২৪.১১.২২/

"গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ" এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

মিনিবাস ভাড়ার জন্য দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ তৈল, গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ করপোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা) এর কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীদেরকে সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিসে আনা এবং অফিস হতে ফেরত নেয়ার জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত রুটসমূহে ০৩ (তিন)টি মিনিবাস সৈনিক ভাড়া ভিজিটে সরবরাহ করার নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত মিনিবাস চালিকদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

| ক্রমিক নং | মিনিবাস চলাচলের রুট | প্রতিসেট দরপত্র সিডিউলের অফারযোগ্য মূল্য | নিরাপত্তা জামানত/ আনুমানিক |
|--------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| ০১। | (ক) পেট্রোসেন্টার-বাসো-মালাটেক রুট | টঃ ২,০০০.০০ | টঃ ৫০,০০০.০০ |
| | (খ) পেট্রোসেন্টার-মোহাম্মদপুর-মিরপুর-চিডিয়াখানা | টঃ ২,০০০.০০ | টঃ ৫০,০০০.০০ |
| | (গ) পেট্রোসেন্টার-আগারগাঁও-মিরপুর-কালাপানি | টঃ ২,০০০.০০ | টঃ ৫০,০০০.০০ |

০২। অর্থের উৎসঃ পেট্রোবাংলার নিজস্ব অর্থায়ন।

০৩। দরপত্র সূত্র ও তারিখঃ ২৪.১১.২২ (অংশ) তারিখঃ ২১/০৩/২০০৭।

০৪। শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলী সফলিত ভেজার সিডিউল অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (বেলা ৩.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত) আগামী ২৮-০৩-২০০৭ তারিখ হতে ২২-০৪-২০০৭ পর্যন্ত নিম্নবর্ণিত অফিসসমূহ হতে জমা করা যাবে:-

ক) হিসাব বিভাগ, বাংলাদেশ তৈল, গ্যাস ও খনিজ সম্পদ করপোরেশন (পেট্রোবাংলা), ৩, কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা।

খ) হিসাব বিভাগ, তিতাস গ্যাস টি এন্ড ডি কোং লিঃ, ১০৫, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা।

গ) হিসাব বিভাগ, বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন এন্ড প্রোডাকশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (বাগেশ), ৮০/এ-বি, সিক্রেটারী সার্কুলার রোড, শাহজালাল টাওয়ার, মালিবাগ, ঢাকা।

ঘ) হিসাব বিভাগ, গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, রেড ক্রিসেন্ট বোরাক টাওয়ার (লেভেল-৬) ৭১-৭২, পুরাতন এলিমেন্টারি রোড, ইকুটন, ঢাকা।

০৫। যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাঃ সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/ব্যক্তিগত/ব্যক্তিগত বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানে মিনিবাস সরবরাহের ন্যূনতম ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।

০৬। মিনিবাস সরবরাহের অভিজ্ঞতার সন্দেহ এবং এতদসংক্রান্ত কার্যাদেশের কপি, বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, বৈধ ইনকাম ট্যাক্স সন্দেহ এবং মূল কপি/প্রথম শ্রেণীর সরকারি কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত ছায়াছবি এবং সিডিউল ক্রয়ের মূল রসিদ দাখিল করতে হবে।

০৭। মিনিবাসগুলি ন্যূনতম ৩১ (একত্রিশ) আসন বিশিষ্ট কুশনকৃত এবং ১৯৯৬ সন হতে পরবর্তী যেকোন মডেলের হতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ, ক্রটিপূর্ণ, শর্তযুক্ত ও নিরাপত্তা জামানত (আনুমানিক) ব্যতীত কোন দরপত্র বিবেচনা করা হবে না। বিস্তারিত শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলী অনুযায়ী সিডিউল পূরণ করে নির্দিষ্ট তারিখ ও সময়ে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

০৮। ভেজার নম্বর, তারিখ এবং মিনিবাস চলাচলের রুট উল্লেখপূর্বক পৃথক পৃথক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্রসমূহ আগামী ২৩-০৪-২০০৭ তারিখের উপরে বর্ণিত অফিসসমূহে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাগে বেলা ১১.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ফেলতে হবে এবং একই দিন দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকায় মহাব্যবস্থাপক, সেবা বিভাগ (২য় তলা), পেট্রোবাংলা, ৩, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫ এর দপ্তরে দরপত্রসমূহের সম্মুখে (যদি, কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্রসমূহ খোলা হবে।

০৯। দরপত্রের সঙ্গে দরপত্র সিডিউলের শর্তানুযায়ী যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংক হতে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে উপরে উল্লিখিত রুটভিত্তিক নিরাপত্তা জামানত "পেট্রোবাংলা" এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।

১০। প্রত্যেক রুটের জন্য পৃথক পৃথক দরপত্র সিডিউল জমা করতে হবে এবং তদানুযায়ী নিরাপত্তা জামানত বাবদ অর্থ জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।

১১। দরপত্রের ক্ষেত্রে "The Public Procurement Regulation-2003" এর বিধি বিধান অনুসরণ করা হবে।

১২। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ দরপত্র দাখিলের দিন কার্যদিবস ব্যাহত হলে অথবা অন্য কোন কারণে অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই সময়ে ও স্থানে দরপত্র গ্রহণ এবং খোলা হবে।

১৩। পেট্রোবাংলা কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বনিম্ন দরপত্র গ্রহণে বাধ্য নহে এবং কোন কারণ ব্যতীতকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল অথবা পরিমাণ/ত্রুটি/ব্যক্তিগত কারণে অধিকার সার্বক্ষণ করে।

মোঃ হুমায়ুন রহমান
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