

Russia, China, India bribe most to win business abroad

Says Transparency International

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Companies based in emerging economies such as China, India and Russia are perceived to routinely engage in bribery while doing business abroad, according to Transparency International's 2008 Bribe Payers Index (BPI).

Belgium and Canada shared first place in the 2008 BPI with a score of 8.8 out of a very clean 10, indicating that Belgian and Canadian firms are seen as least likely to bribe abroad. The Netherlands and Switzerland shared third place on the index, each with a score of 8.7.

At the other end of the spectrum, Russia ranked last with a score of 5.9, just below China (6.5), Mexico (6.6) and India (6.8), said a statement.

The BPI, released on Tuesday, also shows public works and construction companies are the most corruption-prone while dealing with the public sector, and most likely to exert undue influence on the policies, decisions and practices of governments.

"The BPI provides evidence that a number of companies from major exporting countries still use bribery to win business abroad," said Transparency International Chair Huguette Labelle.

"The inequity and injustice that corruption causes make it vital for governments to redouble their efforts to enforce existing laws and regulations on foreign bribery and for companies to adopt effective anti-bribery programmes. In this spirit, all major exporting countries should commit to the provisions of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention," said Labelle.

Iftikharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said: "Bribe Payers Index once again stresses that corruption is a

global problem demanding global approach."

He said it is disappointing that companies from developed countries continue to engage in bribery in developing countries taking advantage of weak institutions, laws and enforcement.

"Governments have the responsibility and moral obligation to criminalise bribery abroad, and ensure that companies strictly uphold the highest standard of integrity in their international business practice," said Zaman.

TI's 2008 BPI ranked 22 leading exporting countries by the tendency of their firms to bribe abroad. The combined global exports of goods and services and outflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) of these 22 countries represented 75 percent of the world total in 2006.

The 2008 BPI is based on the responses of 2,742 senior business executives from companies in 26 developed and developing countries, chosen by the volume of their imports and FDI inflows.

Bribe Payers Survey, which serves as the basis for the BPI, also looked at the likelihood of firms in 19 specific sectors prone to bribery. In the first of two new sectoral rankings, companies in public works contracts and construction, real estate and property development, oil and gas, heavy manufacturing, and mining were seen to bribe officials most frequently.

The cleanest sectors, in terms of bribery of public officials, were identified as information technology, fisheries, and banking and finance.

A second sectoral ranking evaluates the likelihood of companies from the 19 sectors to engage in state capture, whereby parties attempt to wield undue influence on government rules, regulations and decision-making

through private payments to public officials.

Public works contracts and construction, oil and gas, mining, and real estate and property development were seen as the sectors whose companies were most likely to use legal or illegal payments to influence the state.

The banking and finance sector is seen to perform considerably worse in terms of state capture than in willingness to bribe public officials, meaning that its companies may exert considerable undue influence on regulators, a significant finding in light of the ongoing global financial crisis.

The sectors where companies are seen as least likely to exert undue pressure on the public policy process are agriculture, fisheries and light manufacturing.

While most of the world's wealthiest countries have already subscribed to a ban on foreign bribery, under the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, there is little awareness of the convention among the senior business executives interviewed in the Bribe Payers Survey.

Governments have a key role to play in ensuring that foreign bribery is stopped at the source.

"The unfolding financial crisis has shown us just how integrated the world's markets have become. Accountability must be guaranteed across borders, include improved risk management and reach all the way down a company's supply chain," said Cobus de Swardt, TI managing director.

"Businesses face a complex challenge, but efforts to improve labour practices, for instance, by working with intermediaries, suppliers and affiliates, show that there is no excuse to not extend anti-bribery standards globally in a similar fashion," he added.

India plans 2nd stimulus plan

AFP, New Delhi

India plans a second economic stimulus package to fight flagging growth, a minister said Thursday, amid growing pessimism about prospects for Asia's third-largest economy.

The announcement came after authorities announced last weekend four billion dollars in extra spending and interest rate cuts to try to shield India from the global financial crisis and the fallout from last month's deadly attacks on Mumbai that have further shaken economic confidence.

"We have to ensure our domestic demand continues and the government will be taking all steps" to push the country back onto a nine-to-10 percent growth track, Commerce Minister Kamal Nath told reporters.

"We're again looking at something (a package) for next week," he said.

His statement came as data showed industrial infrastructure output slowed to 3.9 percent between April and October, down from 6.6 percent a year earlier, reflecting the widening global downturn which has hit demand.

The second stimulus package would target employment creation in such sectors as export-oriented textile industry and engineering, Nath said as recruitment agency Manpower India reported a survey suggesting "considerable declines in anticipated hiring activity" by companies.

Nath also said the package would also aim to ensure companies' financing needs were met with the global credit crunch stifling lending.

WB launches \$2b fast-track facility for poorest countries

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank Group has announced the creation of a \$2 billion fast-track facility to speed up grants and long-term interest-free loans to help the world's poorest countries to cope with the impact of the global financial crisis.

The International Development Association (IDA) Financial Crisis Response Fast-Track Facility, approved by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors in Washington on Tuesday, will allow the Bank Group to provide rapid funding for social safety nets, infrastructure, education, and health.

"The poorest people will be hit the hardest by the crisis that is likely to get worse next year. Our Global Economic Prospects report projects developing country growth will be 4.5 percent next year, down from 7.9 percent in 2007. We want to

help countries manage this downturn with rapid financing to help minimise its impacts and by assisting them in designing supportive policies," said World Bank Group President Robert Zoellick.

He also said the facility would fast-track an initial \$2 billion of the \$42 billion of IDA15 resources available to 78 of the world's poorest countries over the coming three years.

Zoellick said: "We cannot afford business as usual. We need a human rescue package, not just a financial rescue package, and we need a new rapid response capability to make sure the money gets quickly to where it is most needed."

Already 100 million people have been driven into poverty as a result of high food and fuel prices, he said, adding: "We estimate that a 1 percent decline in developing country growth rates will trap 20 million more people in poverty."

The facility will foster rapid bank response to the pressing needs of IDA countries based on more swift World Bank analysis of those needs.

It will finance expenditures needed to maintain economic stability and sustain growth, address volatility, and protect the poor.


World Bank Group chief also said the operational responses will include funding budget expenditures in infrastructure services, education and health and social safety nets.

"We hope that our development partners will also benefit from our early assessment of what these countries need to help anticipate, pre-empt and manage the crisis," said the bank's Managing Director Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

The new IDA Facility builds on the Food Crisis facility created earlier this year to support countries hit hard by the food crisis.



Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam hands over the ICAB National Award-2007 for the Best Published Accounts and Reports (banking category) to M Ehsanul Haque, managing director of Prime Bank Limited, recently.



Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL)
(A Company of Petrobangla)
Development Division

Invitation for Tenders

গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ, এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন	শিল্পে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস গৃহস্থালীতে বিকল্প জ্বালানি				
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division.				
2. Agency	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla).				
3. Procuring entity name	Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL).				
KEY INFORMATION					
4. Procurement method	Open tendering method.				
FUNDING INFORMATION					
5. Budget and source of funds	Own fund of company.				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
6. Date and time for selling tender document	14-12-2008 to 04-01-2009 during office hours.				
7. Name & address of the office(s)	Address				
- Selling tender document	Accounts Department, Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL), Red Crescent Borak Tower (Level-4), 71-72, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000.				
- Receiving tender document	Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL), Committee Room, Red Crescent Borak Tower (Level-6), 71-72, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000.				
- Opening tender document	Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL), Committee Room, Red Crescent Borak Tower (Level-6), 71-72, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000.				
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
8. Eligibility of tenderer	This invitation for tenders is open to all eligible tenderers as mentioned in instruction to tenderers (ITT) and Tender Data Sheet (TDS).				
9. Tender's name and other related information:					
Sl. No. & invitation Ref. No.	Description of works	Price of tender document (Tk)	Amount of tender security (Tk)	Time for completion (days)	Tender submission and opening date & time
9.1) GTCL/Dev/Const/26/09/2008-2009	Construction of internal walkway, fencing, surface drain & sludge pond shade, land development work, installation of a tubewell and maintenance works at CGS, Chittagong.	750.00 (seven hundred fifty)	60,000.00 (sixty thousand)	150 (one hundred fifty)	Date: 05.01.2009 Submission time: Up to 12:00 noon. Opening time: 12:15pm on the same date.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
10. Name of official inviting tender		Construction Department, Development Division.			
11. Designation of official inviting tender		Deputy General Manager (Construction).			
12. Address of official inviting tender		Red Crescent Board Tower (Level-5), 71-72, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000.			
13. Contact details of official inviting tender		Tel. No: 9355813		Fax No: 9358100	
14. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.					
15. All activities in connection with the said procurement of works will be guided as per "The Public Procurement Rules-2008."					
GTPR-20/08-09 GD-5706					

China's monthly exports drop in 7 years

ANN/CHINA DAILY

Exports and foreign direct investment (FDI) both fell in November because of shrinking demand overseas, sending fresh signs of economic weakness and prompting calls for more measures to bolster the economy.

Exports dropped 2.2 percent to \$114.99 billion last month, the first monthly decline in seven years, Customs authorities said Wednesday. And FDI fell 36.52 percent year-on-year to \$5.3 billion, the Ministry of Commerce said.

But the country's trade surplus soared to a record \$40.09 billion in November despite a fall in exports because imports fell, too, by 17.9 percent year-on-year after having risen 15.6 percent in October.

Wholesale inflation eased to a 31-month low, thanks to a fall in commodity prices because of rising inventory and weak demand. And the producer price index (PPI) rose 2 per

cent year-on-year, the lowest since April 2006.

The consumer price index (CPI) is expected to fall, too. In October, the CPI, the main gauge of inflation, moderated to an 18-month low of 4 percent year-on-year. It had peaked to 8.7 percent in February.

Inflation weakened largely because of the recent drop in commodity prices, including those of crude oil and non-ferrous metals. Analysts said weak business sentiment has pushed up inventories of raw materials across the country, which in turn depressed factory gate prices.

The wholesale inflation is likely to fall further in the coming months because the slump in global oil and commodity prices haven't been fully taken into account in the latest data.

Business and consumer demand is expected to weaken further in the short term, because it will take a few months for the government's \$586-billion stimulus package to take effect.

World stocks struggle

AFP, London

Global stock markets mostly struggled on Thursday as investors worried about the progress of a rescue plan for the troubled US auto sector, dealers said.

"The bailout packages for the Big Three US automakers are still being debated and there's a significant amount of uncertainty about this -- and what effect they would have on the broader global economy," Hargreaves Lansdown analyst Keith Bowman told AFP.

In European trade near the half-way stage, London climbed back into positive territory, while Frankfurt and Paris fell but trimmed earlier losses. All three markets had fallen by more than one percent in morning trade.

In Asia, Hong Kong added 0.2 percent and Tokyo gained 0.70 percent to hit a one-month high, rising for a fourth straight day despite caution about the US auto bailout. Wall Street, which reopens at 1430 GMT, edged higher overnight.

"The sheer extent of the government bailout that is being proposed for the US auto industry seems to be receiving mixed opinions," CMC Markets dealer Matt Buckland said.

In Washington, the House of Representatives raised hopes on Wednesday by approving a package worth some 14 billion dollars to keep General Motors, Ford and Chrysler afloat -- potentially the most far-reaching intervention in US industry in years.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the legislation helping the Big Three automakers would serve as "a jumpstart for an industry and our country's economic health."

But it now faces stiff opposition in the Senate from Republicans who consider it a quick fix.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Netrakona

Invitation for Tenders (IFT for Works)

Tender Notice No. 20/2008-2009

1. Ministry/Division	Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperative/ Local Government Division.			
2. Agency	Local Government Engineering Department.			
3. Procuring entity name	Executive Engineer.			
4. Procuring entity code	Not applicable.			
5. Procuring entity district	Netrakona.			
6. Invitation for	Improvement of Ziakhara R&H-Chesrakhal GC Road (Ch: 0+000km to 5+900km).			
7. Invitation Ref. No.	XEN/LGED/NET/2008/5136.			
8. Date	04-12-2008.			
KEY INFORMATION				
9. Procurement method	National open tendering method (NOTM).			
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10. Budget and source of funds	GOB, ADB, KFW, GTZ.			
11. Development partners (if applicable)	Asian Development Bank (ADB), Department for International Development (DFID), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ).			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12. Project/programme code (if applicable)	3700.			
13. Project/programme name	Second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project: RIIP-II.			
14. Tender package No.	W-NETR-Khalaijuri-SR-08-06.			
15. Tender package name	Improvement of Ziakhara R&H-Chesrakhal GC Road (Ch: 0+000km to 5+900km).			
Date				
16. Tender publication date	11 December 2008			
17. Tender last selling date	04 January 2009			
Date	Time			
18. Tender closing date and time	05 January 2009 1.00pm			
19. Tender opening date and time	05 January 2009 3.00pm			
20. Name and address of the office(s)	Address			
Selling tender document (principal)	The Executive Engineer, LGED, Dist: Netrakona.			
- Selling tender document (others)	1. Office of Project Director, RIIP-II, LGED, Level-3, Workshop Building, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. 2. Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Dist: Netrakona. 3. Office of the Superintendent of Police, Dist: Netrakona. 4. Office of the Upazila Engineer, Upazila: Khalaijuri, Dist: Netrakona. 5. Office of the Upazila Engineer, Upazila: Madan, Dist: Netrakona.			
- Receiving tender document	1. Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Dist: Netrakona. 2. Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Dist: Netrakona. 3. Office of the Superintendent of Police, Dist: Netrakona. 4. Office of the Upazila Engineer, Upazila: Madan, Dist: Netrakona.			
Opening tender document	Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Dist: Netrakona.			
21. Place/date/time of Per-tender meeting (optional)	Date: 15-12-2008 Time: 11:00am			
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
22. Eligibility of tenderer	The tenderer shall have a minimum five (5) years of specific experience in the construction works all countries except ADB non-eligible countries.			
23. Brief description of goods or works	As described in item-15.			
24. Brief description of related services	N/A			
25. Price of tender documents	W-NETR-Khalaijuri-SR-08-06 Tk 3,000.00			
26.				
Package No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount (Tk)	Completion time
W-NETR-Khalaijuri-SR-08-06	Improvement of Ziakhara R&H-Chesrakhal GC Road (Ch: 0+000km to 5+900km)	Upazila: Khalaijuri, District: Netrakona	4,00,000.00	530 (five hundred thirty) days
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
27. Tender validity		120 days.		
28. Name of official inviting tender		Md Kamrul Ahsan.		
29. Designation of official inviting tender		Executive Engineer.		
30. Address of official inviting tender		Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Dist: Netrakona.		
31. Contact details of official inviting tender		0951-61547 Fax: 0951-61797 lged_netrakona@yahoo.com		
32. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.				
Md Kamrul Ahsan Executive Engineer Ph: 0951-61547				
GD-5807				