

# BTMA demands 15pc cash incentive

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) leaders yesterday demanded 15 percent cash incentives from the government to offset losses stemming from the global recession.

They also demanded a two-year moratorium on bank loan interests. The BTMA leaders also sought a research and development fund, equivalent to 6 percent of export earnings from the RMG and textiles, for manufacturers.

The BTMA leaders raised the demands at a meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office. BTMA President Abdul Hai Sarker headed the delegation.



A delegation of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association meets Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

At the meeting, the BTMA leaders donated Tk 51 lakh for welfare of the families of the army officers, who were killed in the February 25-26 BDR carnage.

The prime minister was briefed on the problems and prospects of the textiles

sector with the help of a power-point presentation.

The BTMA leaders urged Hasina to take effective steps to protect the economy from any negative impacts from the current economic recession.

The government has

formed a high-powered taskforce to monitor the situation and take necessary remedial steps.

The BTMA leaders urged the prime minister to ensure a smooth supply of gas and electricity to maintain uninterrupted production cycles.

## Australia's economic activity lowest since 1982

AFP, Sydney

Australia's economic activity contracted in February to its lowest level in 27 years, according to figures released Wednesday, suggesting the country is headed for recession.

The Westpac-Melbourne Institute leading index, which indicates the likely pace of economic activity three to nine months into the future, shrank to minus 5.1 percent from minus 3.1 in January, pointing to a rapid economic slide.

The latest figure, the worst since 1982, continues a consistent run of negative annualised growth readings from positive 0.5 percent in September.

"The rate of deterioration of the growth rate of the leading index is truly remarkable," said Bill Evans, chief economist at Westpac, one of the country's biggest banks.

"For some months the index has been signalling that the Australian economy will enter a recession."

"The weak readings of the leading and coincident indexes suggest that the economy may continue to contract," he added.

## 10 Warid photo booths in city

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Warid Telecom has set up 10 photo booths at vantage points around Dhaka, which allowed people to capture their festive moods on Pahela Boishakh, says a press release.

Thousands flocked to these booths, drawn by the lure of getting themselves photographed by professionals.

The photo booths were set up nearby TSC and at the Institute of Fine Arts in Dhaka University, Central Public Library, Ramana Botomul, Rabindra Sarobar in Dhanmondi, Wonderland in Gulshan, North South University campus, in front of Sangshad Bhaban and Shanto Mariam University in Uttara.

Some 7,000 photographs were shot during the daylong event.

The photos will be available on the web-portal from April 18.

# Collateral-free loans for SMEs at 9pc interest

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation (SMEF) yesterday began disbursing collateral-free loans at an interest rate of 9 percent, the lowest in the country, to help promote small and medium entrepreneurs.

"The government sincerely wants to support the country's small and medium entrepreneurs. Therefore, we are constantly working to disburse loans to them at a low interest rate," said Dilip Barua, industries minister and chairperson of SMEF.

"We are also trying to lower bank interest rates, the main obstacle to the country's industrial development. A lowered rate of interest would not only help the country's SME entrepreneurs but also the national economy," he added.

He was speaking at a loan handover ceremony "Credit Wholesaling Pilot Programme" organised by SMEF at its office in Dhaka.

"The government has decided to disburse these loans for the manufacturing sector only, instead of the trading sector. We would like to encourage the manufacturing sector to develop the country's status as an

industry-based economy," he added.

Barua stressed modifying the Money Loan Court Act and said, "The act should have a balanced position, instead of favouring the lender. The major shortcoming of this act is that it does not favour the borrower."

In 2004, the government received a grant worth \$50 million from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to support the SME sector. Of the total grant, \$30 million has been sanctioned as SME loans and \$5 million spent on entrepreneur training programmes.

The Bangladesh Bank has sanctioned 78 percent of the Tk 500 crore Small Enterprise Fund (SEF) among the SME entrepreneurs, at a 10 percent rate of interest, said Barua.

Under the Credit Wholesaling Pilot Programme, SMEF would disburse Tk 2 crore to Midas Financing Limited and Shakti Foundation. Barua handed over a check for Tk 50 lakh to Rokia Afzal Rahman, chairman of Midas Financing Limited.

Rahman said the government should consider the SME sector as the backbone of the nation, to improve the country's economic condition.

"The SME sector should be the backbone of the country. It currently manufactures a wide range of essential products and recruits a large number of people," she said.

"The government should have proper plans to nourish and support the sector with capital generation through collateral-free loans at lower interest rates and easy repayment conditions," she suggested.

She emphasised raising the size of loans, which should be disbursed among a wide range of SME entrepreneurs, to encourage more people to get involved in such entrepreneurship.

She also stressed the need for professional training for the SME entrepreneurs, to make them more efficient.

Professor Momtaz Uddin Ahmed, acting managing director of SMEF, said the pilot programme would disburse the amounts as a pre-financing loan, which would help the entrepreneurs receive the loan in a short span of time.

SMEF was established in 2007 with an endowment of Tk 205 crore from the central bank.

Gazi Abdur Rashid, managing director of Midas Financing Limited, was also present.

# Govt to prioritise protection of export-oriented industries

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government will prioritise protection of the export-oriented industries, agricultural growth, employment generation and social security to offset the negative effects of the global economic crisis, the finance minister said yesterday.

AMA Muhith also said policy support would be extended to spur economic activity and seek budgetary assistance from multilateral lending agencies such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

"Creating a climate of confidence is extremely important to face the current crisis," the minister said

at a discussion on "Response of Bangladesh to the Current Global Economic Crisis: A Private Sector Perspective".

The Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) organised the programme at its office, where economists, diplomats, and senior executives of different local and foreign companies took part.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Stephen Evans, US Ambassador James F. Moriarty, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Annisul Huq, BEI President Farooq Sobhan and Centre for Policy Dialogue's Distinguished Fellow Debapriya Bhattacharya spoke. Salman

F. Raham, chairman of the BEI board of governors, chaired the discussion.

Discussions suggested short, medium and long-term measures to cushion the effects of the global economic meltdown.

They also recommended creation of an export stabilisation fund, retention and skill development for returning migrant workers, infrastructure development and simplification and streamlining of rules and procedures to help entrepreneurs.

"We need to turn the current economic crisis into an opportunity. It's very important," said Muhith. "We have to find ways to

make investment productive."

"The government is attaching high importance to employment generation and skills development," he said.

Referring to the banking sector, the minister said banks might feel the crisis as export-oriented industries suffer a decline in exports.

Citing an increase in the funding capacity of multilateral lenders, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Debapriya Bhattacharya of CPD said access to foreign aid would be important. "What we need is more budgetary support," he said.

## Oil slips

AFP, London

World oil prices fell Wednesday on news that US crude reserves had hit the highest level since 1990, indicating fragile demand in the recession-blighted American economy.

In late afternoon trade, London's Brent North Sea crude for May delivery dropped 54 cents to \$14.2 dollars per barrel.



Shahjahan Majumder, acting CEO of Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, and Yongbok Jo, deputy managing director of IDLC Finance Ltd, exchange documents after signing an agreement recently in Dhaka. Under the deal, the hospital will prioritise corporate benefits and medical services to the employees of the financial institution.

**Bangladesh Film Development Corporation**  
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208  
Tender No. FDC/PD-MISE/2007-2008/9/Re/51/Re/80 Dt. 13/04/2009

## Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Short-listing of Pre-shipment Inspection Agent (Re-Tender)

Sealed proposal/documents are invited from the bonafide Pre-shipment Inspection Agent for carrying out the pre-shipment inspection services for various goods/materials to be purchased from abroad under the following terms and conditions:

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Information, Government of Bangladesh.
02	Agency	Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, Dhaka.
03	Name of procuring entity	Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, Dhaka.
04	Procuring entity district	Dhaka, Bangladesh.
05	Expression of interest for selection of	Pre-shipment Inspection Agent.
06	EOI for Ref. No.	FDC/PD-MISE/2007-2008/9/Re/51/Re/80.
07	Date	13/04/2009.

**KEY INFORMATION**

08	Procurement sub-method	Open tendering method.
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**FUNDING INFORMATION**

09	Budget and source of funds	Revenue.
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**PARTICULAR INFORMATION**

10	(a) EOI closing date and time	Dt. 13/05/2009 up to 2.00pm.
	(b) EOI opening date and time	Dt. 13/05/2009 up to 2.30pm.

**INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT**

11	Brief description of the assignment	To carry out comprehensive pre-shipment inspection which should include the inspection and compliance of quality, quantity, specification, packing, marking and weight as per terms of contract besides supervision of loading of goods to be shipped from different countries of the world against import contracts.
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12	Experience, resources & delivery capacity required	Intending firms have to submit the following documents along with the EOI (offer): - Brochure/prospectus summarizing their facilities, areas of the expertise, general information including legal documents; - Description of similar assignments; - Experience in similar operating conditions; - Availability of appropriate experience and professional qualifications among applicant's staff and resources to carryout the said assignment; - Administrative strength, logistics and financial capability.
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13	Other details	A short-list of potential PSI Agents would be prepared from the individuals/firms who would register their expression of interest to this notice. Terms of Reference (TOR) and evaluation criteria will be issued to the short-listed individuals/firms for submission of proposals. Final selection of the PSI Agent will be made in accordance with the Public Procurement Regulation-2008.
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14	Association with foreign firms is	
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(a)	Ref. No.	Phrasing of services	Location	Indicative start date (month/year)
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**PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS**

15	Name of official inviting EOI	SM Kaiser Hossain Mollick.
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16	Designation of official inviting EOI	Deputy Director (Procurement).
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17	Address of official inviting EOI	Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
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18	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Tel: 8120997, Fax: 8802917280.
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19	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs without assigning any reason thereof.	
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**SM Kaiser Hossain Mollick**  
Deputy Director (Procurement)  
On behalf of Managing Director of BFDC

GD-1947

# More 26pc GDP, if 100pc electrification

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The size of gross domestic product (GDP) would increase by additional 26 percent in a year on electrification of the whole of the country, said economist Abul Barakat yesterday.

"Tk671 billion could be added to the economy and 410 million litres of diesel and kerosene could be saved if the country is 100 percent electrified," Barakat told a seminar in Dhaka.

Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) organised the seminar on 'Industry, Power and Solutions Vision-2021: Reform Attempt for Sustainable Development' at Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

Presided over by BCI President Shahedul Islam

Helal, it was attended by Industries Minister Dilip Barua as chief guest. B D Rahmatullah, former director general of Power Cell, presented the keynote paper.

Barua said it is not possible to improve the power situation overnight, as it is a long process to generate electricity in the national grid.

He said a Russian team has already visited Bangladesh recently to assess whether a nuclear power plant could be set up for generating power to meet its growing demand.

B D Rahmatullah said security of the country is under threat if electricity could not be generated as early as possible as the issue of employment and income of the people is related to power production.

## US industrial output falls

AFP, Washington

US industrial production fell in March for the fifth consecutive month, by 1.5 percent, to the lowest level in a decade amid a prolonged recession, government data showed Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted monthly decline matched the 1.5 percent drop in February, revised up from a prior estimate of 1.4 percent, the Federal Reserve said.

The March slide was much steeper than the 0.9 percent decline expected by

most analysts.

Output in March dropped to its lowest level since December 1998 and was nearly 13 percent below its year-earlier level.

On a 12-month basis, output was down a hefty 12.8 percent.

For the first quarter of the year, industrial output dropped at a punishing annual rate of 20.0 percent, the largest quarterly decline "of the current contraction," the Fed said.

Output had fallen 12.7 percent in the final quarter of 2008.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর  
(সদর দপ্তর)  
আবহাওয়া ভবন, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭  
নথি নং আইপি-১(১)/২০০৮-০৮/৯৬৫ তারিখঃ ১৩/০৪/২০০৯ইং

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা কর্তৃক নিম্নে বর্ণিত বিভিন্ন প্রকারের যন্ত্রপাতি/যন্ত্রাংশ ক্রয় করার জন্য প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে।

১।	মন্ত্রণালয়ের নাম	প্রতিরক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়।		
২। <th>অধিদপ্তরের নাম</th> <td>বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর।</td>	অধিদপ্তরের নাম	বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর।		
৩। <th>প্রকিউরিং এনটিটি</th> <td>পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭।</td>	প্রকিউরিং এনটিটি	পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭।		
৪। <th>টেন্ডার নথি নং</th> <td>আইপি-১(১)/২০০৮-০৮।</td>	টেন্ডার নথি নং	আইপি-১(১)/২০০৮-০৮।		
৫। <th>দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির নাম/বর্ণনা</th> <td>বিভিন্ন প্রকারের যন্ত্রপাতি/যন্ত্রাংশ।</td>	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির নাম/বর্ণনা	বিভিন্ন প্রকারের যন্ত্রপাতি/যন্ত্রাংশ।		
৬। <th>দরপত্র নং, পণ্যের নাম, সিডিউলের মূল্য ও টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটির বিবরণ নিম্নে দেওয়া হইলঃ</th> <td></td>	দরপত্র নং, পণ্যের নাম, সিডিউলের মূল্য ও টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটির বিবরণ নিম্নে দেওয়া হইলঃ			
লট নং	দরপত্র নং	পণ্যের নাম	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটি (ফেরতযোগ্য)
লট-১	নথি নং আইপি-১(৩)/হাইড্রোজেন/২০০৮-০৯	হাইড্রোজেন প্রাক্টার যন্ত্রাংশ	৪০০/-	১২,০০০/-
লট-২	নথি নং আইপি-১(৩)/অগ্নি/২০০৮-০৯	অগ্নি নির্বাপক যন্ত্র	৪০০/-	৪,২০০/-
লট-৩	নথি নং আইপি-১(৩)/সার্ভার/২০০৮-০৯	সার্ভার ও পিসি	৪০০/-	৫,৫০০/-
লট-৪	নথি নং আইপি-১(৩)/ম্যাক-২/২০০৮-০৯	পিসি, ইউপিএস, প্রিন্টার ও টেনার কার্টিজ	৪০০/-	৫,০০০/-
৭।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির স্থান	সিনপটিক মহাশাখা, আবহাওয়া সদর দপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭।		
৮।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির আরম্ভ তারিখ	পত্রিকায় প্রকাশের দিন হইতে।		
৯।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির শেষ তারিখ	২৯-০৪-২০০৯ইং।		
১০।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির সময়	প্রত্যেক কার্যদিবসে সকাল ৯-০০মঃ হইতে বিকাল ৫-০০মঃ পর্যন্ত।		
১১।	দরপত্র গ্রহণের তারিখ ও সময়	৩০-০৪-২০০৯ইং দুপুর ০৩-০০মঃ পর্যন্ত।		
১২।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	৩০-০৪-২০০৯ইং দুপুর ০৩-০০মঃ।		
১৩।	দরপত্রের তথ্য/শর্তাবলী	দরপত্র সিডিউলে বিস্তারিত বর্ণিত রহিয়াছে।		

২। অগ্রহী দরদাতাগণ পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ আবহাওয়া অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-এর বরাবরে আবেদন করতঃ প্রতিটি দরপত্র সিডিউল নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিস হইতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উত্তেজিত মূল্য ক্রয়/সমগ্র্য করিতে পারিবেন।

**দীপক চন্দ্র নাথ**  
সহকারী পরিচালক  
পরিচালকের পক্ষে  
জিডি-১৯৯৯  
ফোনঃ ৯১১৭৪৩৬ (অফিস)