

Experts stress production boost to hike export

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Enhancing internal production capacity in the industrial sector is key to surviving amid the fierce competition in the global business, top entrepreneurs observed at a seminar in Dhaka yesterday.

They also said the country should not run only after signing deals with different countries for gaining duty-free market access as Bangladesh can hardly utilise properly such existing facility due to a lack of enough internal production capacity.

"Bangladesh should continue negotiations with advanced economies to gain duty- and quota-free market access. But, we must build up the internal production capacity in the industrial sector," said Anisul Huq, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organised the seminar on 'Duty Free Quota Free Access to US Market' where former Bangladesh ambassador to the United States M Humayun Kabir presented the keynote paper. Exporters, manufacturers, government high-ups, entrepreneurs and business leaders attended the seminar.

The FBCCI boss also said Bangladesh has the opportunity to export over 8,000 types of products to US under duty-free facility, whereas the country can ship only 420 types now with the existing capacity.

Unfortunately, the country's main export item -- readymade garment (RMG) -- is not kept in the duty-free category, Huq said, adding that Bangladesh has to pay 16 percent duty on export of this product to the US market.

"We should continue talks with all the African least developed countries to gain duty-free access of our RMG products to the US market," he said.

Arshad Jamal, a director of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the country should focus more on labour and gas issues and infrastructure.

"We should also think about the proposed Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with the US, as many countries have already signed this deal," Jamal said.

Asif Ibrahim, a director of Dhaka chamber, said Bangladesh can continue dialogue on whether the TIFA could be signed or not as it is a formal platform for discussion with US.

Former ambassador in Geneva Tawfiq Ali called upon the businesspeople to negotiate properly through appointing lobbyists to gain the duty-free market access in the US.

Tawfiq Hasan, secretary general of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said the country paid \$573 million as duty to US in 2008, which is very high for an LDC like Bangladesh.

Sharifa Khan, deputy secretary of the commerce ministry, said the duty-free access to the US market is now an issue of political persuasion. "We can't convince the finance ministry to give money for appointing a lobbyist to gain the duty-free access," she said.

DCCI President Abul Kasem Khan said Bangladesh exported goods worth \$4.05 billion to US in fiscal 2008-09 against the imports worth \$456.56 million.

Fazlul Hoque, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, and Mostofa Abid Khan, an international trade analyst, among others, spoke at the seminar.



Latifur Rahman, chairman and managing director of Transcom Beverages Ltd (TBL), Shahnaz Rahman, Saifur Rahman, Arshad Waliur Rahman and Atiqur Rahman, directors, Golam Quddus Chowdhury, chief executive officer and executive director, and Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury, general manager of TBL, pose with the participants of the company's annual conference 2010, in Bangkok in Thailand recently. Tejinder Khurana, country manager for Bangladesh, and Deepak Iyer, executive director (north and east) of PepsiCo International, were also present.

Dying potato plants worry farmers in Rangpur

Substandard seeds blamed

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

A large number of farmers in different areas in the district are worried as their potato plants are dying due to substandard seeds, imported by a private company from the Netherlands.

The importer is yet to respond to a demand for compensation for losses from the low-quality potato seeds, the affected growers allege.

Agro Concern, a private agro-based firm in Dhaka, had imported the Dutch seeds of granola potato and supplied those to Rafiqul Islam and Mostafizur Rahman, two of its agents in Rangpur. The agents sold the seeds to farmers at Tk 6,000 to Tk 7,000 per carton (50kg).

The affected farmers, mostly in Pirgachha, Mithapukur, Kounia and Rangpur Sadar upazilas, purchased potato seeds of the variety from the local agents and sowed those about one month back.

Officials at the Department of Agriculture Extension said potato plants on about 500 bighas of land in the district got rotten.

According to Shamsul Alam, a potato grower of Mahiganj, 35 days after plantation, potato plants on 15 bighas turned yellow and died.

So are the experiences of Khairul Alam Mona of Dimla, Faruque Hossain of Mahiganj, Akbar Hossain of Jarindra under Rangpur Sadar upazila, Amjad Hossain of Pirgachha upazila and Noor Alam of Mithapukur.

When contacted, Agro Concern's local agent Mostafizur Rahman told The Daily Star that he informed the company Chairman Dr Abdul Quader of the problem.

Quader requested Deputy Director (seeds) of Bangladesh Agriculture Development

Corporation Delwar Hossain to examine the affected potato fields.

Hossain went to the fields of some of the affected farmers. But what he reported to the company chairman could not be known.

However, Quader thinks it might be a problem with soil or weather. Dutch experts are expected to arrive in the area next month to examine the potato fields, said to be affected, added Agro Concern's boss.



A farmer picks up a dead potato plant from his field in Pirgachha upazila, Rangpur. Potato plants on about 500 bighas of land in the district died prematurely due to the use of low-quality seeds.

StanChart top official due today



David Gareth Thomas
STAR BUSINESS DESK

David Gareth Thomas, group country head of human resources for Asia, Standard Chartered Bank, is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka today, said a press release.

During his two-day official visit, Thomas will be accompanied by Madhavi Lall, regional head of human resources for India and South Asia.

He will meet senior officials and several stakeholders of the bank.

Thomas, a seasoned banker with over two decades of experience in UK and UAE, handled a wide spectrum of human resource roles in various senior positions within Standard Chartered Bank.

He provides strategic leadership for the overall human resource responsibilities in Asia.

BRAC Bank MasterCard to hit market soon

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank and MasterCard Worldwide, an international payment system solutions provider, jointly announced formation of a strategic alliance to launch BRAC Bank MasterCard branded cards in Bangladesh, said a press statement.

The bank customers will now enjoy a wide range of products and services in terms of transacting with plastic money, both locally and globally.

AEA Muhaimen, managing director and chief executive officer of BRAC Bank, and Vikas Varma, vice president for South Asia, MasterCard Worldwide, signed the alliance agreement.

These cards, built under EMV (Europay, MasterCard, Visa) compliance to ensure



AEA Muhaimen, managing director and chief executive officer of BRAC Bank, and Vikas Varma, vice president for South Asia, MasterCard Worldwide, exchange documents after signing a deal recently. The bank will launch BRAC Bank MasterCard branded cards in Bangladesh.

the highest level of security to avoid fraudulent risk, will be accepted by millions of merchants operating on MasterCard's global network.

"We are happy to announce this strategic alliance with MasterCard, which will allow us to offer more choices to our valued customers," said

Muhaimen. In addition to security, it will also provide instant discount on merchant points, hotel bookings and reward points on usage.

Dollar mixed

AFP, London

The dollar traded mixed against its main rivals on Monday as investors await a Federal Reserve policy meeting and a key speech by US President Barack Obama this week.

In London morning deals, the euro rose to 1.4150 dollars from 1.4135 late in New York on Friday.

Against the Japanese unit, the dollar climbed to 90.27 yen from 89.91 yen late on Friday.

Investors were cautious ahead of the Fed's two-day monetary policy meeting starting Tuesday, followed a day later by Obama's State of the Union speech, which comes amid concern about his tough banking reform plan.

Any traders taking a positive view of the dollar's prospects will be looking for signs in Obama's speech that the US government "is serious about cutting the burgeoning budget deficit", Callyon analysts wrote in a note.

Controversy shadows debut of Russia's Rusal

AFP, Hong Kong

Debt-ridden Russian metals giant UC Rusal makes its stock market debut this week in an offering worth 2.24 billion US dollars that marks one of the most controversial listings ever in Hong Kong.

The world's largest aluminium producer will become the first Russian company to list in Hong Kong when its shares begin trading

on Wednesday. Rusal's depository receipts are also to float on the Paris-based Euronext bourse.

In the lead-up to the initial public offering (IPO), Rusal flagged strong interest from big-league investors by selling 1.61 billion shares at 10.80 Hong Kong dollars (1.40 US) each.

But while most IPOs in Hong Kong are avidly followed by the Chinese territory's legions of small-time investors, the Securities and

Futures Commission (SFC) has slapped rare restrictions on Rusal's offering.


The Hong Kong regulator stipulated a minimum investment in Rusal equivalent to about 130,000 US dollars, which was described as "unprecedented" by observers of the local securities regime.

Shareholder activist David Webb said the restriction was meant to scare off smaller retail investors and

was a "dangerous precedent".

"On one hand, approving (the IPO) is an implicit endorsement while the restriction is an implicit risk warning," he told AFP.

Rusal's 1,100-page IPO prospectus outlined a laundry list of possible risks, including potentially crippling lawsuits, its massive debt of 15 billion US dollars, and even the company's demise should metals prices plunge again.



ঢাকা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর
গাজীপুর-১৭০০
স্মারক নং-ঢাপ্রপ্রবি/শিঃশাঃ/পোঃমাঃ/কি/ভর্তি/কোঃরেঃ/৪২/০৪/১২১

তারিখঃ ১৩/০১/২০১০ ইং

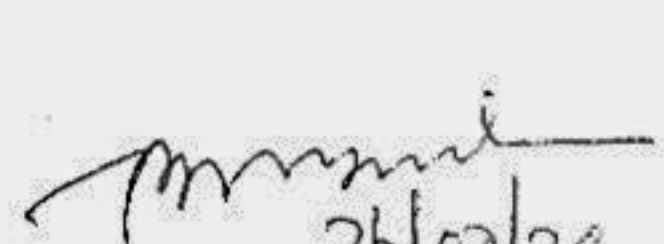
পিএইচ.ডি/এম.ফিল/এম.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/এম.ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং প্রোগ্রামে সংশোধিত ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর-এর ২০০৯-২০১০ শিক্ষাবর্ষে পুরকৌশল, তড়িৎ ও ইলেকট্রনিক কৌশল এবং যন্ত্রকৌশল বিভাগে পিএইচ.ডি, এম.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, এম.ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং প্রোগ্রামে ও রসায়ন, গণিত এবং পদার্থবিজ্ঞান বিভাগে এম.ফিল প্রোগ্রামে পূর্ণকালীন/অর্ধকালীন ছাত্র/ছাত্রী হিসাবে ভর্তির জন্য নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত পূরণ সাপেক্ষে আশ্রয়ী প্রার্থীদের নিকট হইতে নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।

- পিএইচ.ডি প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তির জন্য প্রার্থীর কোন স্নাতক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/স্নাতক সমতুল্য শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান হইতে এম.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/এম.ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং অথবা সমতুল্য ডিগ্রীতে সন্তোষজনক ফলাফল থাকিতে হইবে।
- এম.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/এম.ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তির জন্য প্রার্থীর কোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/ইনস্টিটিউট/অনুলুও বিভাগ হইতে বি.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বা ইহার সমতুল্য ডিগ্রী থাকিতে হইবে। বি.এসসি ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং অথবা ইহার সমতুল্য ডিগ্রীতে সন্তোষজনক ফলাফলের উপর ভিত্তি করিয়া প্রার্থী নির্বাচন করা হইবে।
- রসায়ন, গণিত ও পদার্থবিজ্ঞান বিভাগে এম.ফিল প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তির জন্য প্রার্থীদের কোন স্নাতক শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে সংশ্লিষ্ট ডিসিপ্লিনে এম.এসসি/চার বৎসর মেয়াদী বি.এসসি (সম্মান) বা ইহার সমতুল্য ডিগ্রী থাকিতে হইবে।
- চাকুরীরত প্রার্থী নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সম্মতিক্রমে স্বতন্ত্রকালীন ছাত্র/ছাত্রী হিসাবে ভর্তির জন্য আবেদন করিতে পারিবেন।
- দেশ/বিদেশের বিভিন্ন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের যে সকল ডিগ্রী অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ইকুইভ্যালেন্স করা হয় নাই, সে সকল ডিগ্রী অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে ইকুইভ্যালেন্স করিতে হইবে।
- পূর্ণকালীন ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের মধ্যে মেধার ভিত্তিতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রচলিত নিয়মানুযায়ী Teaching Assistantship দেওয়া যাইতে পারে।
- পূর্ণকালীন ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের জন্য সীমিতসংখ্যক আবাসন ব্যবস্থা করা যাইতে পারে।

এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের পর হইতে অফিস চলাকালীন ঢাকা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর-এর অনুলুও যে কোন Scheduled Bank হইতে অগ্রাধী ব্যাংক লিঃ, ডুয়েট শাখা, গাজীপুর-এর উপর ৬০০/- (ছয়শত) টাকার পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট প্রদান পূর্বক একাডেমিক শাখা হইতে অথবা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের <http://www.duet.ac.bd> ওয়েবসাইট হইতে ডাউনলোড করিয়া ভর্তির আবেদন ফরম ও প্রসপেক্টাস সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে এবং আবেদনপত্র ৮০ গ্রাম A4 সাইজের অফসেট কাগজের উভয় পৃষ্ঠায় প্রিন্ট করিয়া পূর্ণপূর্বক পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফটসহ সরাসরি বা ডাকযোগে ১১/০২/২০১০ ইং তারিখ বৃহস্পতিবার পর্যন্ত একাডেমিক শাখায় জমা দেওয়া যাইবে। ভর্তির নিমিত্ত চূড়ান্তভাবে মনোনয়নের জন্য প্রার্থীকে আগামী ২২/০২/২০১০ ইং তারিখ সোমবার সকাল ১০-০০ ঘটিকায় সংশ্লিষ্ট বিভাগে মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করিতে হইবে। চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীকে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করিতে হইবে।

একই সংগে স্মারক নং-ঢাপ্রপ্রবি/শিঃশাঃ/পোঃমাঃ/কি/ভর্তি/কোঃরেঃ/৪২/০৪/১২১, তারিখঃ ১৩/০১/২০১০ ইং এর মাধ্যমে জারীকৃত বিজ্ঞপ্তির কার্যকরিতা বিলুপ্ত হইবে।


(মোঃ আলিম দাদ)
১৩/০১/১০
রেজিস্ট্রার

GD-387