

Ramadan festival breathes new life into Saudi's old Jeddah

AFP, Jeddah

Residents of the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah are slowly returning to its historic centre, where a Ramadan cultural festival and UN heritage status are giving new life to the old quarter.

Last year the United Nations added Jeddah to its UNESCO global heritage list, acknowledging its distinctive architecture, which evolved from the city's centuries-old role as a global trading hub and the gateway for pilgrims visiting Islam's holiest sites.

The cultural festival that began on June 18, the first day of the fasting month of Ramadan, coincides with a broader tourism drive in Saudi Arabia.

The kingdom is targeting its own citizens as well as the millions of Muslims from around the world who undertake religious visits.

"We wanted to bring life back to this area after its people had abandoned it, and we achieved that," Jeddah's Deputy Governor Mohammed al-Wafi told the news agency among the festival crowds.

He said a number of homes in the old quarter had already been renovated, but much work still needs to be done in the historic heart of the kingdom's second-largest city.

Among old Jeddah's most famous

attractions is the Sharbatly House, made of coral, where legendary British First World War intelligence officer TE Lawrence stayed in 1917.

Like other buildings in the district, which also includes centuries-old mosques, it fell into disrepair before the quarter's UNESCO listing began to spark a revival.

Sami Nawar, head of the historic area known to residents as Al-Balad, said several prominent families are among those who have reconstructed homes at their own expense, and more than 700 restoration licences have been granted over the last five years.

Tourism and finance ministry officials are looking at how to help other owners fund their renovations, possibly through loans, Nawar said.

In its decision last year, UNESCO noted the importance of the "reduction of the rate of decay of the historic houses, which are often abandoned and squatted (in) by poor immigrants".

While warning "negative development" could jeopardise the area's character, it foresaw "a new virtuous circle" thanks to renovation projects and involvement of homeowners and merchants, like Maha Baeshn.

Baeshn, an artist and poet, said the Ramadan festival encouraged her and other homeowners to take better care of their properties.

"The Jeddah festival brought life to the houses and the area," she said.

The homes, some of them rising multiple storeys, are built of rock and wood, with decorated facades and large bay windows known as rawashin to help air circulate. This has the added benefit of creating cooling shadows for people outside.

UNESCO said the design and function of the homes reflected their adaptation to the humid local climate and to Jeddah's prominence as a trading and religious centre.

Only "scant vestiges" of this Red Sea architectural tradition survive outside of Saudi Arabia, UNESCO said.

Along alleys between the houses, the Ramadan festival features about 80 shops and stalls and a dozen restaurants -- all usually staffed by locals -- representing traditional trades and delicacies from the coastal Hejaz region around Jeddah.

"We have been running this business as a family for almost 150 years, and this is considered one of the oldest professions in the kingdom," Samir Jastania said at his popular shop selling Hejazi sweets.

Wafi said that in its first seven days almost 130,000 people flocked to the festival's open-air markets, games, traditional rituals, foods and literary discussions.

Indonesia eyes return to Opec as oil crisis looms

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesia is seeking to rejoin Opec to get access to cheaper oil supplies as demand soars and domestic production falls, but critics say the move is an unwelcome distraction from efforts to overhaul the country's troubled energy sector.

Resource-rich Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy, was part of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) for almost 50 years until suspending its membership in 2009 after becoming a net oil importer.

The switch to becoming an importer came as domestic demand soared and output dropped due to a lack of investment from foreign companies, put off by complex regulations, corruption and growing economic nationalism.

With oil imports surging as the economy booms and the energy sector still in urgent need of reform, the government is looking for cheaper supplies and has taken the unusual step for an oil importer of requesting to rejoin the 12-member exporting cartel.

"It is only natural that we should build relations with exporters," Energy Minister Sudirman Said said before heading to an Opec meeting at the organisation's headquarters in Vienna last month, where he was seeking to have the suspension lifted.

After the meeting, the energy ministry said that some Opec members had backed Indonesia rejoining.



David Laizans, country manager of SGS Bangladesh, and Sajjad Alam, head of direct sales at Grameenphone, pose at an agreement signing ceremony recently. The mobile phone operator will provide complete communication solutions to SGS Bangladesh, a firm for inspection, verification, testing and certification.



Sharfuddin Ahmed, mayor of Rangpur city, opens the 30th branch of NRB Commercial Bank on GL Roy Road in Rangpur yesterday. Dewan Mujibur Rahman, managing director of the bank, was also present.



Aminul Islam Khan, joint secretary of education, launches a job site for fresh graduates -- www.bd-internships.com -- at the Westin hotel in Dhaka on Thursday. Arif Iftekhar, managing director of Frontdesk Bangladesh, which built the site, was also present.



Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Brac Bank, along with other officials, cuts a cake to mark the 14th founding anniversary of the bank at a programme recently.



SYLHET AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

Office of the Sub-project Manager
Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology, Faculty of Agriculture,
Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet

Invitation for Tender

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Supply, testing and commissioning of Microbus | | | | |
| 1. Ministry/Division | Ministry of Education. | | | |
| 2. Agency | Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet-3100. | | | |
| 3. Procuring entity name | Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet-3100. | | | |
| 4. Procuring entity code | N/A. | | | |
| 5. Procuring entity district | Sylhet. | | | |
| 6. Invitation for | Tender for Goods. | | | |
| 7. Invitation Ref No. | UGC/HEQEP/SPM/SAU-FA/CP#3626/OTM/G1/-2015/07 | | | |
| 8. Date | 09-07-2015. | | | |
| KEY INFORMATION | | | | |
| 9. Procurement method | Open Tendering Method (National). | | | |
| FUNDING INFORMATION | | | | |
| 10. Budget and source of funds | Development Budget (Government and IDA Credit). | | | |
| 11. Development partners (if applicable) | International Development Association (IDA). | | | |
| PARTICULAR INFORMATION | | | | |
| 12. Project/programme code | 9137 | | | |
| 13. Project/programme name | Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP). | | | |
| 14. Tender package No. | G1 | | | |
| 15. Tender package name | Supply, testing and commissioning of Microbus. | | | |
| 16. Tender publication date | 14/07/2015. | | | |
| 17. Tender last selling date | 02/08/2015. | | | |
| 18. Tender closing date and time | 03/08/2015 at 12:00 noon. | | | |
| 19. Tender opening date and time | 03/08/2015 at 12:30pm. | | | |
| 20. Name and address of the office | Office of the Sub-project Manager, Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet-3100. Tenderer may submit their tender by hand or by courier service within the closing date & time mentioned above. | | | |
| 21. Place of selling & receiving tender document | | | | |
| 22. Place of opening tender document | | | | |
| INFORMATION FOR TENDERER | | | | |
| 23. Eligibility and qualifications of tenderer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The tenderer shall have a minimum of 5 (five) years of overall experience in the supply of goods and related services.Tenderers from all countries except Israel to be offered.Tenderer should have up-to-date and valid trade license, VAT certificate, TIN certificate.The tenderer shall have successfully completed minimum 5 (five) supply contract of vehicle within last five years.Tenderers must have past experience of supply of vehicle of minimum Tk 35 lakh (thirty-five lakh only) under a single contract during last 5 (five) years.The minimum amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility is Tk 40 lakh (forty lakh only).The maximum 2 (two) number of arbitration against the tenderer over a period of last 5 (five) years. | | | |
| 24. Brief description of goods | Supply of Microbus. | | | |
| 25. Brief description of related services | Testing, commissioning of Microbus. | | | |
| 26. Tender document price | BDT 1000/- (one thousand) only. | | | |
| Lot No. | Identification of lot | Location | Tender security amount in Taka | Completion time |
| 23. Lot-1 | Supply, testing and commissioning of Microbus | Office of the Sub-project Manager, Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet-3100. | 1,25,000/- (one lakh twenty-five thousand) | 120 days |
| PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS | | | | |
| 24. Name of official inviting tender | Professor Dr. A.F.M Saiful Islam | | | |
| 25. Designation of official inviting tender | Sub-project Manager, HEQEP Sub-project (CP # 3626) & Chairman Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, Sylhet Agricultural University, Sylhet-3100. | | | |
| 26. Contact details of official inviting tender | E-mail: afmsislam@yahoo.com; afmsislam@gmail.com Cell No: +88 01711978392 | | | |
| 27. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. | | | | |

Chairman
Department of Crop Botany & Tea Production Technology
Faculty of Agriculture, Sylhet Agricultural University
Sylhet-3100



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Information and Communication Technology Division
Bangladesh Computer Council
Development of e-Learning Platform for Computer Programming
BCC Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

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| GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH | |
| 1. Ministry / Division | Information and Communication Technology Division |
| 2. Agency | Bangladesh Computer Council |
| 3. Name of Procuring Entity | Executive Director, Bangladesh Computer Council |
| 4. Expression of Interest | For selection of consulting firm for developing e-learning platform for C Programming Language |
| 5. EOI Ref No | 56.01.0000.011.14.098.15-818 |
| 6. Date (dd/mm/yy) | 13/07/2015 |
| KEY INFORMATION | |
| 7. Procurement Method | QCBS |
| FUNDING INFORMATION | |
| 8. Budget & Source of Funds | Revenue Budget, GOB |
| PARTICULAR INFORMATION | |
| 9. Project / Program Code | 3-2896-4310 |
| 10. Project / Program Name | Development of e-Learning Platform for Computer Programming |
| 11. EOI Closing Date & Time | 03/08/2015 at 12:30 PM |
| INFORMATION OF APPLICANT | |
| 12. Brief Description of Assignment | The Consulting firm will design and develop an online e-learning platform for C Programming Language. Software includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Development of a web portal for the e-Learning PlatformDevelopment of a Core Judge Engine for automatic C source code compilation and verdict generation.Development of Course Specific judging mechanism / scriptDevelopment of Performance Analytics and Reporting EngineDevelopment of Adaptive Training system for the studentsIntegration, scaling and deployment of the software in a cloud environmentC Course Curriculum DesignModules and Tasks development (at least 2000; Basic, Intermediate, Advanced and Real Life tasks)Documentation of the Software, User Manual, Training |
| 13. Experience, Resource & Delivery Capacity Required | Firm selection criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should have at least 05-years of IT software development experience;Should have successfully completed at least one Software development project of minimum 1 (One) Crore Taka in a single contract. (Appreciation Certificate must be provided)Should include updated Trade license, VAT certificate, Tax Identification Number certificate;Company profile showing organizational structure and logistics;Specific experience of the firm relevant to the assignment;<ul style="list-style-type: none">At least 8 (Eight) successfully Completed Web Based Application Software.Experience of developing a core judge engine that has been used for at least two national level Programming ContestTechnology to be used, Technical Approach and Methodology for the proposed assignment;Work plan;Brief description of the technical experts to be assigned for the assignment; |
| PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS | |
| 14. Name of the Official inviting EOI | Mohammad Mohidur Rahman Khan |
| 15. Designation of the Official inviting EOI | Program Director, Development of e-Learning Platform for Computer Programming |
| 16. Address of the Official inviting EOI | Bangladesh Computer Council, BCC Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh |
| 17. Contact Details of the Official inviting EOI | Tel: 8144673, 01675298300 Fax: 9124626 email: mohidur.khan@bcc.net.bd |
| Appropriate authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs' | |
| (Mohammad Mohidur Rahman Khan) Program Director Development of e-Learning Platform for Computer Programming | |