

আপনার সংসার গুছিয়ে দিচ্ছি আমরা

এসআইবিএল ইসলামিক কনজুমার ফাইন্যান্স

আপনার সংসার পোছানোর আসবাবপত্র, শিক্ষা সামগ্রী, ইলেক্ট্রনিক ও অন্যান্য জোশপপ্য কেনার সুন্দর সমাধান দিচ্ছি আমরা।

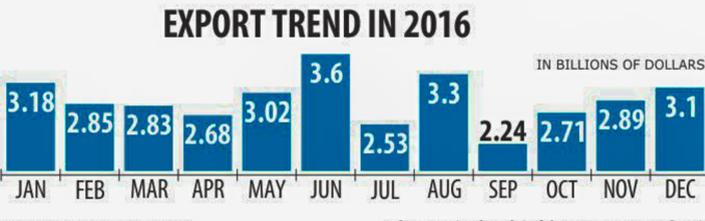
• ফ্রি অনলাইন সেবা
যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০০৯২২



Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 5, 2017, POUH 22, 1423 BS

Exports robust despite dismal global trade



REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The UK is the third largest export destination for Bangladesh after the US and Germany. Bangladesh typically ships more than \$3 billion worth of garment products to the UK in a year.

With the uncertainty surrounding Brexit, the election of Donald J Trump as the 45th president of the US, and the scheduled polls in Germany and France, the outlook does not look too promising.

Hassan said it is not a major cause of concern as exports to new destinations have been on the rise as a result of relaxation of the Rules of Origin.

For instance, some Asian markets such as Japan, China and India are showing good promise, he said, adding that exports to Japan have already crossed the \$1 billion mark in 2016. "Our export growth is going in the right direction."

The apparel industry must address the issues of gas and power shortage, market diversification, access to new markets and political stability for achieving the targeted export growth in 2017, the BGMEA vice-president added.

Exports registered 7.11 percent growth in 2016 to \$34.93 billion on the back of higher shipments of garment items.

The amount would have been more if the country's major export destinations had not gone through an uncertain political time in 2016, according to exporters.

Garment shipments, which typically account for 80 percent of the export earnings, brought home \$28.61 billion last year, up 7.89 percent year-on-year, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau.

"Our exports grew even amid the volatile condition around the world, so we are hopeful that it will perform even better in 2017," said Faruque Hassan, vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

In 2016, the unit price of garment items decreased by 2 percent year-on-year and the depreciation of the pound as a result of the UK's shock decision to withdraw from the European Union on June 23, 2016 affected the receipts.

Current account deficit widens on sliding remittance

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Current account deficit widened further in the first five months of the fiscal year on the back of the sliding remittance inflow.

Between the months of July and November last year, the current account deficit stood at \$726 million in contrast to \$1,336 million in the surplus a year earlier, according to the central bank's balance of payments data.

The current account balance set foot into the negative territory for the first time in four years in the first quarter of fiscal 2016-17: the deficit was \$504 million.

The last time the current account was in the deficit -- of \$447 million -- was way back in fiscal 2011-12. Since then there has been no deficit in the current account balance at any point in time.

A major source of foreign currency for the country in the last 10 to 12 years has been remittance sent by expatriate Bangladeshis, which also keeps the external balance sheet in a strong position.

In the first five months of the fiscal year, remittance dropped 15.67 percent -- a development that has created a pressure on the current account balance.

Grameen Bank's profit rebounds in 2016

The lender earned Tk 100cr in net profit

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Grameen Bank's net profit rebounded in 2016, with the microcredit pioneer logging in Tk 100 crore on the back of increased loan disbursement and recovery.

A stable economic environment and the absence of any major natural disaster helped the bank raise the profits from only Tk 2.43 crore in 2015.

Its net profit came down sharply in 2015 following the implementation of the national pay-scale for its 21,000 employees with retrospective effect. The lender had to spend Tk 450 crore on the additional salary expenses.

However, officials said the new pay-scale encouraged the employees to put in more efforts in lending and recovering loans.

The bank disbursed Tk 18,754 crore last year. Its outstanding loans stood at Tk 11,824 crore in 2016 which was Tk 9,642 crore a year ago. Last year, the bank also recovered Tk 105 crore in bad loans.

The bank saw lower-than-expected profits in 2014 and 2015. In 2014, it made a profit of Tk 43 crore.

Bankers said the bank's activities slowed in 2013 and 2014 because of various uncertainties that affected its profit margin.

Ratan Kumar Nag, acting managing director of the bank, said the lender strengthened its activities in late 2015 which continued in 2016.



crore in dividends in 2015 thanks to its 25 percent stake in the bank. The bank's 62 lakh shareholders received the rest of the dividends.

Last year, Grameen Bank, founded by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, added more than one lakh members to take the total number to 89 lakh.

Although the bank has been performing well financially, other issues are hampering its activities.

The borrowers who own 75 percent share in the bank do not have representation in the board as the tenure of the nine elected directors ended in February last year. Since then the election to pick the directors from the borrowers has not been held.

Another issue is: the bank has been running by an acting managing director since Prof Yunus left it in 2011.

The issue is pending in the court after the nine elected directors went to the court challenging the Grameen Bank board's authority to publish newspaper advertisement to appoint the chief executive.

On Sunday, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the government would move to get the case resolved.

On an average, Grameen Bank lends Tk 1,500 crore per month. It has 2,566 branches across the country. Its non-performing loans stand at less than 2 percent.

Since its inception in 1983, the bank has distributed Tk 123,000 crore in loans.

Land tariffs for economic zones to be finalised today

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY

The tariff plan prepared by Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority for leasing and renting lands in 16 economic zones will be finalised today.

Under the plan, if approved at a meeting of Beza's governing body, the tariff for per square metre land will range between \$0.35 and \$0.8 in case of leasing while it will range between \$0.9 and \$2 in case of renting.

The land tariff varies depending on the types of infrastructure -- developed, undeveloped and specialised.

"We are expecting that the tariff will be finalised at the meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair," said Paban Chowdhury, executive chairman of Beza.

It is necessary to fix the tariff to allocate lands -- which are developed or being developed under the authority and supervision of Beza in economic zones -- to the entrepreneurs for setting up industrial units. An economic zone is a designated area in a country with special economic regulations that differ from the rest of the country.

An entrepreneur can enjoy various benefits, including tax incentives, from the authorities by setting up an industrial unit in an economic zone.

Chowdhury said the tariff should be very reasonable so that the investors, whether local or foreign, can get the lands easily.

He said they will also recommend the governing body allow Beza to create a welfare fund for the workers of economic zones.

Earlier in July, a tariff plan with higher prices than the latest proposal was placed at the governing body's meeting for approval. But the governing body, instead of approving the plan, reset a committee headed by the senior secretary of the Finance Division and asked it to come with a revised tariff plan.

The revised tariff plan will be of two types. The first will be made for Mirsarai, Feni, Shreehatta, Dhaka-2, Atrahazar and Gazaria economic zones.

Summit signs deal to build \$500m LNG terminal



Summit Group Chairman Muhammed Aziz Khan pose at a deal-signing ceremony in Dhaka on Tuesday. Summit signed an initial agreement with Petrobangla to set up an LNG terminal in Cox's Bazar.

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Summit Group has signed an initial contract with Petrobangla to set up a liquefied natural gas terminal on Moheshkhali Island in Cox's Bazar at a cost of about \$500 million.

Summit LNG Terminal Company, a unit of Summit Group, will develop the floating facilities in 18 months after signing the final contract, the company said in a statement yesterday.

Energy Secretary Nazimuddin Chowdhury, Petrobangla Chairman Abul Mansur Md Faizullah, Summit Group Chairman Muhammed Aziz

Khan, Vice-Chairmen Md Latif Khan and Md Farid Khan and General Electric's Infrastructure Director Peter Mackey were present at the signing of the initial agreement at Petrobangla in Dhaka on Tuesday.

The floating terminal will supply 500 million cubic feet of natural gas per day. The LNG will cost the government \$0.45 per 1,000 cubic feet of natural gas. Summit will transfer the facilities to Petrobangla after operating it for 15 years.

Summit will implement the project jointly with US-based GE as equity investment partner, and plans to implement the LNG terminal

project with its own funds.

"We want to ensure constant supply of primary energy for the country by implementing this project," said Aziz Khan.

LNG will be the easiest, most cost-effective, environment-friendly and quickest solution to meet the primary fuel demand as the current supply of gas will start declining in 2018, he said.

Khan also said the floating terminal will help Summit implement a large gas-based power plant, having a capacity of generating 600 megawatts of electricity.

BASIS software expo begins next month, after four years

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services or BASIS will organise the country's biggest software and information technology exposition on February 1-4, after a lull of four years.

One of the objectives of this year's BASIS SoftExpo is to boost the use of local software, especially in government procurement, the organiser said.

There is no official estimate on the market size of software in Bangladesh, but industry people believe the figure will not be less than Tk 16,000 crore a year.

Through the exposition the local software developers want to grab a portion of the amount, BASIS said.

Seminars on IT and IT-enabled services will be held on the sidelines of the show at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka.

"This year the exhibition will be bigger and better than ever," said Mustafa Jabbar, president of BASIS. "We are targeting the local market though a good number of foreign buyers will participate in the exposition," he said.

Home Loan

Take-over @ 8.75%

Processing Fee 0.50%

মিউচুয়াল ট্রাস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

Mutual Trust Bank Ltd.

you can bank on us

16219 or 09604016219 www.mutualtrustbank.com

China plans to spend \$115b on railways in 2017

REUTERS

China plans to spend 800 billion yuan (\$115.09 billion) on building railways this year, the same budget as last year, to grow its network to 150,000 kilometers, state news agency Xinhua reported on Wednesday.

China plans to add 2,100 kilometres of track this year, mostly in its central and western regions, and electrify 4,000 kilometres of railways, Xinhua reported, citing a statement released by national operator China Railway Corporation after an annual work conference.

The country, which had set an annual spending target of 800 billion yuan for the last three years, used 801.5 billion yuan on railway construction in 2016, according to local media reports citing the national operator. It plans to spend 3.5 trillion yuan on building railway tracks over 2016-2020, Xinhua said.

Railway spending was at a high of 840 billion yuan in 2010 before a high-speed rail crash that led to the arrest of numerous officials on corruption charges and the breakup of the railway ministry.

Congratulations

Summit Alliance Port Limited (SAPL) congratulates APL Logistics on the milestone achievement of completing the 1st Export Container Shipment by Inland Waterways.

MARKS & SPENCER LONDON

SAPL also gratefully acknowledges the respective roles of Marks & Spencer (the leading UK Retailer) and Safmarine for achieving this historic event.

Safmarine Together we go places

APL Logistics

A member of the KWE Group

SAPL Summit Alliance Port Limited