

FULL VISION



Maksudur Rahman, senior director of Symphony, and Kevin Henry, vice president for device and data at Robi, launch Symphony Z10 smartphone at a programme in Dhaka yesterday. The handset will be available at Symphony outlets and customer centres of Robi and Airtel at Tk 15,990.

Ireland unveils loans to help small businesses cope with Brexit

AFP, Dublin

The Irish government unveiled Tuesday a 300-million-euro (\$354 million) loan scheme for small businesses buffeted by Brexit, in a move designed to spur innovation and investment needed to tap new markets.

The loan scheme for small and medium-sized businesses was announced as part of a major Brexit-proofing spending package in Irish Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe's 2018 budget.

The heavy reliance of Irish businesses on trade with Britain has spurred fears they could face difficulties when the UK leaves the EU in March 2019. The possible reinstatement of a hard border between the two countries has also caused concerns.

"As the impact of Brexit unfolds over the coming years, it is clear that there are likely to be permanent changes in our trade patterns," Donohoe said.

"Small and medium businesses will need to innovate and increasingly look to new European and international markets other

than the UK," he added.

The proposal -- dubbed a "Brexit Loan Scheme" -- will offer competitive interest rates of around four percent on loans to businesses with up to 499 employees.

The initiative will receive funding from the Irish government as well as the European Investment Bank Group, the European Commission and the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland.

Donohoe also promised that an extra 25 million euros in loans would be set aside for farmers and food processors, noting Irish food businesses are uniquely exposed to the British market.

Deputy head of government Frances Fitzgerald said the measures would "help Irish exporters to grow their international sales and diversify their markets."

The British Irish Chamber of Commerce welcomed the announcements, which it said would provide "much needed support" to small and medium-sized businesses, which employ over 69 percent of the workforce.

UK stuck in slow growth gear, BoE on course to raise rates

REUTERS, London

Britain's Brexit-bound economy remains stuck in a low gear but is probably not weak enough to dissuade the Bank of England from raising interest rates next month, economic data showed.

Separately on Tuesday, Britain's budget forecasters gave a gloomier medium-term outlook for the economy, potentially leaving finance minister Philip Hammond with less room to offset any big hit from Britain's departure from the European Union.

The somewhat downbeat picture for the world's fifth-biggest economy from a raft of data - including a record goods trade deficit - contrasted with the situation in some of Britain's closest trading partners in the European Union.

German exports outpaced imports in August, adding to signs it performed strongly in the third quarter, and Italian industrial output was much stronger than expected. But there were some signs of encouragement for Britain.

The country's factories had their strongest

Alibaba launches \$15b overseas R&D drive

REUTERS, Beijing

China's top e-commerce firm, Alibaba Group Holding Ltd, is launching a \$15 billion drive to build overseas research hubs as the deep-pocketed firm looks to compete with global leaders in e-commerce, logistics and cloud technology.

The Alibaba 'Damo' academy would launch eight research bases in China, Israel, the United States, Russia and Singapore and was hiring 100 researchers to work on artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing and fintech, the company said in a statement on Wednesday.

"The Alibaba DAMO Academy will be at the forefront of developing next-generation technology that will spur the growth of Alibaba and our partners", Chief Technology Officer Jeff Zhang said.

The Chinese giant and its affiliates have undergone a rapid expansion in the past year, bringing it into direct competition with US e-retailer Amazon.com Inc, as well

as global payments, cloud and logistics firms.

Since last year Alibaba has invested roughly \$2 billion to acquire a majority stake in Singapore-based retailer Lazada.com, creating a network of e-commerce hubs across Southeast Asia in partnership with payment affiliate Ant Financial.

It has also pursued a 1.2 billion bid for U.S. money transfer service MoneyGram, in a pending deal that has come under scrutiny from critics who say it poses a national security threat. Along with an existing data science research lab in California, Alibaba has opened new data centers in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, Australia, Japan, India and Indonesia since 2016, in a bid to boost its cloud business.

The investment also comes as Beijing prioritises state funding in quantum computing, AI and big data, urging provincial governments, universities, the military and private firms to play a bigger role in developing advanced technology in areas where China trails developed countries.

Bangladesh Election Commission
Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project
Nirbahan Bhaban (Floor-8), Agargaon, Dhaka

Invitation for Tenders

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1	Ministry/division	Bangladesh Election Commission.	
2	Agency	Election Commission Secretariat.	
3	Procuring entity name	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project.	
4	Invitation for	Procurement of Laminating Cards for citizens.	
5	Invitation Ref No.	BEC/IDEA/G30	
6	Date	Issued on 11 October 2017	

7	Procurement method	National Open Tendering Method.	
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8	Budget and source of funds	Worlds Bank IDA Credit.	
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9	Development partners (if applicable)	World Bank.	
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10	Project/programme code (if applicable)	4938	
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11	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project.	
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12	Tender package No.	G30	
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13	Tender publication date	12 October 2017 (Estimated)	
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14	Tender last selling date	7 November 2017 (5:00pm).	
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15	Date	8 November 2017 2:00pm	
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16	Tender opening date and time	8 November 2017 2:30pm	
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17	Name & address of the office(s)	Address	
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-Selling and receiving tender document	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project, Nirbahan Bhaban (Floor-8), Agargaon, Dhaka.		
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18	Place/date/time of Pre-tender meeting (optional)	No pre-tender meeting.	
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19	Brief eligibility of tenderer	The Tenderer shall have	
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(a)	The maximum zero number of arbitration against the tenderer over a period of last five years.
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(b)	The Tenderer shall have a minimum of five years of overall experience in the supply of IT product (computer hardware/accessories) or Office equipment supply or related services/products.
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(c)	The minimum supply of Goods: BDT 5 (five) crore or above supply of IT product (computer hardware/ accessories) of reputed National/International Organization in last five (5) years.
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(d)	Any IT product (computer hardware/accessories) of at least 1 (One) contracts successfully completed within the last 5 years, each with a value of at least BDT 5 (five) crore.
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(e)	The minimum amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility is BDT 5 (five) crore.
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20	Brief description of related services	Procurement of Laminating Cards for citizens	
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21	Price of tender document (Tk)	BDT 2,000.00 (two thousand only)	
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22	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location
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1	Procurement of Laminating Cards for citizens	IDEA Project, Nirbahan Bhaban (Floor - 8), Agargaon, Dhaka.	20,00,000 (twenty lac)	Completion time in weeks/months
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30	Name of official inviting tender	Mohammed Saidul Islam		
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31	Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director		
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32	Address of official inviting tender	Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project, Nirbahan Bhaban (Floor
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