



Md Alamgir Kabir, chairman of GPH Ispat, presides over the company's 11th annual general meeting at Chittagong Club in the port city yesterday. The company declared 5 percent cash and 5 percent bonus dividends for 2016-17. Mohammed Jahangir Alam, managing director, was also present.

Britain's smaller banks jostle for business banking grants

REUTERS, London

Britain's smaller banks are lining up to apply for multi-million pound grants the government hopes will help them compete in the corporate banking market.

For years the government has wanted to reduce the dominance of big banks in the small- to medium-sized business (SME) banking sector. The four largest — HSBC, Barclays, RBS and Lloyds Banking Group — control over 70 percent of business current accounts.

Royal Bank of Scotland was directed by the government and the European Commission to set up two funds worth a combined 775 million pounds following its 45.5 billion pound bailout during the financial crisis, seen as an unfair boost to RBS.

"A consequence of the 2008-9 crisis was that there was huge consolidation in financial services," said Anne Boden, CEO of digital Starling Bank, which launched in 2014.

Applications for grants from the funds open next year. One, worth 350 million pounds, will be used to encourage customers to switch providers, while the other 425 million pound fund will help challenger banks invest in their SME offerings.

The fiercest competition is expected to be over six grants making up the bulk of the second

fund and focused on current or soon-to-be business current account providers.

At least 12 banks are likely to be eligible for just the first two pools of funding containing the six biggest grants.

Virgin Money and Starling Bank have set out plans to enter business banking in recent months while the CEO of app-based bank Monzo told Reuters it was now also tempted to move into the sector, having previously ruled this out.

Virgin Money will be able to bid for a pool of grants including one worth 15 million pounds and two worth 15 million pounds and open to firms new to the sector.

Its Chief Commercial Officer Hugh Chater recently told investors that its proposition, offering customers access to partners' services, would provide a "compelling case" for funding.

Starling plans to have its service off the ground before it applies, allowing it to bid for one of the three biggest grants ranging from 60-120 million pounds and earmarked for firms already up and running. Unsuccessful firms will be considered for other pools of grants.

"We are very uniquely placed in this... and confident of our ability to win," said Starling's Boden, while agreeing competition was heating up.

"I think that (the funds) are probably not

enough. It could have been much more."

Another digital player Tandem is set to acquire a banking license and business banking unit if its takeover of Harrods Bank is approved and plans to apply for all four pools of funds on offer.

"It (competition) is kicking off now," said Ricky Knox, CEO of Tandem.

"It's not reached a scale where there is serious acknowledgement of it, but we're going to see a really interesting 2-3 years."

Clydesdale and Yorkshire Bank (CYBG), TSB and Metro Bank are also in the running.

CYBG is currently piloting a business e-lending service and expanding in Birmingham and the West Midlands, moves that set it up to apply for the three biggest grants.

TSB also has plans to expand. Its CEO Paul Pester said in November it will be at the "front of the queue" for funding.

Santander fits the criteria, but its eligibility has drawn criticism given its parent, Spain's Banco Santander, is one of the world's biggest banks.

Santander UK CEO Nathan Bostock said the bank has the reputation and proven capability required to convince customers to switch.

"We will create some things we feel will help customers make that choice," he added, referring to new products or services the bank will offer as part of its application.

Syed Maruf Ali, head of cards at One Bank Ltd, and Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, director for finance at Hotel Sarina Dhaka, exchange documents after signing a deal at a programme. The bank's cardholders and employees will get discounts at the hotel.



ONE BANK

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Alternative Medical Care (AMC) Director General of Health Services Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212 Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

1.	Ministry	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW).
2.	Division	Health Services Division.
3.	Agency	Directorate General of Health Services.
4.	Procuring entity name	Line Director, Alternative Medical Care (AMC), DGHS, Dhaka.
5.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6.	Expression of interest for selection of	Survey of Patients received AMC services out of OPD patients at the selected Medical College Hospital, District Hospital & Upazila Health Complex in Ayurvedic System of Medicine.
7.	EOI Ref. No.	DGHS/LD/AMC/Procurement plan/Gob (services)/2017-2018/Service-Package No. SPI (Ayurvedic).
8.	Date	11/12/2017
9.	Procurement method	Consulting firm/Research Institute/Consultant will be selected in accordance with the People's Republic of Bangladesh procurement Guideline and Procedures set out in the Public Procurement Regulation 2008 of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Followed by QCBS Method).
10.	Budget of source of funds	As per ADP allocation 2017-2018 (GOB), Health Sector Development Fund.
11.	Project/program name	Alternative Medical Care (AMC), 4th HPNSP.
12.	Development partners	N/A
13.	Project/program code	5032
14.	EOI closing date & time	26/12/2017 (Up to 4:00pm). EOIs shall be submitted in sealed envelope to Line Director, Alternative Medical Care, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212. Name of the work should be mentioned on the top of the envelope.
15.	Brief description of assignment	Survey of Patients received AMC services out of OPD patients (minimum 10 diseases profile describe according to health center receive patients) at the selected Medical College Hospital, District Hospital & Upazila Health Complex in Unani System of Medicine.
16.	Experience, resources & delivery capacity required	The applicant shall have to submit the EOI with the following documents: (1) Category of the firm: Research Organization/Survey organization/Consulting firm; (2) Brief description of the firm with proof of working in the relevant areas and of conducting Survey; (3) Valid Trade license/Registration; (4) Updated Income Tax certificate; (5) Certificate of VAT; (6) 05 (five) years experience in the survey/research; (7) List of major clients working within last five years with contact reference; (8) Bank solvency certificate; (9) Name of the Central Key personnel with C.V. who will be involved with the assignment; (10) Relevant documents in favour of organizational strength of the firm.
17.	Association with other firms	Consultant firm/Research Institute may associate with other consultants to enhance its qualifications.
18.	Association with foreign firms	N/A
19.	Name of official inviting EOI	Dr. Monowara Sultana.
20.	Designation of official inviting EOI	Line Director, Alternative Medical Care (AMC).
21.	Address of official inviting EOI	Line Director, Alternative Medical Care, DGHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.
22.	Contact details of officials inviting EOI	Tel No-02-58812134, Email-amc@ld.dghs.gov.bd.
23.	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all of the EOIs.	

Dr. Monowara Sultana
Line Director
Alternative Medical Care Program
DGHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka

GD-2688

Fed to hike interest rates as Trump tax cut looms

AFP, Washington

The US central bank is set to raise the benchmark interest rate this week, looking to get ahead of price increases that, though absent so far, are still expected to materialize.

It would be the third rate hike this year, and is overwhelmingly expected by economists and traders, and hinted at by policymakers, even though official data show inflation remains well below the Federal Reserve's two percent target.

With the world's largest economy growing and near full employment -- confirmed by a strong November jobs report on Friday -- the central bank has long been expecting to see signs of inflation in the pipeline.

And now a Republican plan nearing approval in Congress to slash corporate taxes offers a potential juice to the economy that could prompt the Fed to hike rates faster, economists say.

The Fed's forecast in September indicated three rate hikes were likely next year, but any increase in anxiety over fiscal policy and its impact on inflation could be reflected in the revised projections from policymakers that will be released at this week's meeting.

Since the rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee last met six weeks ago, economic data have seen ripples of distortion from the multiple hurricanes of late summer, including rebounds in home construction and industrial output, for example.

And a key measure of consumer inflation posted its first gain in nine months in October -- though this was partly driven by the cost of hotels and lodging, which rose as people left home to flee Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

The Fed's latest nationwide survey of the economy also contained reports of rising prices and worker pay -- just the thing the central bank watches closely.

But the underlying trends have not changed much: an economy humming along at near three percent quarterly growth, robust-but-slowing job creation and record low unemployment, accompanied by weak inflation and sluggish wage gains.

The absence of inflation has baffled Fed officials and led to a split among those who want to go slow, and those who want to hike more quickly before price increases hit the economy.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Project Director Clean Air and Sustainable Environment (CASE) Project Department of Environment Paribesh Bhaban, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka Request for Bids (Goods) (Two-Envelope Bidding Process)

Memo No. Paribesh/CASE/DoE/AF-G1/233/2017/1162 Date: 07 December, 2017

Country: Bangladesh

Name of Project: Clean Air & Sustainable Environment (CASE) Project-DoE Component

Contract Title: Procurement of Air Quality Monitoring Equipment and Vehicular Emission Monitoring Equipment

Credit No. IDA 5924-BD

RFB Reference No. DoE-AF-G1

- The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Clean Air and Sustainable Environment (CASE) Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contracts for-
 Lot-1 Equipment for Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAMS) having facility to measure PM10, PM2.5, SO2 and NOx, CO, O3, meteorological parameters;
 Lot-2 Compact Air Quality Monitoring System (SO2, NOx, CO, O3, PM2.5, PM10 and meteorological parameters);
 Lot-3 Portable Air Quality Monitoring Equipment and Stack Monitors;
 Lot-4 Vehicular Emission Monitoring Equipment Gas Analyzers and Smoke Opacity Monitor.
- Bidders may Bid for one or several lots, as further defined in the Bidding document. Bidders wishing to offer discounts in case they are awarded more than one contract will be allowed to do so, provided those discounts are included in the Letter of Bid.
- The Department of Environment, GoB now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for purchasing of following goods:

Lot No.	Brief description of lot	Quantity
Lot-1	Equipment for Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAMS) having facility to measure PM10, PM2.5, SO2 and NOx, CO, O3, meteorological parameters	5 sets
Lot-2	Compact Air Quality Monitoring System (SO2, NOx, CO, O3, PM2.5, PM10 and meteorological parameters)	15 sets
Lot-3	Portable Air Quality Monitoring Equipment and Stack Monitors	15 sets
Lot-4	Vehicular Emission Monitoring Equipment Gas Analyzers and Smoke Opacity Monitor	15 sets

Place of delivery:

The following places of Bangladesh:

- Lot-1: i) Ganakbari, Savar, Dhaka, ii) Rangpur, iii) Comilla, iv) Mymensingh & v) Narsingdi,
 Lot-2: Dhaka,
 Lot-3: Dhaka,
 Lot-4: Dhaka.

Delivery period: Five (05) months after signing of contract for all the lots.

- Bidding will be conducted through international competitive procurement using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers-July 2016" ("Procurement Regulations"), and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Office of the Project Director, CASE Project-DoE Component, email: munjurulkhan@gmail.com and inspect the bidding document during office hours 0900 to 1700 hours (Except Friday and Saturday) at the address given below. A pre-bid meeting shall take place on January 08, 2018 at 1100 hrs local time (GMT+6 hrs) at the address mentioned below.
- The bidding document in English may be purchased by interested eligible Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of equivalent USD 50.00 (Fifty US dollars). The method of payment will be Pay-Order/Bank Draft in favour of "Project Director, Clean Air & Sustainable Environment (CASE) Project" from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh. For overseas delivery, the bidder may obtain the bidding document by instructing any international courier service to collect the same from the address mentioned below.
- Bids must be delivered to be address below on or before January 24, 2018; 1430 hrs local time (GMT+6 hrs). Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked "ORIGINAL BID", and the inner envelopes marked "TECHNICAL PART" will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend, at the address below on January 24, 2018; 1500 hrs local time (GMT+6 hrs). All envelopes marked "SECOND ENVELOPE: FINANCIAL PART" shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Purchaser until the second public opening.
- All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security as mentioned below in any freely convertible currency:

Lot No.	Name of lot	Bid security
Lot-1	Equipment for Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAMS) having facility to measure PM10, PM2.5, SO2, and NOx, CO, O3, meteorological parameters	USD 37,000.00 or equivalent amount
Lot-2	Compact Air Quality Monitoring System (SO2, NOx, CO, O3, PM2.5, PM10 and meteorological parameters)	US 23,000.00 or equivalent amount
Lot-3	Portable Air Quality Monitoring Equipment and Stack Monitors	USD 16,500.00 or equivalent amount
Lot-4	Vehicular Emission Monitoring Equipment Gas Analyzers and Smoke Opacity Monitor	USD 14,000.00 or equivalent amount

- The address(es) referred to above is (are):

Dr. S. M. Munjurul Hannan Khan
Project Director
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