

New Nafta talks aim to clear pathway to toughest issues

REUTERS, Mexico City

Mexico and Canada aim to finish reworking less contentious chapters of the Nafta trade deal with the United States in new talks beginning on Sunday, hoping to clear the path for a breakthrough on the toughest issues before upcoming elections.

In six months, negotiators have ground out progress on the technical details of a revamped North American Free Trade Agreement, but made little advance on the most radical demands made by the administration of US President Donald Trump.

Ranging from demands for major changes to automotive content rules and dispute resolution mechanisms, to imposing a clause that could automatically kill Nafta after five years, the chief stumbling blocks laid by the White House look unlikely to be removed in the latest Mexico City round, officials say.

But if the three negotiating teams manage to iron out remaining differences on areas of broader consensus, officials hope the political leaders will turn their attention to brokering a compromise on the trickiest US proposals.

"I think there's going to be major progress on the technical issues and major obstacles on the critical issues," Bosco de la Vega, head of Mexican farm lobby the National Agricultural Council, said of the talks running until March 5.

Once agreement is reached on technical chapters such as state-owned enterprises, barriers to trade and e-commerce, about 10 percent of the modernized accord would eventually be left over for political leaders to work out, de la Vega estimated.

Mexico hopes to build on the previous round of talks in Montreal, when Canada floated what it called "creative" solutions to the US demands.

"We will address and deepen the discussion on Canada's proposals," a Mexican official told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

Canada countered US demands for a higher auto content requirement with a proposal to include expenses for engineering, research and development and other high-value work in the total.

Under Nafta, at least 62.5 percent of the net cost of a passenger car or

light truck must originate in the region to avoid tariffs. Trump wants the threshold raised to 85 percent.

"You can't have a successful negotiation if there's no change to the rules of origin," said the Mexican official, adding, "it won't be 85 percent. We're not sure what the number is going to be."

Mexico's Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo has said his negotiating team aims to present a proposal on rules of origin, though he has not provided details.

Any final agreement would need to be reached between Trump and auto sector bosses in the United States who oversee the Nafta region, an industry source close to the process said.

Rules of origin are due to be discussed during the first three days of this round of talks. The North American auto industry has so far pushed back against Trump's demands, arguing it would damage competitiveness and regional supply chains.

The latest round comes amid flare-ups between Washington and Ottawa and growing, if cautious, optimism in Mexico that the trade agreement will remain.

Marie-Annick Bourdin, French ambassador to Bangladesh, and Hossain Khaled, managing director of jute and automobiles division of Anwar Group, attend the launch of an outlet of French car brand Peugeot on Tejgaon Link Road in Dhaka on Thursday. AG Motors, a subsidiary of the group, is the sole distributor of Peugeot in Bangladesh.

AG MOTORS



Venezuela hopes to recover 70pc of oil output decline

REUTERS, Caracas

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro promised on Saturday to recover 70 percent of the country's lost oil production in the first half of 2018.

"I can tell you, the unprecedented injustices led to an important fall of a million barrels of oil," Maduro said in an interview with state television with-

out giving more specific figures or defining a time period for the output decline.

"I think that in the first half of this year, we will have recovered 70 percent of production," he said.

Venezuela's oil production dropped by nearly 13 percent last year according to figures released by OPEC in January, hitting a 28-year low that suggested a deepening economic crisis and

increased chances of a debt default.

Venezuela produced 2.072 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2017 compared with 2.373 million bpd the previous year, registering a near 300,000 bpd drop. Maduro has criticized an "economic war" led by the United States as well as corruption in the state oil company PDVSA for shrinking production.



HALDA VALLEY TEA

Major General Md Shafeenul Islam, chairman of Bangladesh Tea Board, and Nader Khan, managing director of Pedrollo NK Ltd and chairman of Halda Valley Tea Company Ltd, launch the company's two new premium quality tea brands—Dragon Well Green Tea and Silver Needle White Tea—at a programme at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka on February 18.

Saudi January inflation jumps

REUTERS, Dubai

Saudi Arabia's annual consumer price inflation rate jumped to 3 percent in January after the government introduced a 5 percent value-added tax and hiked domestic gasoline prices, official data showed on Sunday.

The statistics agency changed the base year for the consumer price index to 2013 from 2007 last month and adjusted the basket of goods and services, making direct comparisons with previous months difficult.

But the new tax and higher gasoline prices clearly pushed up inflation sharply. Annual inflation was just 0.4 percent in December, according to previously released data using the old basket.

Greek bank efforts bearing fruit but more remain to be done: ECB

AFP, Athens

Greek banks' efforts have started bearing fruit but the very high stock of non-performing loans remains a thorny issue, European Central Bank chief supervisor Daniele Nouy said Sunday.

"We must acknowledge that the efforts of Greek banks since 2015 have started bearing fruit," Nouy told Vima newspaper.

"Gradual progress is being made in reducing the very high stock of non-performing loans (NPLs). But dealing with NPLs in a sustainable way is still very much a work in progress. Greek banks must do more and do it faster."

The banks are burdened by around 100 billion euros (\$119 billion) in non-performing loan exposures -- about half of overall lending -- and the issue has repeatedly been highlighted by the European Central Bank.

Nouy stressed that "the top priority for Greek banks is to significantly reduce the production of new NPLs by improving their credit underwriting criteria and to clean up their balance sheets."

Efforts to clear the books in recent months have been disrupted by leftist protests at court houses that led notaries to repeatedly go on strike and to then take the process online.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives

Local Government Division

Local Governance Support Project-3 (LGSP-3)

City Centre (Level 10), 90/1, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

No. 46.00.0000.018.07.024.17-22

Date: 22-02-2018

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Capacity Building Specialist (Contract Package No. S-09)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit (IDA Credit No. 5946-BD) from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Local Governance Support Project-3 (LGSP-3) and intends to apply a part of the proceeds to cover eligible payments under the contract for providing consultancy services by hiring a Capacity Building Specialist for the project as an individual national consultant.

The Capacity Building Specialist (CBS) will support development of an in-situ capacity development program and its implementation in 4550 UP and 16 pilot Pourashavas. The CBS with guidance from the Deputy Project Director (Field Operations) will be responsible for delivering capacity building services using training videos with assistance from the District Facilitators (DFs). The DFs will provide hand holding support to UP and Pourashava functionaries for using video training materials and provide explanation on issues raised by them. The training sessions will be held in each of the 4550 UP and 16 pilot Pourashava offices. The CBS with guidance from the Deputy Director (Field Operations) will be responsible. The capacity building program will focus in the following areas: managing block and performance based grant, public financial management, procurement processes, budgeting and planning environmental & social safeguards, operation of MIS, GEO Tagging, and M&E Reporting through MIS.

The Capacity Building Specialist will report to DPD (Field Operations)/PD.

The consultant will perform the following tasks: (i) Develop and update core training curriculum and training modules including instruction manuals for developing training videos for UPs and Pourashavas; (ii) Prepare training contents with support from relevant/concerned Specialists from PMU and based on Union Parishad and Pourashava Operation Manuals; (iii) Development of training modules on the following thematic areas: (1) Module-1: Introduction to LGSP-3 and its Methods of Work; (2) Module-2: Participatory Planning; (3) Module-3: Budget Formulation & Scheme Implementation; (4) Module-4: Scheme Implementation & Supervision Process; (5) Module-5: Women Empowerment, Environment and Social Safeguards; (6) Module-6: Public Financial & Asset Management; (7) Module-7: Procurement, Management; and (8) Module-8: MIS & M&E Systems; (iv) Oversee production of capacity building videos for both UPs and Pourashavas; (v) Provide training to DDLGs/DFs to equip them to assist UP and Pourashava functionaries to make best use of video training materials; (vi) Develop relevant capacity building programs for UNOs and officials of UP and Audit Wing of the Local Government Division. Design a series of Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials aimed at providing the general public, LG officials and other stakeholders with basic information about project fiscal modalities, conditions and outcomes; (vii) Provide support in carrying out key Capacity Building implementation functions of coordination, monitoring supervision, evaluation and quality control; (viii) Review, evaluate and report on the activities and impacts of Capacity Building program on a periodic basis; (ix) Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of training programs, and recommend modifications of the Capacity Building program; (x) Support Senior Finance Specialist to provide information in a timely manner required for quarterly financial management reporting to IDA; (xi) Support functioning of the UP Helpline by providing relevant LGSP-3 related information; (xii) Implement the Information Education and Communication (IEC) activities. Details are provided in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the assignment.

The qualifications and experiences required for the assignment are:

Qualification and Experience

A master's in urban planning, public policy, social science or any other relevant discipline.

At least fifteen years' practical experience in developing curriculum and delivering professional training programs on one or more of the following areas: Local Government Management, Public Administration, Financial Management, Citizen Engagement and application of participatory training methods. At least 10 years' experience in GoB and Donor supported projects. S/he must have proven experience in the area of capacity building in a training institute or in development projects. The deserving candidate must have basic computer skills and ability to work in a fast-paced environment. Working experience with local government sector will be an added advantage.

The Local Government Division now invites eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Applicants are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (complete CV with other details and expected remuneration).

The Consultant will be selected using the Selection of Individual Consultants method in accordance with "The World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (July 2016)". It is expected that the services will be commenced in March, 2018 and shall be completed on December, 2021 at the office of the undersigned.

Interested applicants may obtain the Terms of Reference (TOR) upon request from the address provided below either by e-mail or in person during the office hours. The TOR is also available at the LGSP-3 website (www.lgsp3.gov.bd) and LGD website (<http://www.lgd.gov.bd>).

Expression of Interest (EOI) (2 copies) must be submitted, along with copies of certificates and supporting documents, by the applicant on or before **15th March, 2018** within **2:00pm** in a sealed envelope delivered to the undersigned and be clearly marked **"Expressions of Interest for Selection of Capacity Building Specialist"**. In addition, submission of EOI in soft copy through email to lgsp3.lgd@gmail.com or in CD/DVD along with the hard copy of EOI is encouraged.

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs received without assigning any reason thereof.

Sardar Sarafat Ali

Project Director

Local Governance Support Project-3 (LGSP-3)

Level 10, City Centre, 90/1, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

Tel: 9580503

GD-534



Synthesis of Carbon-rich Poly-ynes: A Novel Class of Materials for Linear and Non-Linear Optics and Liquid Crystallinity Under the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP), UGC

Department of Chemistry, Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, Sylhet-3114
Telephone: 0821-713491 Ext: 260, Email: saiful-che@sust.edu, myounus-che@sust.edu
Ref. No: CHE/CPSF/2017/15/27 Date: 25.02.2018

Revised e-GP Tender Notice (Goods)

e-GP tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods.

Sl No.	Tender ID	Name of Package/Ref. No.	Tender document last selling date and time	Tender closing & opening date & time
01	165438	Supply of Chemicals and Glassware (CHE/SUST/HEQEP/CPSF/CP-2524/Proc./e-GP/G5/2018/27)	28-Feb-2018 15:45	01-March-2018 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Prof. Dr. SM Saiful Islam

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GD-532

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Upazila Engineer

Gabtali, Bogra

www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No.- 46.02.50.10.40-18/098(2)

Date: 25-02-2018

Invitation for Tender (Works)

e-Tender Notice Number: 03/2017-18

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works. Detailed are given below.

Sl. No.	Tender ID & package No.	Name of work	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
01	e-Tender ID-168553 PEDP-III/BRG/GAB/ 2017-18/W17.295	Construction of Boundary wall in/c gate of Nangloo, Nijgram Sonakania & Sultanpur Primary School.	18-03-2018 17.00pm	19-03-2018 13.00pm
02	e-Tender ID-168510 PEDP-III/BRG/GAB/ 2017-18/W17.294	Construction of Boundary wall in/c gate of Bagbari, Chalkbochai, Hosanpur & Kolarbari Primary School.	18-03-2018 17.00pm	19-03-2018 13.00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hardcopy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-GP documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 18-03-2018 at 5.00pm. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). Interested person can be communicating with the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Akkas Ali

Upazila Engineer

LGED

Gabtali, Bogra

Phone: 05025-75022

ue.gabtali@lged.gov.bd

GD-531