



Md Mahbub ul Alam, managing director of Islami Bank Bangladesh, speaks at a business development conference organised by the bank's Mymensingh zone in Jamalpur recently.

EU business lobby dismisses China's latest opening pledge

AFP, Shanghai

The EU business lobby in China has dismissed President Xi Jinping's latest market-opening pledge as a rehash of earlier unkept promises, saying European companies had become "desensitised" to Chinese vows.

Xi vowed at the opening of a new import fair in Shanghai on Monday that China had a "sincere commitment" to open its markets, despite foreign accusations that it was dragging its feet or backsliding amid calls to remove barriers to market access.

The Chinese leader announced steps would be taken in several areas but the

EU chamber said in a strongly worded statement that much of what Xi promised was a reiteration of past statements.

"This constant repetition, without sufficient concrete measures or timelines being introduced, has left the European business community increasingly desensitised to these kinds of promises," it said in a statement late Monday.

The chamber said expectations for Xi's speech opening the China International Import Expo had been "continuously stoked" by the Chinese government.

"With this in mind, European busi-

nesses think that the commitments made... do not go as far as is necessary."

Xi said China would "step up" efforts to stimulate imports, lower tariffs, ease customs clearance procedures, and implement harsh punishments for intellectual property infringements, among other things.

But he was light on specifics and provided no timelines.

The chamber noted that Xi briefly mentioned removing caps on foreign investment in education and medical services, and support for accelerating negotiations on an EU-China investment agreement, calling them "potentially significant".

US services sector retreats from record growth, trade cited

AFP, Washington

The broad US services sector cooled slightly in October after a record high in the previous month, but continued very strong growth, according to an industry survey released Monday.

Some industries expressed concern about the US-China trade war but they have felt the pinch much less than commodities-driven manufacturing industries, according to the Institute for Supply Management.

ISM said its monthly non-manufacturing index fell 1.3 points to 60.3 percent, surprising economists who had expected a bigger dip from the record pace in September.

Any reading above 50 percent indicates growth the services industry has recorded uninterrupted expansion for nearly nine years.

"We had a slight cooling off but still a very strong reading," said Anthony Nieves, chair of ISM's survey committee for the non-manufacturing sector.

"Over the course of reading through our respondents' comments, they have indicated still concern about tariffs and how the potential impact would be for this sector," he told reporters.

Across the board, the survey reflected strong growth, and only one of the 18 industries surveyed reported a slowdown in the month: education services.

The indices for business activity and employment both fell 2.7 points, imports dropped four and prices fell 2.5 while inventories grew 1.5 points.

Nieves said the faster inventory growth for the month partly reflected efforts to build up supplies ahead of tariff-driven price increases.

US President Donald Trump plans to meet later this month in Argentina with Chinese

President Xi Jinping, but the White House has sent conflicting signals about the status of a resolution of the US-China trade war.

Tariff rates on about \$200 billion in US imports from China are due to rise to 25 percent from 10 percent on January 1 if the two sides fail to reach a resolution.

"Tariffs are beginning to impact business," a respondent in the construction sector was quoted as saying.

"We ask our suppliers to hold pricing for six months, but we are experiencing difficulties,"

RDQ Economics said the report, along with recent job creation numbers, suggested robust GDP growth should continue in the final quarter of 2018.

"Between the payroll data and the ISM, it appears that the fourth quarter is off to a fairly strong start," the firm said in a client note.



REUTERS/FILE

Job seekers and recruiters gather at TechFair in Los Angeles, California.

German industrial orders rise 0.3pc

AFP, Frankfurt

German industrial companies booked a rise in orders in September, official data showed Tuesday, beating expectations as a rebound in August also proved stronger than previously announced.

Companies reported a 0.3 percent month-on-month gain in new orders for September, after price, seasonal and calendar effects were adjusted for, federal statistics authority Destatis said in a statement.

The data strongly outperformed a 0.5 percent drop predicted by analysts polled by Factset financial services.

In addition, Destatis revised upwards its data for August, saying orders were up 2.5 percent compared to a month earlier, instead of the previously announced 2.0 percent. Orders data are closely followed by economists as they give a forward look at the performance of the industrial sector, the beating heart of Europe's largest economy.

This year, the figures have varied sharply from month to month as US President Donald Trump has left trading partners unsettled with his multi-front commerce battles.

France races to save EU digital tax proposal

AFP, Brussels

France said Tuesday it is prepared to delay an EU-wide tax on high-tech giants in order to save a proposal that faces opposition from Ireland and Nordic countries.

Paris has been urging its European Union partners to impose a new tax to ensure that global tech platforms like Facebook and Google pay their fair share.

But Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said France now agrees with Germany that the levy could be delayed while a more international solution is sought.

On Monday, Le Maire's German counterpart Olaf Scholz backed a European tax, but only if a broader solution is not found "within a year, a year and a half".

Arriving at a meeting of EU finance ministers in Brussels, Le Maire told AFP the draft EU law "is

due to be adopted in December 2018... but we are open to postponing the entry into force to allow time for the OECD to make a more comprehensive proposal."

"There is no disagreement with Mr Scholz on this. We share the same analysis, there are technical difficulties to solve and we must solve them within the next four weeks," said Le Maire.

The change of tack comes after France and the European Commission first advocated a provisional bloc-wide solution until an international scheme is found at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, which groups major world economies.

Paris argues the measure would be a vote-winning accomplishment for mainstream EU politicians ahead of the European Parliament elections next May, in which anti-Brussels populists could do well.

But Ireland, which hosts the

European headquarters of several US tech giants, leads a small group of otherwise mostly Nordic countries that argue the tax will also punish European companies and stoke Washington's anger.

"Anything is possible in politics, but I think it is very difficult to see an agreement on the digital service tax," said Danish Finance Minister Kristian Jensen.

Given the way that the tax "has been framed as aiming at US companies, of course there will be a reaction from the United States," he warned.

The EU proposal is also intended to stop other countries going it alone with their own digital tax and creating a patchwork of schemes across the continent.

Some EU member states such as Britain, Spain and Italy are working on national versions of a digital tax, with Singapore and India also planning their own schemes.



PREMIER BANK

Md Abdul Jabbar Chowdhury, additional managing director of Premier Bank, and Sabrina Imam, director for information technology and corporate marketing at Praava Health, exchange documents after signing a deal at the latter's office in Dhaka recently. The bank's credit and debit cardholders will get 15 percent discount at Praava.

Amazon plans to split second headquarters in two cities

REUTERS

Amazon.com Inc is planning to split its second headquarters evenly between two cities, people familiar with the matter said Monday, in a twist to a more than year-long contest that has drawn overtures from locales across North America.

Dallas, Long Island City in New York and Arlington near Washington, D.C. are all among the finalists with which Amazon is holding advanced talks, one of the people said on condition of anonymity. The person would not confirm which two are expected to win or if any others remain in the running.

Amazon declined to comment on the news, first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

The world's largest online retailer

sparked a bidding frenzy in September 2017 when it announced it would invest over \$5 billion to create an "HQ2" in addition to its home base in Seattle and hire up to 50,000 people.

One of the major reasons for the decision was for Amazon, which has satellite operations around the world, to recruit top talent. Offering a choice of head offices could help it win new workers in a battle with Alphabet Inc's Google and others, with which Amazon competes in areas such as cloud computing and voice-controlled technology.

"Amazon is going where it won't have to jostle with Google and Facebook as much as it would in San Francisco or it does in Seattle," said Alex Snyder, analyst at CenterSquare Investment Management near Philadelphia.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department (LGED)

Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2)

LGED Headquarters, RDEC (Level-6)

Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar

Dhaka-1207

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উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র
শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র

Memo No: 46.02.0000.911.11.004.18.662

Date: 06-11-2018

Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

For

providing the services of Agriculture Facilitator/Fishery Facilitator to facilitate the implementation of Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2) (SSWRDP-2)

- Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2) (SSWRDP-2), Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (MoLGRDC) is funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Government of Bangladesh (GoB) intends to apply a part of this fund to pay for the contract of providing services of "Agriculture Facilitator"/"Fishery Facilitator" to facilitate the implementation of Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2) (SSWRDP-2). The project area covers all the districts in Dhaka, Sylhet, Mymensingh and Rangpur Division.
 - Project Objectives:**
 - Increasing agricultural production by providing surface water resources management infrastructures (145 Nos. of New Sub-project, 90 Nos. additional development sub-project, 9 Nos. of flagship sub-projects and 46 Nos. rehabilitation/enhancement sub-project).
 - Establishing and strengthening of Water Management Co-operative Association (WMCAs) for sustainable Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of sub-projects.
 - Increasing farmer's income by providing agri-business-related facilities, training and non-farm activities.
 - The national farms will be engaged to provide services of "Agri Facilitator" and "Fish Facilitator" for SSWRDP-2.
 - Scope of the Service:**
 - Package-SD-09 (18 Nos. Agriculture Facilitator)**

The Firm will be contracted for providing Agriculture Facilitator as follows to assist in smooth implementation of the project.

Responsibilities of Agriculture Facilitator
 - Assist in the implementation of institutional development component, preparing institutional Development Action Plan and collecting information on present land use and agricultural development constraints and opportunities.
 - Guide and assist WMCA for sustainable agricultural production on preparation agricultural production plan; ensuring guidance, advice and support relevant department in the preparation agricultural production plan and strengthening agricultural extensions and organizing training activities;
 - Package-SD-10 (16 Nos. Fishery Facilitator)**

The Firm will be contracted for providing Fishery Facilitator as follows to assist in smooth implementation of the project.

Responsibilities of Fishery Facilitator
 - Assist in the implementation of institutional development component, preparing institutional development action plan from the perspective of fishery and in collecting data and information on present land/water bodies use and fish development constraints and opportunities.
 - Guide and assist sub-project WMCA for the sustainable fish production; Identify fish/prawn/shrimp culturists present within the subproject areas; and motivate the beneficiaries in fish production.
 - Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) now invites eligible firms to show their interest in providing the services of Agriculture Facilitator/Fishery Facilitator. Interested Firm must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services.
- The EOIs would be reviewed on the basis of the following:** (Submission of EOI as per "Form-A" and "Short TOR" which is available in the <http://www.lged.gov.bd/Procurement.aspx?ProcurementType=4> this Link)
- Legal establishment of the firm (updated TIN and VAT registration No., trade license, etc).
 - List and availability of professionals to carry out the assignment (Name, date of birth (age), mention academic qualification & length of experience(yrs).
 - Organizational capacity of the firm.
 - Total No. of full time staff and No. of staff in Pay-roll.
 - Financial capacity of the firm (Turnover of last 3 years).
 - Experience of the firm in similar task/assignments in last seven years (example of past experience of similar nature and cost and duration of the assignment. Year counting backward from the date of publication of EOI in the newspaper).
 - Experience of the firm in other works in last five years (example of past experience including location, cost and duration year counting backward from the date of publication of EOI in the newspaper).
 - Organization's Brochure.
- Consultants may associate with other Firm to enhance their qualifications, and, if association, should mention whether the association is in the form of "joint venture" or "sub-consultancy". In the form JV the number of the firm should be two including lead firm.
 - A consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the selection of **Fixed Budget System (FBS)** procedures as set out in Standard Documents according to PPR-2008. Interested firm may obtain further information at the address below during office hours. **A shortlist of Firm will be prepared, from the expressions of interest, for requesting proposals for this assignment.**
 - Interested firm can submit their proposal separately for each package.
 - 1 (One) Original and 1 (One) Copy, total 2 (two) numbers for each package of EOI shall be submitted separately in a sealed envelope through Registered post, or delivered by hand, subscribing of "Agriculture Facilitator" (Package-SD 9) and "Fishery Facilitator" (Package-SD 10) for a Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2) (SSWRDP-2) on top of the envelope to the following address by 1:00pm, date: 26-11-2018.
- Project Director
Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (Phase-2)
Local Government Engineering Department (LGED)
LGED Headquarters, RDEC (Level-6), Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
- The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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