

Star BUSINESS

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Improve business climate, go for intense negotiation for more Japanese investment

Japanese Envoy ITO Naoki says in an exclusive interview

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and PORIMOL PALMA

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh ITO Naoki believes Bangladesh should begin intense negotiations with his country so that the duo could sign a comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

The rich nation of the Far East has been turning into a major trading and economic partner of Bangladesh and such a deal will ensure duty-free access to Bangladeshi goods even after it makes its graduation in 2024.

The United Nations Centre for Development Policy is scheduled to evaluate certain least developed countries (LDC), including Bangladesh, in 2021 for promotion to the developing country category.

Currently, 98 per cent of goods originating in Bangladesh enjoy duty-free access to Japanese markets under the LDC category, said Naoki.

The exports to Japanese markets, including leather and leather goods, are growing. Some 80 per cent of the shipment is clothing items, but pharmaceuticals have a big potential too, he said.

"Bangladesh's exports to Japan alongside Japanese investment in the country have tripled over the last 10 years," said Naoki in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star at his residence in



ITO Naoki

Dhaka last week.

Japan is the only country in Asia where Bangladesh's exports crossed \$1 billion over the past decade. Currently, the number of Japanese companies doing business in Bangladesh is 315, which have invested \$730 million.

"Many Japanese companies are awaiting the scope to invest in Bangladesh's energy and power, garment, sugar, processed food, construction and fertiliser sectors," said the ambassador.

Achieving such a big success in the Japanese market has been possible because Bangladesh is a very important trading partner, he said.

A testament to this is an important meeting held in July last year among top officials of 70 Japanese companies which sought to know about the investment climate in Bangladesh, said Naoki.

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A portion of the metro rail project is seen in Mirpur, Dhaka. The photo was taken last week.

PALASH KHAN

JAPAN-FUNDED MAJOR PROJECTS IN ROAD AND RAIL SECTORS

PROJECT NAME	WORKS	COST (IN TK CRORE)	DEADLINE
MRT-6	Metro rail (Uttara-Motijheel)	22,000	2024
MRT-1	Metro rail (Airport-Kamalapur via Natun Bazar-Purbachal)	52,562	2026
MRT-5	Metro rail (Hemayetpur-Bhatara)	41,238	2028
Cross-border Road Network Improvement Project	17 bridges and 11-km roads	3,684	2022
Western Bangladesh Bridge Improvement Project	81 bridges and 42-km roads	2,911	2022
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Railway Bridge Project	Dedicated rail bridge over the Jamuna river	16,780	2025

Robi's IPO subscription begins today

AHSAN HABIB

The biggest initial public offering in Bangladesh's history will make a major step forward today as investors would be able to bid for the shares of Robi-Axiata.

The offer closes on November 23. General and eligible investors and non-resident Bangladeshis can apply for the shares.

Robi, the second-largest mobile network operator, is going to raise Tk 523.79 crore from its IPO, overtaking market leader Grameenphone's floatation of Tk 486 crore in 2009.

Most investors and analysts have welcomed Robi's IPO since they expect it to boost investor confidence. But after a few years, there might be an impact in the secondary market as the company is making available a massive number of shares.

PROFIT AND LOSS OF ROBI AXIATA

In crore taka; SOURCE: IPO PROSPECTUS



"We are excited by the IPO because of its growth potential," said Mohammed Rahmat Pasha, chief executive officer of UCB Capital Management, a brokerage house.

"It's a dream IPO," he added. Usually, brokers do not show much interest in companies bearing lower earnings per share (EPS). However, Robi is different since it will properly utilise the fund to increase profits.

"So, we hope the company's EPS will grow in the coming years along with its dividends," Pasha said. Robi's EPS was Tk 0.04 in 2019.

READ MORE ON B2

IPDC Finance far from pandemic blues

Books higher profits in Q3

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

IPDC Finance logged Tk 50.3 crore in profits for the July-September quarter, a 13 per cent increase year-on-year, according to a press release.

The country's first private sector non-bank financial institution (NBFI) ended the third quarter of 2020 with an all-time high liquidity of Tk 825.9 crore, which it terms "enough to meet its short-term obligations".

"The IPDC was able to achieve this feat due to good corporate governance, proactive planning and by taking responsibility of customers, employees and the community," said Managing Director and CEO Mominul Islam.

Islam was speaking at IPDC's "Investors Meet", held virtually on November 15 to discuss financial highlights, benchmarks and the NBFI's key strategies for the future.

The IPDC maintained good capital amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and also registered growth with net profit by setting aside adequate provisioning in anticipation of difficult times ahead.

Despite the Covid-19 fallouts, the IPDC has outperformed itself compared to that in the same period last year, Islam said.

READ MORE ON B3

Paramount Textile to buy 80pc stake in Intraco Solar for Tk 60cr

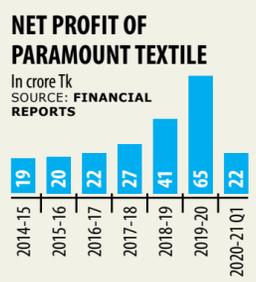
AHSAN HABIB

Paramount Textile is set to buy an 80 per cent stake in Intraco Solar Power for around Tk 60 crore in a bid to enter the renewable energy market.

The listed textile-maker has reached an agreement with Intraco CNG to buy 29 per cent share for Tk 18.48 crore, Paramount Textile said in a disclosure published on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website yesterday.

"We will buy the remaining 51 per cent stake from Intraco CNG soon," said Md Robilul Islam, company secretary of Paramount Textile, which had its trading debut in 2019.

READ MORE ON B3



Record \$1.2b remittance flows in 15 days of Nov

Kamal hails migrant workers

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh earned a record \$1.2 billion in remittance in the first 15 days of November, the finance ministry said yesterday, despite grim forecasts made at the height of the pandemic about the money sent by migrant workers.

Even amid the coronavirus pandemic, the surge in remittance has kept its pace, the ministry said in a press release. In just 12 days this month, expatriates sent more than \$1 billion.

"This is a rare event in the history of Bangladesh," it said.

From July 1 to November 12, remittance inflow stood at \$9.69 billion, up 43.42 per cent from \$6.89 billion year-on-year.

The migrant workers remitted \$2.11 billion in October, which was higher than \$1.64 billion flown to the country in the same month a year ago.

October's receipts were the third-highest monthly flow in history, behind July's \$2.59 billion and September's \$2.15 billion.

The increasing trend of remittances has given a massive respite to the government to manage its external sector from the ongoing economic hardship.

Experts hope the trend would continue in the coming months given the global economic scenario and the initiatives taken by the government.

READ MORE ON B3

Micro businesses can now accept digital payments

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

In a remote part of the country, a vegetable vendor wakes up early in the morning and goes to the nearest local market where wholesalers are available.

During the day, he purchases some vegetables by debiting money from his account. He pays the wholesalers the total for his purchases by using the mobile app of his bank or a mobile financial service (MFS) provider.

Then, some of his customers pay the value of their purchases to the vegetable vendor by using their mobile wallet while others use cash.

Funds can also be encashed by transferring the required amounts to MFS agents or merchants under the agent banking programme of the central bank.

From now on, such scenarios would become a reality in rural areas as Bangladesh Bank yesterday allowed micro and underprivileged businesses to open personal retail accounts.

Such digital banking is now available at shopping malls in cities but was quite impossible in the case of remote rural markets.

The businesses, who can submit their trading licence, tax certificate and rent statement, are allowed to open merchant accounts such that customers can digitally make payments for the value of the products.

But micro businesses will not require such documents to open their personal retail accounts, according to a central bank notice released yesterday.

They will have to manage a certificate on their profession from the local public representative for opening the account.

If such documents from public representatives cannot be managed, banks, MFS providers and payment



The banking watchdog has given go-ahead to small and micro businesses to open retail account without any trade licence. The photo was taken from the capital's Tejgunipara bazar last week.

PRABIR DAS

KEY POINTS

- Digital banking to get a momentum
- Use of cash and necessity of branch will reduce
- Unbanked people to be brought under formal financial system
- Micro businesses to be allowed to open retail account without trade licence
- Digital payment ecosystem to emerge
- Account-holders of banks, MFS and payment service providers will be eligible to open account

service providers (PSP) will have to accept certificates from respective professional organisations of the micro businesses.

The central bank, however, imposed a ceiling on the financial transactions through personal retail accounts.

If micro businesses open accounts with banks by fulfilling the full-fledged KYC (Know Your Customers) requirements, there will be no limit to transactions.

The monthly outstanding balance cannot cross Tk 10 lakh at the respective accounts if micro

businesses open the account by filling up an e-KYC.

The central bank allowed clients to open accounts by filling up simplified e-KYCs, where national identification cards have to be submitted.

READ MORE ON B3

China's factory output beats forecasts as Asia shakes off Covid slump

REUTERS, Beijing

China's factory output rose faster-than-expected in October and retail sales sped up, as the recovery in the world's second-largest economy from its COVID-19 slump gathered momentum.

Industrial production climbed 6.9 per cent in October from a year earlier, data from the National Statistics Bureau showed on Monday, in line with September's gain and faster than the 6.5 per cent rise expected in a Reuters poll of analysts.

The upbeat figures came as other Asian powerhouses also climbed out from their pandemic depths with Japan's economy reporting its fastest quarterly growth on record.

China's industrial sector has staged an impressive turnaround from the pandemic paralysis seen earlier this year, helped by resilient exports. Now, with the coronavirus largely under control in China, consumers are opening up their wallets again in a further boost to activity.

"The latest data suggest that the broad-based acceleration of China's economy continued in October," Julian Evans-Pritchard at Capital Economics said in a note.

"Policy stimulus continued to boost investment and industrial output while growth in real retail sales and services activity returned to pre-virus levels."

Across China, smelters and refineries ramped up production in October with aluminium and crude oil hitting record output levels as the reopened economy stoked demand.

Growth is expected to accelerate in the fourth quarter as the service sector recovery maintains momentum, Fu Linghui,

spokesman of the National Statistics Bureau said, told reporters at a briefing.

In the consumer sector, retail sales rose 4.3 per cent on-year, missing forecasts for 4.9 per cent growth but still the fastest growth this year.

The improved appetite for spending was seen with China's auto sales growing 12.5 per cent in October, thanks to surging demand for electric vehicles.

Domestic tourism also saw a strong rebound over the Golden Week holiday last month, although levels were still well short of last year's.

Fixed-asset investment rose 1.8 per cent in January-October from the same period last year, compared with the 1.6 per cent growth forecast and a 0.8 per cent increase in the first nine months of the year.

China's consistent run of improving data since the second

quarter and recent comments from officials have prompted speculation the central bank may start to tighten policy.

But analysts say policymakers are unlikely to rush winding down existing stimulus amid persistent uncertainties about the pandemic and global demand.

"Domestic demand remains relatively weak, and any move to tighten policy could hurt the economic recovery," said Nie Wen, economist at Shanghai-based Hwabao Trust.

The government has rolled out a raft of measures including more fiscal spending, tax relief and cuts in lending rates and banks' reserve requirements to revive the economy.

Property investment was a key driver of broader spending with October real estate investment up 12.7 per cent from a year ago, the

fastest pace since July 2018 and quickening from 12 per cent seen in September, according to Reuters calculations based on NBS data.

Property sales by floor area rose a solid 15.3 per cent, the highest in over three years, while new construction starts expanded 3.5 per cent, improving from last month's fall of 1.9 per cent.

However, government efforts to prevent bubbles in the property sector are gaining traction with Chinese new home prices growing at a slower monthly pace in October amid restrictions imposed in some big cities.

Private sector fixed-asset investment, which accounts for 60 per cent of total investment, fell 0.7 per cent in January-October, compared with a 1.5 per cent decline in the first nine months of the year.

While China's economic recovery looks to be accelerating, surging coronavirus infections in Europe and the United States have clouded the outlook for exports.

Former Chinese finance minister Lou Jiwei said last week Sino-U.S. trade frictions may not ease in the near-term, even under a Joe Biden presidency.

Analysts believe a Biden administration is likely to maintain a tough political stance on Beijing, keep tight restrictions on China's access to advanced technology, although it could act in a less aggressive and more predictable way than the Trump administration.

China's economy grew 4.9 per cent in the third-quarter from a year earlier, but annual growth could slow to just over 2 per cent for 2020. That would be the weakest in over three decades but still much stronger than other major economies.

Robi's IPO subscription begins today

FROM PAGE B1

At the end of October this year, the network provider reached the milestone of five crore subscribers in a testament to its growing influence in the local market. Grameenphone has more than 7.76 crore active subscribers.

Robi was the first operator to launch 3.5G services in Bangladesh. It rolled out 4.5G services across all 64 districts in 2018.

Since Robi is a multinational company that maintains good governance, it will attract foreign investors, said Khairul Bashar Abu Taher Mohammed, chief executive officer of MTB Capital, a merchant bank.

"The company's EPS is very small, so investors will not get quick returns, but we hope it will grow soon."

The market regulator should try to bring more multinational companies like Robi to the market to boost investor confidence, he added.

In a statement, Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer of Robi Axiata, said: "If you look at the global best practices, digital companies are not valued against their EPS."

"EBITDA [Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation] multiplier is used as the yardstick. In this backdrop, it is inappropriate to speculate on Robi's prospect based on our EPS."

Robi will issue 52.3 crore shares, which account for 10 per cent of the company's total number of shares, at face value of Tk 10. Initially, the operator will raise Tk 136 crore from the stock market by issuing 13.6 crore shares. The remaining Tk 387.74 crore would be raised by doing out a further 38.77 crore shares.

Of the 38.77 crore shares, around 19.39 crore will be issued to general investors and 15.44 crore to eligible investors. The rest will go to non-resident Bangladeshi investors.

The IPO proceeds will be used to expand the company's network in anticipation of revenue-generating opportunities in the areas such as Internet-of-Things. IDLC Investments Ltd is the issue manager of the IPO. Robi is going to the public even though

there is still no signs from the government that it would meet two conditions put forward by the operator.

The operator demanded that the turnover tax be reduced to 0.75 per cent from the existing 2 per cent and the corporate tax be slashed by 10 percentage points to 35 per cent for the next 10 years.

Alam said Robi is paying an effective tax rate of 95 per cent.

"The minimum turnover tax, high corporate tax rate and extremely high regulatory expenses make our financial status poorer than it actually is. We hope with the rationalisation tax structure, Robi will be able to register much better performance which it is capable of."

Despite the heavy tax burdens, Robi had been making profit consistently for many years, he said.

"The merger [with Airtel] had put us in the red for some time, but we have successfully consolidated our market position post-merger and are looking to deliver stellar performance in the coming days leveraging our increased economies of scale."

The company had tried to get listed in 2015, but it backtracked due to "unfavourable business circumstances."

Its paid-up capital was Tk 4,714 crore and turnover Tk 7,481 crore in 2019, according to the draft prospectus.

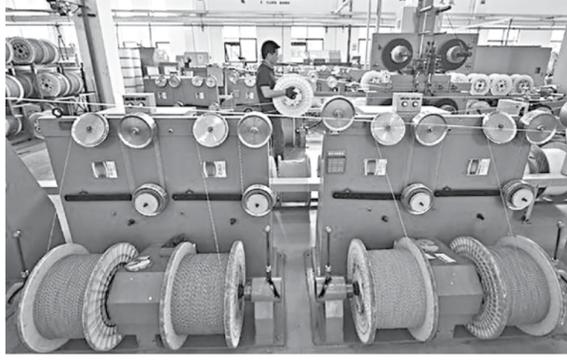
The company's per share net asset value was Tk 12.64 as of December 31, 2019. The carrier started its journey in 1997 under the brand name of Aktel. It then changed its name to Axiata (Bangladesh) in 2009 and took the present name Robi Axiata in 2010.

Axiata holds a 68.69 per cent stake in the company and the Delhi-based Bharti Airtel owns the remaining 31.31 per cent.

In Bangladesh, Robi was the first operator to test 5G service on its network.

"The IPO is so huge that many investors have already sold their shares in the secondary market to apply for Robi's offering," said a merchant banker.

"As our market turnover is still very low, its trade may impact the secondary market," he added.



An employee works at a production line manufacturing optical fiber cables at a factory of the Zhejiang Headway Communication Equipment Co in Huzhou, Zhejiang province, China.

Aramco plans debt market comeback with multi-tranche bond deal

REUTERS, Dubai

Saudi Aramco said on Monday it has hired a group of banks ahead of a multi-tranche US dollar-denominated bond issuance, as the world's largest oil company seeks to raise cash amid lower oil prices.

The announcement comes as Gulf issuers show no sign of slowing this year's blitz on international debt markets as they seek to plug finances hit by weaker oil prices and the coronavirus crisis.

Issuances from the region so far this year have already shot through last year's record, surpassing \$100 billion. Goldman Sachs, Citi, HSBC, JPMorgan, Morgan Stanley and NCB Capital were hired to arrange investor calls starting on Monday ahead of the planned transaction, Aramco said in a bourse filing.

Other banks involved in the deal include BNP Paribas, BOC International, BofA Securities, Credit Agricole, First Abu Dhabi Bank, Mizuho, MUFG, SMBC Nikko and

Societe Generale, a document issued by one of the banks on the deal showed.

The oil giant, which made its debut in the international debt markets last year when it raised \$12 billion after receiving more than \$100 billion in orders, did not detail the size of the proposed issuance.

It planned a benchmark multi-tranche offering consisting of three-, five-, 10-, 30- and/or 50-year tranches, subject to market conditions, the document said. Benchmark bonds are generally at least \$500 million per tranche.

Rangamati Hill District Council

Rangamati Hill District.

Memo No. 29.234.8400.204.14.002.2019- 797

Date: 15.11.2020

e-Tender Notice: 05/2020-21
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of work as started as below.

SL No	Tender ID	Name of work & Package No	Last selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1	510712	Construction of Narangiri Mukh Para Mohoungya Parami Student Hostel Raikhali Union Kaptai Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/179	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
2	510716	Completion of Incomplete Work of Constructed Betunia Central Jame Mosque cum Fourkania Madrasa Kawkhali Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/181	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
3	510726	Construction of Naramukh Mahasukh Bidyacharan Bidarshan Bhabana & Bouddha Dharma Education Centre Rajosthali Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/182	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
4	511128	Completion of Incomplete Work of Songkrit School at Tabalchari Sadar Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/186	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
5	511150	Construction of Road From Dabua K P Chowdhury Para to Raktachari Kawkhali Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/192	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
6	511158	Development of Road From Noapara LGED Road to Hajipara Govt. Primary School Gilachari Union Rajosthali Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/193	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
7	511161	Construction of Road From Upazilla Sadar To Madhyo Balukhali Village Jurachari Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/194	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
8	511297	Development of Road From Mitinggyachari Road to Marma Para Chandragona Union Kaptai Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/198	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
9	511328	Development by Cutting 10 km of road From Dokhaiya Para Launch Ghat under Tarengapara to Karnafuli Par under 2 no Mogban Union Sadar Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/200	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
10	511357	Completion of Incomplete Work of Jibtali Rabar Bagan Road Sadar Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/201	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
11	511387	Construction of Road From Mahajan Para Road to South Debatachari Kaptai Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/203	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
12	511403	Completion of Incomplete Work of Agraja Nagarik Parishad Building Kawkhali Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/215	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
13	511474	Construction of Retaining Wall at Roy Saheb Narangiri Bouddha Bihar Raikhali Union Kaptai Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/218	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00
14	511625	Completion of Incomplete Work of Atarokhara Arjogiri Bana Bihar Longadu Upazilla Rangamati. RHDC/20-21/900/228.	30-Nov-2020 17:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00	01-Dec-2020 13:00

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not 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 also form e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Biral Barua
Executive Engineer (In-charge)
On behalf of Chairman
Rangamati Hill District Council
Phone No: 0351-62312
E-mail: xenrhdc@gmail.com

GD-1830

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Education Engineering Department

Chattogram

E-mail: xeneedctg@gmail.com

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 of following packages from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

Tender Notice No. EE/EED/Ctg-Zone/e-Tender/2020-2021/23 **Date: 15.11.2020**

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID	Last date & time of selling documents	Last date & time of submission documents
01	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G32	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Yakub Ali Dobash Girls High School, Kotwali, Chattogram. (Category C5(Est)) (7 Classroom)	512870	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 14:45
02	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G34	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Collegiate High School, Fatikchhari, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511776	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
03	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G35	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Bhujpur National School & College, Fatikchhari, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511777	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
04	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G36	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Captain Shamsulhuda High School, Sitakunda, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511778	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
05	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G37	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Madam Bibrhat Shahjahan High School, Sitakunda, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511779	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
06	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G38	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Jafrabad High School, Hathazari, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511780	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
07	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G39	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Chipatali Eidgha Bhozumuki High School, Hathazari, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511781	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
08	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G40	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Charia High School, Hathazari, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511782	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
09	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G41	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Uttar Rangunia High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511783	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
10	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G42	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Sarabhata Ideal High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511784	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
11	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G43	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Rafikabad Girls High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511785	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
12	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G44	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Islampur High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511786	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
13	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G45	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Padua Sammilani Girls High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511787	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
14	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G46	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Uttar Pomra High School, Rangunia, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511788	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
15	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G47	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Yakubhandi Wares Mohsena High School, Boalkhali, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511789	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
16	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G48	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Sarowartali Nur Mohammad High School, Boalkhali, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511790	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
17	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G49	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Charandwip U C High School, Boalkhali, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511791	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00
18	Ctg/Dev/Vertical/19-20/G50	Manufacturing and Supplying of Furniture for Academic Building at Kanungopara Dr. B B High School, Boalkhali, Chattogram. (Category C4) (9 Classroom)	511792	30-Nov-2020 16:00	01-Dec-2020 15:00

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

Md. Zalal Uddin Chowdhury
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Chattogram

GD-1833



Humayun Kabir, head of regulatory and corporate affairs of bKash, hands over one of six ventilators as donations for Covid-19 patients at Central Police Hospital to Md Azharul Islam Talukder, the doctor in charge, in Dhaka on Sunday.



KSM Mostafizur Rahman, managing director of the National AgriCare Export and Import, and Ramendu Majumdar, managing director of Expressions, exchange documents after signing a deal in Dhaka on Sunday on branding the former.

Record \$1.2b remittance flows in 15 days of Nov

FROM PAGE B1
Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal has expressed his gratitude to the expatriates.

He said the global economy faced a significant economic crisis suddenly because of the Covid-19. During the pandemic, the migrant workers have emerged as the drivers of the economy by sending their hard-earned money, he said.

The government introduced a 2-per cent cash incentive for the remittances sent through legal channels in the last fiscal year. Soon, remittances started to increase, Kamal said.

"At the time, many people started to say that it [the incentive] would not be effective and the flow would not sustain," he said in the press release.

Even, international organisations expressed doubt about the remittance flow, he said.

"But the flow of remittance since the announcement of the incentive has proved their predictions wrong, and it proved once again that we were right," the minister said.

"Achieving more than \$2 billion in remittance in a single month is rare in Bangladesh's history," he said.

Diversion of remittances from informal to formal channels due to the difficulty of carrying money under travel restrictions amid the pandemic and damages inflicted by the recent floods helped Bangladesh bring the remittance flow back to the positive territory in 2020, according to a recent statement of the World Bank.

In April, the multinational lender had said money sent by the migrant workers to Bangladesh is projected at \$14 billion for 2020, a fall likely of about 22 per cent because of the fallouts of the pandemic.

The rising flow from May led the WB to forecast on October 30 that inbound remittance would accelerate by about 8 per cent to \$19.8 billion this year.

Bangladesh is forecast to have posted the highest year-on-year remittance growth of 53.5 per cent among the top 49 recipient-countries in the third quarter of 2020.

Bangladesh received \$18.3 billion in remittance in 2019. Remittance is an important pillar of Bangladesh's economy and the second-largest source foreign currency after exports, accounting for 5.8 per cent of gross domestic product last year.

Micro businesses can now accept digital payments

FROM PAGE B1
Such accounts can be opened within five minutes through agent banking outlets.

"This is an outstanding initiative taken by the central bank," said Md Arfan Ali, managing director of Bank Asia.

"We have been working on the issue for more than two years such that digital financial inclusion and branchless banking get a momentum," he said.

The use of cash will decrease at a faster pace when the service gains a tempo.

Smartphones are essential both for customers and micro businesses to settle transactions through the new central bank initiative.

A micro business will display a quick response (QR) code in front of the

respective stall, and clients will have to scan the code to make payments for products purchased from the stall.

The value of products can be settled by using the mobile application of the respective banks, Ali explained.

Retail businesses can also pay the value of the products to the wholesalers by using the mobile app.

Bank Asia will open at least 30,000 personal retail accounts within next year and it has already completed the initial tasks, Ali said.

Micro businesses even will not come to branches as they will be allowed to open accounts at agent outlets.

Personal retail accounts can be opened through MFS providers as per the central bank notice.

A client will be permitted to open the retail account despite having an existing common MFS account. But MFS agents will not be permitted to open such accounts.

Officials of MFS providers or representatives appointed by them will have to supervise and monitor closely while opening the accounts.

The central bank has imposed ceilings on the financial transactions using MFS accounts.

A micro business will be allowed to take a maximum payment of Tk 30,000 per day and Tk 5 lakh per month from clients.

There is no limit on the number of transactions from a person to retailer.

"The central bank has, in brief, taken

a time-befitting decision," said Kamal Quadir, chief executive officer of bKash.

The digital programme will put a positive impact on both retailers and clients, he said.

"It will contribute to the government vision to digitalise the country's financial sector," Quadir said.

Retail personal accounts also can be opened by using the platforms of payment service providers (PSP).

A retailer, who holds such an account with a PSP, will be allowed to transact to the tune of Tk 10 lakh per month.

All stakeholders will have to come forward to implement the central bank initiative successfully, said Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank.



Md Mahbub ul Alam, CEO of Islami Bank Bangladesh, opens 13 new sub-branches in Dhaka, Chattogram, Gazipur, Barishal, Khulna and Shariatpur through a digital platform yesterday.

Paramount Textile to buy 80pc stake in Intraco Solar for Tk 60cr

FROM PAGE B1
The company has paid-up capital of Tk 147.69 crore, according to DSE data.

Paramount Textile continued to grow amid the pandemic thanks to its diversified business pattern. "And we want to continue diversifying," added Islam.

The government approved Intraco Solar Power to set up a 30-megawatt plant. The construction is yet to begin.

"We will set up the plant at the cost of around Tk 350 crore," Islam said.

The owners would take bank loans to finance the project.

The proposed solar power plant project, located in Gongachhora of Rangpur, has a 20-year tenure. The power tariff will be 18 US cents per kilowatt.

Since Paramount Textile has expertise in the power plant business, it decided to move ahead with the expansion, Islam added.

The textile-maker's diverse portfolio made it possible to book higher profits in the July-September quarter of the fiscal year. In the quarter, Paramount Textile raked in Tk 12.98 crore in profits from its investment in the power plant project. The company's total profit was Tk 22.23 crore in the period.

As a result, the textile-maker topped the chart of listed apparel companies in terms of earnings per share, which stood at Tk 1.51 in July-September.

Paramount Textile made an equity investment in Paramount BTarc Energy in 2018. It holds a 49 per cent stake in the 200-megawatt power plant situated in Sirajganj.

"Our last year's business was impacted due to the spread of the Covid-19, but the power plant business saved our profit growth," Islam added.

The company took home Tk 515 crore in sales from its textile business in 2019-20, a 9.17 per cent drop compared to the previous year. Gross profits declined 6 per cent to Tk 79 crore in the last fiscal year.

Despite the lower gross profit, Paramount Textile's net profit rose 60 per cent to Tk 65 crore riding on higher profits from the power plant business.

The profits from the power plant segment rose 278 per cent to Tk 36.77 crore. Yesterday, stocks of Paramount Textile closed 0.69 per cent higher at Tk 58.60.

Improve business climate, go for intense negotiation for more Japanese investment

FROM PAGE B1
in the sectors which have gone through diversification," said the ambassador.

"I am confident that both trade in services and goods will increase to Japan. The Japanese investment has increased a lot over the years," he said.

There is a big room for improvement for Japanese investment and export from Bangladesh, he added.

Of the total \$57 billion Japan invested in Asia, Bangladesh's pie is only 0.1 per cent. Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) got most of the Japanese investment.

Naoki said Bangladesh needs to improve on its investment climate so that a change in perception comes about among the Japanese investors about the country.

Although Japanese companies are coming here, they are not gaining that much of confidence to make large investments, he said.

This is occurring despite government initiatives aimed at taking the country to a double-digit ranking from a three-digit one in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index, he added.

"To attract more Japanese investment, the government should take care of Japanese companies which have already invested in Bangladesh, so that they become satisfied and can expand operations," said Naoki.

"If they are satisfied here, other Japanese companies will feel encouraged to invest in Bangladesh," he said.

Apart from improving the investment climate, Bangladesh should not discriminate in providing incentives to companies housed inside export processing zones (EPZs), be it owned by locals or foreigners, said the ambassador.

For example, although local garment factories in the EPZs are eligible for a 4 per

cent cash incentive on export to emerging markets, those owned by foreigners are not, he said.

The envoy lamented that little has changed till date even though his office sent letters to the government several times about this discrimination.

Even the immediate past Japanese prime minister, Shinzo Abe talked about this with his Bangladeshi counterpart, Sheikh Hasina, in August this year for attracting more Japanese investment, he said.

There are some other small issues like long waits for customs clearances and problems centring telegraphic transfers of Japanese investment that need to address as soon as possible so that bilateral trade and investment grow at a faster rate, the ambassador also said.

"More improvements are needed. Some improvements took place recently due to the government's efforts," he said.

The foreign factories are being allowed to avail loans from the government's stimulus package aimed at fighting the fallouts of the Covid-19 pandemic, he said.

Regarding Japanese companies seeking to relocate from China to Bangladesh, Naoki said there were two types of Japanese companies in China.

Many Japanese companies have invested targeting the Chinese domestic markets and many invested for making exports from there, he said.

The companies which have targeted the Chinese domestic markets will not relocate as they are doing fine in China, he said.

The Japanese export-oriented small companies may relocate to Bangladesh or other Asian countries from China, said Naoki.

Supply chain disruptions acted as the major reason for the relocation decision of Japanese companies to other Asian countries. Another factor is higher wage

levels in China, he said.

PROGRESS OF JAPAN-FUNDED MEGA PROJECTS IN BANGLADESH

The construction work of some mega projects funded by the Japan government can be completed within the next five years as the works have been going on in full swing even during the time of Covid-19, said Naoki.

Naoki particularly spoke of the Dhaka metro rail project, Arahazar economic zone for Japanese investors, deep-sea port and power plants in Matarbari.

He said the Dhaka metro rail can be partially opened by the end of next year while that of the third terminal at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka would be possible by 2023 and deep-sea port and power plants in Matarbari by 2024.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) has 30 ongoing projects, including large infrastructure projects like that of the Matarbari power plant in Maheshkhali, where a couple of billions of US dollars have been invested.

"These projects in Bangladesh will ensure the base of quality infrastructures for an industrial belt in the country," the Japanese envoy said.

In 2014, both the Japanese and Bangladesh governments undertook some mega projects for infrastructure development under the Japanese concept of Big B plan (Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt) for establishing an industrial corridor between Dhaka, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar.

The Big B plan has been formulated under the model of Japan's Tokyo and Osaka industrial hub that arose between the 1960s and the 1980s mainly aiming to develop many industrial hubs in Japan.

"Such a model worked wonders in Japan," he said.

So, the Big B model is being replicated in Bangladesh for the creation of many industrial hubs between Dhaka, Chattogram and Cox's Bazar, so that Bangladesh can become a developed nation in this region, Naoki also said.

Bangladesh has the opportunity to become a developed country if the Big B model starts working efficiently, he added.

Geographically, Matarbari is very important because the deep-sea port will work as the hub of connectivity with the Indian subcontinent, the Asean countries and East Asian nations, including Japan.

The landscape of infrastructures of this area will dramatically change within three or four years. This will lay the foundation for economic development in this area.

He also said Japan wants to see a Free and Open Indo Pacific (FOIP) for a common vision of peace, stability and prosperity in the Bay of Bengal region.

Last month, the foreign ministers of Japan, the US, Australia and India met in Tokyo to promote the FOIP for disaster management, freedom of navigation, quality infrastructures and for connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region, he said.

Naoki also said by the next two years the development of the economic zone for Japanese investors at Arahazar in Narayanganj would be completed.

It is expected that 100 Japanese companies will primarily invest more than \$1 billion in this special economic zone.

There was no considerable delay in the construction work of Japan-funded projects. For instance, the Japanese engineers and experts did not leave the project sites of Matarbari even in the time of the Covid-19.

So, it is expected that the construction works of some mega projects would be completed within the next five years, he said.

IPDC Finance far from pandemic blues

FROM PAGE B1
In 2020, the company's customer deposits increased 20.5 per cent to Tk 4,278 crore from that at the end of December last year, the company said in its press release.

Its loans, advances and leases increased by nearly 1 per cent to Tk 5,105 at the end of September this year from that of December 2019.

The NBF's classified loan ratio was 1.59 per cent, the lowest amongst listed diversified NBFs in the sector, it added.

Meanwhile, its revenue grew 29 per cent year-over-year to Tk 1,987 crore in the January-September period compared to that a year ago.

Islam emphasised on his company's technology-enabled, socially responsible business models that focus on cottage, micro, small and medium enterprises (CMSMEs), women and young entrepreneurs and lower middle-income households outside Dhaka and Chattogram.

Islam also said the IPDC would continue to support businesses in need, especially the CMSMEs, since they comprised the largest segment of the economy in terms of employment opportunities they generated and their contribution towards the GDP.

The IPDC launched an SME Bondhu package to help disburse Tk 70 crore from the government's stimulus package as per instructions from Bangladesh Bank, he added.

Will Covid-19 create a 'lost generation' in Asia?

THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN

Job offers have been rescinded, life plans are disrupted. The economic fallout from Covid-19 has raised the prospect of a lost generation in Asia. Will the young people of Singapore and the region find new paths to achieve their dreams?

Tailor Vikas Kumar, 25, from India's eastern state of Bihar, had ambitious plans for the next two years.

After chalking up seven years' experience at a textile firm in Mumbai, earning about 25,000 rupees (\$450) a month, he had planned to strike out on his own and start a small tailoring business.

He had also wanted to upgrade his mud and straw hut in Bihar, which houses his parents, wife and two children, into bricks and mortar.

But the pandemic waylaid these plans.

The lockdown imposed by the Indian government in March prevented him from going to work, forcing him to return home in May.

His savings of 100,000 rupees have all been used up now, to ensure that his family survives this difficult phase, leaving no spare cash for rebuilding.

Work has not resumed fully enough at the textile firm to convince Mr Kumar, who was paid by the day, to return to Mumbai. Neither are there opportunities for someone like him - his family does not own farming land - back at his village.

"This year has been wasted," laments Mr Kumar, who has put his plans on hold till 2022.

His story of how the pandemic disrupted life plans and undermined financial security is one that is experienced by young people across Asia.

With most economies in the region still reeling from the fallout of the pandemic, fears are mounting over the prospect of the creation of a "lost generation" in Asia - home to more young people than any other region.

This lost generation may be scarred economically, socially and psychologically by the far-reaching effects of the coronavirus crisis, which has been more consequential than past crises due to the unprecedented extent of its impact, experts say.

Social distancing measures have not only dealt a blow to businesses, but also taken a toll on individuals' mental well-being and disrupted global supply chains.

Unemployment rates among young people have also seen a bigger increase than that those for adults, preliminary data from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) indicates. For unemployment data, the ILO defines youth as those aged 15 to 24.

Young workers must also contend with



THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN

With no smooth transition to the job market, young adults may find it hard to embark on marriage or parenthood, says an expert.

"wage scarring effects", with research indicating that those who find employment after recessions may have to deal with a lasting negative impact on their productivity and wages, said the ILO.

This may have an impact on the life trajectories of a younger generation, warns Professor Jean Yeung, founding director of the Centre for Family and Population Research at the National University of Singapore.

Without a smooth transition into the job market, it can be difficult for youngsters and young adults to embark on other significant adulthood events, such as marriage, parenthood or setting up their own households, she adds.

"The longer the current crisis lasts, the harder it is for the youth to recover from its negative impact. With no effective interventions, they could very well become a lost generation."

Such fears are palpable in Japan, where an

expert panel at the country's labour ministry has urged efforts to support new graduates to avoid another "employment ice age". This refers to the period after the burst of the asset-price bubble era of the 1980s, in which fresh graduates could not find any jobs and were stuck in a vicious circle of irregular dead-end contract unemployment.

Due to Covid-19, the number of people who graduated from university or high school without finding a job in Japan is expected to increase rapidly in 2021, from 20,000 in 2020, though no estimates for next year are available.

According to an August report by the ILO on youth unemployment in Asia-Pacific, the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 24 in Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam increased from the fourth quarter of 2019 to the first quarter of this year.

This was a more significant increase than that for the unemployment rate for adults aged 25 and above in these countries.

And more than 100 million young workers in Asia and the Pacific - nearly one in two young workers in the region - are also employed in sectors experiencing a hit to their economic output due to Covid-19, based on preliminary estimates for 2020, notes the ILO. These sectors include accommodation and food services, and wholesale and retail trade.

While youth in Asia are worried about their job prospects, many fresh graduates and young workers are tempering their expectations or settling for temporary jobs or traineeships while holding out for better opportunities.

The UN Population Fund has also projected that birth rates will continue to drop in many higher-income countries, and climb in many poor and middle-income nations, where it says pandemic-driven disruption in access

to contraception may lead to millions of unplanned pregnancies.

This trend is borne out in Japan, where the number of reported pregnancies nationwide fell 11.4 per cent between May and July compared with the same period last year, due to rising of economic pressures from the outbreak. Women typically report their pregnancies within their first trimester.

On the other hand, 77 per cent of 1,754 married women who were surveyed in Indonesia have been pregnant during the pandemic, according to a survey by market research firm Populix, conducted from Sept 3 to Sept 10.

In developing countries, a surge in birth rates may snowball into wider inequality gaps, while developed countries like Japan, Singapore and China may face a tightened labour supply if birth rates continue to fall due to the crisis, observers have noted.

Housing markets in Indonesia, China and Malaysia have also been hit, though some prospective home owners still find opportunities.

In India, for instance, more millennials are looking into buying a house, given that they are spending the majority of their time in their houses in the Covid-19 era, says Mr Ankit Kansal, the managing director of property brokerage firm 360 Realtors.

Whether these economic and social trends will curb the potential of Asia's economies, which is expected to contribute roughly 60 per cent of global growth by 2030, will depend on how long the pandemic drags on and the quality of government intervention measures to mitigate the crisis' impact.

More training, internships and mentoring opportunities must be provided to young people, and vulnerable groups, such as lower-income families, need more protection, says Prof Yeung.

In Singapore, more than 117,500 jobs and training and attachment opportunities have been created for local job seekers.

The Chinese government has also been taking steps to discourage firms from retrenching workers, notes OCBC Bank head of Greater China research Tommy Xie.

Mr Xie is still optimistic that the technological changes that have been hastened by the pandemic will bring about new opportunities for the young. "Youth can take more paths to success compared with the older generation, such as by capitalising on social media," he says.

Adds OCB economist Wellian Wiranto: "If the global economy can get back to some kind of normalcy by the end of next year, we probably still have a chance of reverting back to (pre-pandemic) potential growth levels."

India to double Bangladeshi rice bran oil import

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's import of rice bran oil from Bangladesh is set to double in the current financial year 2020-21, said BV Mehta, executive director of Solvent Extractors' Association of India.

Import of rice bran oil from Bangladesh have already hit 60,000 tonnes during April-October this year compared to total 75,000 tonnes during 2019-20, Mehta added.

"With the peak season of rice bran processing starting post-Diwali (November 14) as it is the harvest season for paddy, we

expect that total imports of rice bran oil during 2020-21 fiscal would go up to 1.5 lakh tonnes," Mehta was quoted in Pune city by The Economic Times today.

Unlike palm oil, which was earlier being re-routed into India via Bangladesh to avail a duty advantage, rice bran oil originates in Bangladesh and its import is covered by the South Asian Free Trade Agreement.

Rice bran oil is one of the fastest-growing among edible oils and its import is increasing over the past four years, Mehta said.

India produces about one million tonnes of rice bran oil.

Engineering consultants start work for Matarbari port dev project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The engineering consultant team appointed for the development of Matarbari deep-sea port in Moheshkhali started its work yesterday.

The Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) on September 23 signed an agreement with Japanese firm Nippon Koei Joint Venture (JV) Company Ltd for the engineering and consultancy services of the

Overseas Coastal Area Development Institute of Japan (OCADI), Japan Port Consultants (JPC) and a Bangladeshi firm Development Design Consultants Ltd.

The team will be responsible for the design work, tender assistance and construction supervision of the project, said Hiroshi Otani, team leader of Nippon Koei Co Ltd, at a press conference at the port building yesterday.

Also, the team would provide

construction supervision for the marine and civil works.

The package 2 includes services for the procurement of cargo handling equipment and port operation vessels.

The detail design would be conducted between November 2020 and June 2021. The schedule for completing tender assistance is from July 2021 to June 2022, and the construction supervision from July 2022 to December 2025.

The project director, Md Zafar Alam, who is also the member (administration) of the CPA, said they hope the team would be able to complete the works before the schedule.

CPA Chairman SM Abul Kalam Azad said the project is a fast-track initiative of the government and is an outcome of the concept of the Big-B, the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt, jointly announced by the prime ministers of Bangladesh and Japan.

The project aims at strengthening the port logistics capacity of the country by constructing a new commercial port and a port connecting road with the national highway, thereby contributing to the acceleration of logistics with neighbouring countries.

Initially, the construction of a coal jetty was planned for a 1,200MW coal-fired power plant in Matarbari. When the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) started the project to construct the coal jetty, it saw the potential of a commercial port.

The Matarbari Port will be developed in two phases. In the first phase, a 300-metre multi-purpose terminal with a backup area of 29.15 acres will be constructed by June 2025. A 460-metre container terminal with a backup area of 50 acres will be built within December 2025.

Once constructed, the container terminal of the port would be capable of providing berthing facilities to big container ships with a draft limit of 18 metres and capacity to transport 8,000 to 10,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers, the CPA chairman said.

In the multi-purpose terminal, large cargo vessels which can transport 80,000 to 100,000 tonnes of cargoes would be able to berth, he said.

Currently, ships with as high as 9.5-metre draft can berth at the Chattogram port.

Privacy activist files complaints against Apple's tracking tool

REUTERS, Berlin

A group led by privacy activist Max Schrems on Monday filed complaints with German and Spanish data protection authorities over Apple's online tracking tool, alleging that it allows iPhones to store users' data without their consent in breach of European law.

It is the first such major action against the US technology group in regards to European Union privacy rules.

Apple did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The Californian tech giant says it provides users with a superior level of privacy protection. The company had announced it would further tighten its rules with the launch of its iOS 14 operating system this autumn but in September said it would delay the plan until early next year.

The complaints by digital rights group Noyb were brought against Apple's use of a tracking code that is automatically generated on every iPhone when it is set up, the so-called Identifier for Advertisers (IDFA).

The code, stored on the device, allows Apple and third parties to track a user's online behaviour and consumption preferences - vital for the likes of Facebook FB.O to be able to send targeted ads that will interest the user.

"Apple places codes that are comparable

to a cookie in its phones without any consent by the user. This is a clear breach of European Union privacy laws," said Noyb lawyer Stefano Rossetti.

Rosetti referred to the EU's e-Privacy Directive, which requires a user's prior consent to the installation and use of such information. Apple's planned new rules would not change this as they would restrict third-party access but not Apple's.

Apple accounts for one in every four smartphones sold in Europe, according to Counterpoint Research.

The claims were made on behalf of an individual German and Spanish consumers and handed to the Spanish data protection authority and its counterpart in Berlin, said Noyb, a privacy advocacy group led by Austrian Schrems that has successfully fought two landmark trials against Facebook.

In Germany, unlike Spain, each federal state has its own data protection authority.

Both authorities did not immediately reply to requests for comment.

Rossetti said the action was not about high fines but rather aimed at establishing a clear principle whereby "tracking must be the exception, not the rule".

"The IDFA should not only be restricted, but permanently deleted," he said.

National data protection authorities have the power to directly fine companies for breaching European law under the e-Privacy Directive.

OUTLINE OF SERVICES	
PACKAGE 1:	
Detailed Design	Nov'20 to Jun'21
Tender Assistance	Jul'21 to Jun'22
Construction Supervision (Multipurpose Terminal)	Jul'22 to Jun'25
Construction Supervision (Container Terminal)	Jul'22 to Dec'25
PACKAGE 2:	
Services for the procurement of cargo handling equipment and port operation vessels	

Matarbari Port Development Project.

Nippon Koei was selected as the top-ranked consulting firm to render engineering related services with a negotiated contract price of Tk 234 crore.

The consultant team also includes

technology transfer to the CPA, he said. The team consists of 30 experts from Japan, 18 from Bangladesh and 21 supporting staff, all of whom are Bangladeshi nationals.

The project is divided into two packages. The package 1 includes design, tender assistance and the

Otani said the team hopes it would use the latest technologies for jetty, seismic base isolation system for quay gantry crane, a special method for corrosion protection, and maintenance-free plant system.

