



Md Arfan Ali, president and managing director of Bank Asia, and **Md Serajul Islam**, CEO of ERA-InfoTech, exchange documents after signing a deal recently for rolling out "Micro Merchant" apps for management solutions.

UK urges G7 action on Covid recovery, climate, tech tax

AFP, London

Britain on Friday pressed for G7 action to tackle the global fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, as well as climate change and digital taxation, as it outlined its priorities for the elite economic club.

Finance minister Rishi Sunak and Bank of England governor Andrew Bailey hosted their counterparts from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States at an online conference, ahead of a summit in Britain later this year.

The G7's first gathering since Joe Biden became US president included Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who made a clear break with the former administration of Donald Trump. "Secretary Yellen emphasised the commitment of the Biden administration to multilateralism to solve global issues," the US Treasury Department said.

Washington "places a high priority on deepening our international engagement and strengthening our alliances", it added, after four years of Trump's "America First" agenda.

Britain's finance ministry said the talks involved an exchange of views about the best way to bounce back from the impact of Covid-19. "The G7 must ensure that international financial institutions have the right tools to equip and enable vulnerable countries to respond to the pandemic," it said.

On Thursday, a French source indicated that the world's leading economies would consider whether to use the International Monetary Fund to mobilise \$500 billion in coronavirus aid to the poorest nations. Britain, which has suffered more than 116,000 deaths, is banking on vaccines to return to normality, helped by one developed by Oxford University and distributed by



REUTERS/FILE

Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak talks during a TV interview in London.

AstraZeneca.

The low-cost jab, which is easier to transport and store than the ultra-low temperatures needed for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, is being offered not for profit to low- and middle-income countries.

Sunak said there was a "moral, health and economic case for rapid and fair vaccine distribution across the world", given fears of growing "vaccine nationalism" and rows over supplies. The G7 should "take the lead in shaping support for vulnerable countries in 2021", his office said.

G7 leaders including Biden are due to meet at a seaside retreat in Cornwall, southwest England on June 11-13, after last year's meeting in the United States was shelved because of the pandemic.

Britain is also hosting a UN conference on climate change, COP26, in the Scottish city of Glasgow in November, with hopes of fresh commitments towards targets

for net zero carbon emissions.

Sunak urged his counterparts "to make climate and nature considerations a central part of all economic and financial decision-making in 2021", according to his office. The chancellor of the exchequer also "stressed the importance of working together to support a smooth and effective transition of our economies to net zero" carbon emissions. Britain took on the rotating G7 presidency last month with hopes for greater US cooperation, as Biden restored the United States to the Paris climate accord and the World Health Organization.

His government has also expressed support for a proposed global tax on digital giants such as Amazon, Facebook and Google, which have reaped stellar profits during the pandemic. "Progress on reaching an international solution to the tax challenges of the digital economy was noted as a key priority," Sunak said.

MIDLAND BANK ESRM TRAINING UNDER IFC STANDARD



MIDLAND BANK

Midland Bank Managing Director Md Ahsan-uz Zaman attends its training programme for executives and officers on environmental and social risk management through a digital platform.



AB BANK

Nazia Barkat, head of employee banking of AB Bank, and **Mohammad Ferdous Jaman**, company secretary of Orion Group, exchange documents after signing a deal recently offering the Orion employees "exclusive" banking benefits.



PADMA BANK

Md Ehsan Khasru, CEO of Padma Bank, opens the bank's "EK Cup Cha campaign-2021" to greet customers at the bank's Gulshan corporate branch in Dhaka recently.



PREMIER BANK

Golam Awlia, additional managing director of Premier Bank, and **Mahmood Hossain**, adviser for hospital operations at AMZ Hospital, attend a deal signing ceremony at the former's head office in Dhaka recently. The bank's credit and debit cardholders will get up to 25 per cent in discount at the hospital.



SINGER

Chandana Samarasinghe, marketing director of Singer Bangladesh; **Mokbulla Huda Chowdhury**, sales director, and **Kazi Rafiqul Islam**, wholesale director, launch "11th Gen" Dell laptop computers for the Bangladesh market on February 10.



MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, poses with employees who received an "Service Excellence Award 2020" at the bank's corporate head office in Dhaka recently.



GREEN DELTA CAPITAL

Md Rafiqul Islam, CEO of Green Delta Capital, and **Sabbir Ahmed**, head of retail banking of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, sign documents of a deal recently enabling "privilege services and special fees" for customers availing discretionary portfolio management services.