



Bank Asia
MD Arfan Ali, president and managing director of Bank Asia, opens the bank's "Central Trade Processing Centre, (CTPC) – Principal Hub" at Tea Board Building in the capital's Motijheel on February 14. Customers of authorised dealer branches will enjoy specialised and centralised services in foreign exchange transactions as per international standard. Deputy managing directors Mohammad Borhanuddin, Mohammad Ziaul H Molla, SM Iqbal Hossain and Adil Chowdhury and Md Zia Arfin, head of international division, were present.



BEXI FABRICS
Lawmakers Md Shafiqul Islam Mohiuddin and Sagufta Yasmin, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association President Md Mohammad Ali Khokon, Kaler Kantho Editor Imdadul Haq Milan, and Bexi Fabrics managing directors BM Shoeb, Md Hassenuddin Mollah and Emdadul Hoque launch "Bexi Fabrics Privilege Card" at InterContinental Dhaka yesterday.

Card use hits all-time high

FROM PAGE B1
People have now started to spend on a large extent as they had purchased little during the lockdown period and in the following couple of months, said Abul Kashem Md Shirin, managing director of Dutch-Bangla Bank.

In addition, people now prefer to purchase goods by way of using the digital means, heavily fuelling card transactions in recent months, he said.

A good number of clients are avoiding use of cash to reduce chances of catching the virus, he said.

Emranul Huq, managing director of Dhaka Bank, echoed him.

Transactions through the cards will go up more in the months to come since festivals of Pahela Baishakh and Eid-ul-Fitr are upcoming.

In addition, a good number of owners of garment industries now pay wages and salaries of workers through banks instead of through cash, he said. The owners took the initiative when the pandemic spread massively, he said.

"For instance, they opened around 30,000 accounts with Dhaka Bank to pay remuneration to workers. And we provided debit cards to every worker," Huq said.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman,

managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, however, said people were still cautious about spend money as the pandemic continues to persist.

Card-based transactions have been on the rise in the recent period as people are preferring e-commerce more than ever before to protect themselves from the virus, Rahman said. The issuance of credit cards was on the increase in December when the outstanding number of bank credit cards stood at 16.78 lakh whereas it was 16.51 lakh the month before.

Similarly the number of debit cards issued by banks were 2.13 crore and 2.09 crore respectively.

BMW 5 Series now available

STAR BUSINESS DESK
BMW Asia and its sole authorised dealer in Bangladesh, Executive Motors, yesterday announced the availability of a new BMW 5 Series sedans for viewing and test drives.

M Shamsul Arefeen, director operations at Executive Motors, said the BMW 5 Series has been the world's most successful premium executive model by far.

More than 600,000 units of the BMW 5 Series have now been sold worldwide since being launched. The sedans are produced at the BMW plant in Germany, according to a statement.

The BMW 5 Series starts at Tk 1.18 crore with free parts and service warranty for five years up to 60,000 km.

BSEC summons Robi for not paying dividend from profit

FROM PAGE B1
As a result, Robi was subjected to an effective tax rate of 71.8 per cent for 2020.

"In this backdrop, considering the positive growth trajectory of the company, the Robi Board has recommended not to give any dividend for 2020 to secure the investment funds necessary to stimulate Robi's future growth."

"We thought the company would announce at least some dividends. Because, investors love dividend," said a top official of the BSEC, preferring anonymity.

"The company's board has the right for not sharing the profit if it has potential. However, we urged them to think differently next time."

Having added 19 lakh subscribers to its

network in 2020, Robi's subscriber base reached 5.09 crore by the end of 2020.

Robi contributed Tk 4,236 crore to the government exchequer in 2020.

"When the competitors saw revenue decline, Robi experienced positive revenue growth," said Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, managing director and CEO of Robi.

The company could have made higher profit, but the pandemic and the 2 per cent minimum tax on gross revenue barred the company from reaching its full potential, he said.

Amid the adversities, the company also renewed its 11.6 MHz spectrum licence for 900 and 1,800 bands for 10 years to stay true to its commitments, he said.

Business confidence ticking up: Sanem

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The services sector has been performing better than the manufacturing sector, Prof Raihan said.

The improvement in business status in October-December compared to July-September was minimal. Compared to the status in the same quarter in 2019, the situation is still worse, the Sanem said.

"It shows the firms have not got back to the pre-pandemic situation, and it might take a while."

Sectors are recovering at varying paces, and faster recovery is taking place in the pharmaceuticals, textile, and financial sectors. Some of the indicators, such as profitability, employment and wage indicators have improved slightly compared to the past quarter.

The business cost indicator worsened in the last quarter, highlighting the serious threat to the viability of the firms in the long run.

The sectors that need priority attention are leather and tannery, light engineering, wholesale, transport, garment, food processing, and real

estate, said the Sanem.

All these sectors should be given additional incentives, such as lower interest rate for a longer period, increased and eased up duty drawback facility, and increased export cashback facility.

"Benefits such as expanding the reach of the Export Development Fund should be explored. SMEs should be a priority in channelling the loans and stimulus packages."

Md Saiful Islam, president of the Leathers and Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh, said profitability had drastically fallen as the sustainability of businesses declined.

Although the cost of doing business has been increasing every quarter, the prices of export-oriented goods did not increase, he said.

The entrepreneur said the employment of the workers in the leather and leather goods sector had not been affected because of the stimulus package.

Islam urged the government for extending the repayment period for bank loans as local manufacturers

could not bag higher sales during Christmas and other mega sales seasons in the western world.

The rates of logistic services have increased a lot, affecting the profitability of exporters, he added. "We will have to create an enabling business environment for our business sustainability."

Arshad Jamal Dipu, vice-president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said productivity improvement and innovation were significant to survive businesses.

Buyers are not paying fair prices for the exported garment items. The unsold stock of garment items is another problem for the exporters, he said.

Abul Kasem Khan, chairperson of the Business Initiative Leading Development, suggested the government reform the taxation system to reduce the cost of doing business.

Asif Ibrahim, chairman of the Chattogram Stock Exchange, and Farzana Khan, general manager of the SME Foundation, also spoke.

CONTACT NUMBER CHANGE

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Labour and Employment
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000
Common Service Section-1.

Reference :40.00.0000.038.08.001.16-67

e-Tender Notice

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

e-Tender ID No.	Name of the Goods	Scheduled Tender/Proposal Date and Time	Publication	Tender/Proposal Closing Date and Time
546483	Purchase of 01 (One) LED Interactive smart board with IR Multi-Touch Technology (Digital Display Board)	11-Feb-2021 11:00		28-Feb-2021 12:00

This is 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 e-GP registered Bank's Branches.

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

15.02.2021
 Additional Secretary
 Ministry of Labour and Employment
 Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
 E-mail: adddsecretary@mole.gov.bd
 Tel: 9515532

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
অধ্যক্ষের কার্যালয়
ন্যাশনাল একাডেমি ফর অটজম এন্ড নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল ডিজঅ্যাবিলিটিজ (NAAND)
(অস্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস)
৬/এ, সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা

NAAND (অস্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস) এ অটজম ও এনডিডি (অটজম স্পেকট্রাম ডিজঅর্ডার, সেরিব্রাল পালসি, ডাউন সিনড্রোম ও বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধিতা) শিক্ষার্থীদের ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি
শিক্ষাবর্ষ: ২০২১

অটজম ও এনডিডি (অটজম স্পেকট্রাম ডিজঅর্ডার, সেরিব্রাল পালসি, ডাউন সিনড্রোম ও বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধিতা) শিক্ষার্থীদের মাধ্যমিক পর্যায়ে একীভূত শিক্ষায় অন্তর্ভুক্তি নিশ্চিতকরণ এবং বরো পড়া রাখকল্পে শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণের উপযোগী দক্ষতা অর্জন ও সামাজিক দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধির জন্য শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা বিভাগের অধীনস্থ ন্যাশনাল একাডেমি ফর অটজম এন্ড নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল ডিজঅ্যাবিলিটিজ-NAAND (অস্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস) এ নিম্নলিখিত শ্রেণি ও আসনে ভর্তির জন্য আবেদন আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ ১৫ মার্চ ২০২১ খ্রিঃ। ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি তথ্য www.naand.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

ক্রমিক	শ্রেণি	শূন্য আসন	সেবাসমূহ
১.	ষষ্ঠ	১০	• সম্পূর্ণ সরকারীভাবে সংশ্লিষ্ট শ্রেণি কার্যক্রমে শিক্ষা প্রদান।
২.	সপ্তম	১০	• বিকল্প দক্ষতা (নাচ, গান, খেলাধুলা ও ছবি আঁকা শেখার সুযোগ)।
৩.	অষ্টম	১০	• সামাজিক ও মানসিক দক্ষতা উন্নয়নে প্রশিক্ষণ। • কাউন্সেলিং (শিক্ষার্থী ও অভিভাবক) ও থেরাপি সেবা।

ভর্তির শর্তাবলী:

- অটজম ও এনডিডি এর সনাক্তকরণ ও মূল্যায়নের প্রমাণপত্র থাকতে হবে।
- আবেদনকারীকে পিইসি/পঞ্চম ও সংশ্লিষ্ট শ্রেণি পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে।
- ঢাকা শহরে বসবাসরত অথবা অবস্থান করতে হবে।
- শিক্ষাবর্ষ সমাপনান্তে যোগ্যতা অর্জন সাপেক্ষে সাধারণ বিদ্যালয়ে স্থানান্তরিত করা হবে।
- বিদ্যমান সরকারি মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি ও অন্যান্য ফি এর সাথে সামঞ্জস্য রেখে ভর্তি ফি ও অন্যান্য ফি নির্ধারিত হবে।

15/02/2021
 (প্রফেসর মোহাম্মদ গিয়াস উদ্দিন)
 অধ্যক্ষ
 ন্যাশনাল একাডেমি ফর অটজম এন্ড নিউরো-ডেভেলপমেন্টাল ডিজঅ্যাবিলিটিজ (NAAND) (অস্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস)
 ৬/এ, সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা

GD- 323

PM seeks detailed work plan as Payra port project goes slow

FROM PAGE B1
"However, our own ability to conduct a feasibility study for such a large scale project has not been developed yet," he said.

"However, when a feasibility study was later carried out by two firms from Belgium and Denmark, they said the jetty would not be able to withstand the waves that form if a 40,000 tonne-capacity ship comes to the port," he added.

"That is why it has been asked to use steel piles instead of RCC piles," said Rashid.

After conducting a hydrological study on a river and surrounding area inside the port, where one Andharmanik bridge would be constructed, the bridge's length was increased from 1.05 kilometres to 1.17 kilometres by the consultant.

For that, the project seeks another Tk 411 crore from the government.

"If you ask me how the project would be completed by two years as only 7 per cent of it has so far progressed, I would say that now the total design and feasibility study have been finalized," he said.

"And that's why it will be possible to do it within the deadline," Rashid added.

The parliament passed the Payra seaport authority act on November 3, 2013, and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the port's construction work on November 1 that year.

Although she inaugurated limited-scale operations of the country's

third seaport in 2016, the full-fledged activities were aimed to be run by 2023.

Mother vessels still cannot dock at the port because construction of necessary infrastructure is yet to be complete.

The multifarious task involving the much-hyped port in Patuakhali has been facing delays despite being a fast-track project of the government.

The lack of a proper feasibility study, inappropriate cost estimations and reluctance of project officials mainly resulted in the delayed infrastructure development and rising construction costs, according to ministry officials.

The same was stated in a report on the project by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED).

The cost was increased by 23 per cent from the last estimate of Tk 3,350 crore to meet additional expenses on land acquisition, among others, as the Ecne approved a third revised proposal in November last year.

The project, which is being implemented by an agency under the shipping ministry, was undertaken in 2015 at an estimated cost of Tk 1,128 crore. The expenditure went up to Tk 3,350 crore in the first revision.

However, around 80 per cent of the project has been completed as of now.

A government effort to prepare the master plan and design for a Payra deep-sea port by engaging the Bangladesh University of Engineering

and Technology and a consultant of the Netherlands has not been finalised.

As of now, only 50 per cent of the master plan has been completed.

Some other projects of the port, such construction of a multipurpose terminal, a coal terminal and city in the port area and attracting tourists by improving the Kuakata coastal region, have not progressed much.

NBR halves VAT on 4G licence, renewal fees

FROM PAGE B1
revenue," said Kazi Farid Uddin, first secretary of VAT policy of the NBR.

Before the reduction, 15 per cent VAT was applicable on 4G licence issuance or renewal fees after the VAT and Supplementary Duty Act 2012 came into effect from July 1, 2019.

However, mobile phone operators were reluctant to deposit the indirect tax as they could not claim input tax credit in absence of the BTRC's VAT registration.

Now, after the rate cut, no VAT rebate will be applicable, the NBR said, adding that 4G licences cannot be made operational prior to the payment of the reduced rate of VAT on the licence fees, technology neutrality or spectrum fee, royalty or their renewals.

The revenue authority said the reduced rate of VAT on 4G licence or renewal fee would be effective retrospectively from July 1, 2019.

Local firms more optimistic than global counterparts

FROM PAGE B1
Over 60 per cent of Bangladeshi family business feel they have a clear sense of company and/or family values and these values have helped a clear majority during the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, fewer than two in five have their values and company mission in written form.

Some 33 per cent claim to have a robust, documented and communicated succession plans in place, compared with 30 per cent globally.

Over 90 per cent of Bangladeshi family businesses engage in some form of social responsibility activities.

Around 44 per cent feel they have a

responsibility to fight climate change and its related consequences.

Only 37 per cent have a developed and communicated sustainability strategy.

Some 31 per cent expect Covid-19 to lead to a reduction in sales, somewhat more positive than the global picture where 46 per cent expect such a reduction.