

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▼ 0.42%	▼ 0.43%	\$1,778.75	\$63.25	▼ 0.77%	▼ 0.58%	▼ 0.51%	▲ 1.43%	BUY TK 83.95	100.44	115.65	12.81
5,503.67	9,616.12	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	51,703.83	30,292.19	2,920.43	3,655.09	SELL TK 84.95	104.24	119.45	13.47

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Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2021, FALGUN 5, 1427 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Govt fixes edible oil price to tame volatility

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday fixed edible oil prices to tame the volatility in the domestic market and curb price manipulation by a section of unscrupulous traders.

The new price came into effect immediately.

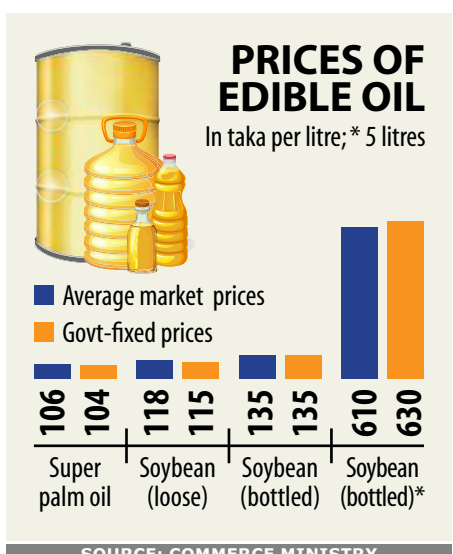
The price of loose soybean oil was fixed at Tk 115 per litre at the retail level, said Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi after a meeting with major refiners, importers, traders and wholesalers at the secretariat in Dhaka.

The move came as loose soybean oil was selling at Tk 116-Tk 120 per litre at the retail level in the capital, up 3.5 per cent from Tk 112-Tk 116 a month ago.

The price of non-branded soybean oil averaged Tk 87 per litre a year ago, meaning it surged 36 per cent now compared to a year earlier, market prices data compiled by state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh showed.

Retail prices of branded soybean oil advanced 29 per cent year-on-year to Tk 130-Tk 140 per litre yesterday, the average price of which is equal to the government-fixed rate.

The government set the price of five-litre branded soybean oil at Tk 630, which was higher than the average price of Tk 610. The price of super palm oil was set at Tk 104 per litre.



"The market will be stable if all mills comply with the decision and keep the supply smooth," said Abul Hashem, general secretary of the Bangladesh Edible Oil Wholesalers Association.

Many wholesalers have bought edible oil from refiners at the prices that are higher than the government rates, he said.

The government-fixed rate for per litre bottled soybean oil is Tk 127 at the distributor level and Tk 123 at the mill gate.

The price of five-litre bottled oil has been fixed at Tk 630 at the consumer level, Tk 610 at the distributor level, and Tk 590 at the mill gate.

The government set the price of loose soybean oil at Tk 110 per litre at the distributor end and Tk 107 at the mill gate.

INTRODUCING NEW HOTLINE NUMBER 16704

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BEATING PANDEMIC WOES Women entrepreneurs need special financial support: experts

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Women entrepreneurs are demanding special allocations of working capital and other financial support from the government to recover from losses suffered from the Covid-19's fallout.

Most of these entrepreneurs have been forced to downsize their businesses while others have shuttered operations entirely, leading to increased unemployment.

Without government support, women entrepreneurs will not be able to stay on course, according to Selima Ahmad, president of the Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI).

"The pandemic forced a large number of female entrepreneurs to lose their income," she said while conducting a webinar on the "Impact of Covid-19 on women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh" organised by the chamber yesterday.

During the peak pandemic period between May and June, many businesses had to be kept shut but the owners still had to pay rent, tax, utility bills, salaries and so on.

As a result, many female entrepreneurs faced social, economic and mental challenges, including domestic violence, she said.

But even though the economy has recovered to a certain extent, many of these women entrepreneurs have not been able to do the same.

This is because many foreign buyers cancelled their orders,



Salma Akther Borsa, an entrepreneur and founder of youth skills development centre Nabila Jubo Mohila Unnayan Songstha in Moghbazar, has trained some 100 youths in a multitude of trade. The photo was taken yesterday.

making it difficult for the businesswomen to renew their trade licenses as the associated fees are high, Ahmad added.

Husne Ara Shikha, general manager of the SME & Special Programmes Department at Bangladesh Bank, said the central bank does not offer any special service with low interest rates for women.

According to her, there are

dedicated loan benefits for small and medium entrepreneurs (SME) which includes a 15 per cent quota for women.

Certain requirements also need to be met for women to secure special loan facilities, Shikha added.

Besides, the central bank has so far disbursed 6 per cent of a Tk 20,000 crore stimulus package among female entrepreneurs while

the target was only 5 per cent.

The general manager went on to assure that action would be taken against commercial banks that harass loan-seeking women entrepreneurs.

Shikha also pointed out that the women entrepreneurs could have borrowed from another Tk 1,500 crore stimulus package available at three per cent interest.

Prices of essentials rise ahead of Ramadan

Dishonest traders, syndicates to blame

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

Prices of many essential commodities, such as edible oil, chickpeas and sugar, have gone up at both retail and wholesale markets across Chattogram despite a rise in imports in the past three months.

The development comes about two months ahead of the fasting month of Ramadan, when demand for these consumer goods goes up to a large extent.

Price hikes ahead of Ramadan are a common phenomenon, according to Najer Hossain, vice president of the Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB).

"This is because the syndicates of traders and importers hike the prices in several phases before mobile court drives are made to tame the spiral," he told The Daily Star.

In order to control prices, it is necessary to monitor the market a few months ahead of Ramadan aside from conducting regular monitoring throughout the year, Hossain added.

According to traders and importers, prices are on an upward trend in global markets as well.

Costs have been fluctuating for the last few months due to a drop in production in



Price hike of essential commodities ahead of Ramadan is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh.

exporting countries and weakening of the international trading system, they said.

The wholesale price of soybean oil at Chattogram's Khatunganj market, one of the country's largest wholesale hubs, has increased by Tk 350 per maund (37.3 kilograms) to about Tk 4,500.

Similarly, palm oil now costs around Tk 3,700 per maund, an increase of about Tk 100 to Tk 120.

In retail markets, the price of bottled soybean oil has increased by Tk 10 to Tk 15 per kg to about Tk 132 while loose soybean has risen by Tk 10 Tk 12 per kg to about Tk 122 in the span of a month.

The wholesale price of chickpeas has increased by Tk 450 per maund from that a month ago to around Tk 2,190. Similarly, dried peas sold for around Tk 1,490 per maund, an increase of about Tk 370.

Retailers say that the price of chickpeas in the domestic market has increased by Tk 12 to Tk 15 per kg to roughly Tk 63 to Tk 70 while dried chickpeas by Tk 10 per kg to about Tk 43 to Tk 45.

The price of another essential commodity -- sugar -- has soared to around Tk 2,290 per kg while it was Tk 2,050 a month back.

Tk 569cr incentive disbursed to fish, livestock farmers

Agriculture minister says

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The fisheries and livestock ministry has handed over Tk 568.86 crore in cash incentive to 485,476 livestock and fish farmers who have been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque said yesterday.

Some 407,402 livestock farmers and 78,074 fishermen received the incentive as a gift from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina through their mobile financial service and bank accounts, he said.

The government will continue supporting the farmers and entrepreneurs to ensure nutrition for the general mass and pull the marginalised people in the rural areas out of poverty, the minister said.

He spoke as the chief guest at a programme in the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium. The fisheries and livestock ministry gave away the cash incentives to the affected farmers at the event, the ministry said in a press release.

The government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is taking and implementing timely steps with particular focus on the agriculture sector, helping the country become self-sufficient in granular foods, he said.

Govt to buy Tk 624cr LNG from Singapore firm

REJAUU KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

The government yesterday approved two proposals to buy a total of 67.2 lakh MMBTU liquefied natural gas from spot market for Tk 623.64 crore to meet the growing demand for the super-chilled fuel.

Vitol Asia Pte Ltd of Singapore will supply the fuel.

The cabinet committee on purchase approved the proposals to buy the LNG from the spot market in a meeting, presided over by Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal.

In a spot market, financial instruments, such as commodities, currencies and securities, are traded for immediate delivery.

"We are buying LNG from the spot market alongside purchasing the fuel through a long-term contract," Kamal told reporters.

Under one of the proposals, Petrobangla, a corporation of the energy and mineral resources division, will buy 33,60,000 MMBTUs (million British thermal units) of LNG for about Tk 310.98 crore. Each MMBTU will cost \$9.3123.

The second proposal will see Petrobangla buy 33,60,000 MMBTU LNG for about Tk 312.65 crore. The fuel is priced at \$9.3611 per MMBTU.

In September last year, the government moved to the spot market for the first time

to purchase the fuel at a cheaper rate. At the time, Vitol Asia won the work order to deliver 3,490,200 MMBTUs for Tk 132.93 crore.

In January, Asian spot LNG prices rose to unprecedented levels due to cargo shortages, transportation bottlenecks, supply outages,

and record winter temperatures boosting end-user demand, according to price agency S&P Global Platts.

The S&P Global Platts JKM for February was assessed at a record high of \$32.494 per MMBTU on January 12. This is the highest for

the LNG benchmark for Asian spot LNG since it was launched in early 2009.

The Japan-Korea-Marker (JKM) is used as a reference point for spot deals in Asia.

LNG price has come down in recent weeks, and a further drop is expected at the end of this

month, according to an official of Rupantarita Praktitik Gas Company Ltd.

Bangladesh also buys LNG from Qatar and Oman under a government-to-government agreements.

In 2017, Bangladesh signed a 15-year contract with RasGas of Qatar, which would supply 2.5 million tonnes of LNG every year. The fuel is supplied at 12.65 per cent of the three-month average price of Brent oil plus \$0.5 constant per MMBTU.

The government has a 10-year LNG import deal with Oman Trading International. The LNG will be priced at 11.9 per cent of the three-month average price of Brent crude oil plus a constant price of 40 cents per MMBTU.

Bangladesh added LNG to its energy system in 2018 as part of the government's efforts to eliminate gas shortages and power outages and unlock the economy's potential.

Accelerate Energy of the US began supplying re-gasified LNG from its terminal in Moheshkhali in August 2017. It has a regasification capacity of 500 million cubic feet of gas per day.

In May 2019, Summit LNG Terminal Co Ltd, the country's second LNG terminal, began supplying re-gasified LNG. The unit has a capacity of supplying 500 million cubic feet of re-gasified LNG.



In January, Asian spot LNG prices rose to unprecedented levels due to cargo shortages, transportation bottlenecks and supply outages.

PHOTO: REUTERS/FILE



Mohammad Akhter, chairman of Prime Islami Life Insurance, and CEO Apel Mahmud attend its annual conference-2020 in Sylhet recently.



Sheikh Fazle Fahim, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), and Sonia Bashir Kabir, technology adviser, pose with the winner of FBCCI Solveathon powered by MIT SOLVE and executed by FBCCI Tech C at the former's office in Dhaka on Tuesday. Team Aftergrad, Team Kri Shop and Team Sushasto have won on themes of Edu Tech, Agri Tech and Health Tech respectively.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Jail Super
Sunamganj District Jail
www.prison.sunamganj.gov.bd

Memo No. 58.04.9000.159.04.043.2021-493(4) Date: 16-02-2021

e-Tender Notice

The following tender has been invited to the National e-GP Portal to inform all the concerns.

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Name of goods	Publishing date & time	Closing date & time
01	540682	Supply of Unnotamaner Choler Dal to Sunamganj District Jail for the period of October/2020 to September/2021	16-Feb-2021 11:30	04-Mar-2021 12:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 17:00 on 03rd March 2021.

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

Nurshed Ahmed Bhuiyan
Jail Super
BJ-0266900098
Sunamganj District Jail
0871-61173 (Office)
jssganj@prison.gov.bd

GD-329

Tk 569cr incentive disbursed to fish, livestock farmers

FROM PAGE B1
The government is now extending all-out support to the farmers to boost production of fish, egg, meat, fruits and other nutrition-rich foods to ensure healthy and safe food for the people, Razaque said.

The fisheries ministry is playing a vital role in providing nourishing foods to the people, alleviating poverty of the marginalised groups and creating more jobs, he said.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister SM Rezaul Karim presided over the event, where Planning Minister MA Mannan was also present as the special guest.

Prices of essentials rise ahead of Ramadan

FROM PAGE B1
Anower Hossain, a wholesale trader at Khatunganj market, said they have sufficient stocks of Ramadan items, including chickpeas and sugar, and that there was no sign of a supply shortage.

However, retailers suddenly placed more orders with Ramadan in mind, resulting in a slight increase in prices at wholesale markets, he added.

Market insiders said although there were sufficient stocks, a nexus of dishonest wholesalers and retailers have created illegal, profit-mongering syndicates that charge extra for these items. In this situation, it is the people, especially those of the low and middle classes, who suffer the most, they added.

According to data from Chattogram Custom House, more than 3.73 lakh tonnes of edible oil, including crude soya bean and refined palm oil, were imported through the Chattogram port in the three months preceding January, up from 3.59 lakh tonnes in the same period a year ago.

Chickpea imports amounted to around 62,165 tonnes while the figure was 183,450 tonnes for the dried variety between November 2020 and January 2021, up from 63,120 tonnes and 162,034 tonnes respectively the year before.

In the same period, about 38,043 tonnes of sugar were imported, the data shows.

SM Zakaria, additional deputy commissioner of Chattogram district, told The Daily Star that market monitoring for Ramadan sales has not yet started.

"We will conduct market monitoring activities very soon after fixing a work plan," he added.

Asked about the price hike, Zakaria said they regularly conduct market monitoring within a small periphery every month.

"If any allegation is received, we will conduct drives and take legal action against the dishonest traders," said the additional deputy commissioner.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
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উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
(০৪/২০২০-২০২১)

স্মারক নং-৪৪৮/ই তারিখ: ১৬/০২/২০২১খ্রিঃ

আগামী ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বৎসরের ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের (এপ্রিল-জুন/২০২১) মাসের জন্য পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এবং তৎপরবর্তীতে সংশোধিত ও প্রণীত আইন/বিধিমালা মোতাবেক নিম্নবর্ণিত মালামাল সরবরাহ/ক্রয়/বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী/যাবসায়ীদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র. নং	আইটেম	পরিমাণ (কেজি)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (টাকা)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময় (দিন)
১.	উন্নতমানের ছোট দানা মস্তর ডাল ক্রয় (যেহ পলিপ্যাকে ২ কেজি ও ১.৫ কেজি প্যাকেটজাতকৃত)	৩৫,০০০ (পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) কেজি	৭৫০/- টাকা	৯০,০০০/-	কার্যাদেশ প্রদানের তারিখ হতে ১০ (দশ) দিনের মধ্যে
২.	উন্নতমানের সরিষা তৈল (ডিটামিন এ সমৃদ্ধ) ক্রয়	৩৫,০০০ (পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) কেজি	৭৫০/- টাকা	৯০,০০০/-	"
৩.	উন্নতমানের পোলাও চাল ক্রয়	১,৭০০ (এক হাজার সাতশত) কেজি	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৪.	চকনা চেরাইকৃত ডালি লাকড়ি	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	৪০০/- টাকা	৫০০০/-	"
৫.	কুলি খরচ (চাল ও চিনি লোড-আনলোড)	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৬.	ডেডষ্টক মালামাল বিক্রয় (খালি চট ও প্রাস্টিকের বড় এবং মাঝারী বস্তা)	ডেডষ্টক মোতাবেক	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৭.	গম পেছাই ও স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে ৫ কেজি ও ২ কেজি প্যাকেটজাতকৃত	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"

দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্য:

১৪. দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা: ১। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ২। হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদ, ৩। ডাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ, ৪। ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদপত্র এবং ৫। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যথা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউএল এ উল্লেখ থাকবে।

১৫. মালামালের বিবরণ:

ক্র. নং	আইটেম	পরিমাণ (কেজি)	দরপত্রের মূল্য (টাকা)	নিরাপত্তা জামানত (টাকা)	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময় (দিন)
১.	উন্নতমানের ছোট দানা মস্তর ডাল ক্রয় (যেহ পলিপ্যাকে ২ কেজি ও ১.৫ কেজি প্যাকেটজাতকৃত)	৩৫,০০০ (পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) কেজি	৭৫০/- টাকা	৯০,০০০/-	কার্যাদেশ প্রদানের তারিখ হতে ১০ (দশ) দিনের মধ্যে
২.	উন্নতমানের সরিষা তৈল (ডিটামিন এ সমৃদ্ধ) ক্রয়	৩৫,০০০ (পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) কেজি	৭৫০/- টাকা	৯০,০০০/-	"
৩.	উন্নতমানের পোলাও চাল ক্রয়	১,৭০০ (এক হাজার সাতশত) কেজি	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৪.	চকনা চেরাইকৃত ডালি লাকড়ি	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	৪০০/- টাকা	৫০০০/-	"
৫.	কুলি খরচ (চাল ও চিনি লোড-আনলোড)	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৬.	ডেডষ্টক মালামাল বিক্রয় (খালি চট ও প্রাস্টিকের বড় এবং মাঝারী বস্তা)	ডেডষ্টক মোতাবেক	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"
৭.	গম পেছাই ও স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে ৫ কেজি ও ২ কেজি প্যাকেটজাতকৃত	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক	৪০০/- টাকা	২০,০০০/-	"

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরণ:

১৬. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম: হাসিবুল আলম, বিপিএম।
১৭. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী: পুলিশ সুপার, সিরাজগঞ্জ।
১৮. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা: পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, সিরাজগঞ্জ।
১৯. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম: ফোনঃ ০৭৫১-৬২১৬৬

২০. বিশেষ শর্তাবলী:
ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিক্রমকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
গ) দরপত্র উন্মুক্ত হলে কোন আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে।

হাসিবুল আলম, বিপিএম
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সিরাজগঞ্জ
ফোনঃ ৬২১৬৬, ফ্যাক্সঃ ৬২৪১৫

জিডি-৩২৫

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Manikganj

e-Tender Notice (Limited Tendering Method)

Memo No. EED-Manikganj-Govt. Revenue-2020-21/14 Date: 17-02-2021

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

SL No.	Tender ID	Name of works	Last date and time of selling documents	Tender closing date/time	Tender opening date/time
01	548293	Repair and Renovation works of Existing Academic Building at Govt. Bicharpati Nurul Islam Mahabiddalaya Harirampur Upazilla Manikganj District.	09 March-2021 15:00pm	10 March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
02	548294	Construction of Internal Road at Patgram Anath Bandhu Govt. High School Harirampur Upazilla Manikganj Distieat.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
03	548295	Construction of Internal Drain at Patgram Anath Bandhu Govt. High School Harirampur Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
04	548296	Repair and Renovation works of Existing Academic Building at Govt. Motilal Degree Collage Daulatpur Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
05	548297	Repair and Renovation works of Block-Z Mohila Hostel at Govt. Debendra College Sadar Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
06	548298	Construction of Boundary wall in front of New Girls Hostel at Govt. Debendra College Sadar Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
07	548299	Repair and Renovation Works of Block-D four-storied Science Building at Manikganj Govt. Mohila College Sadar Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
08	548300	Repair and Renovation works of Block-A Academic Building at Manikganj Govt. High School Sadar Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
09	548301	Repair and Renovation works of Block-A Academic Building at Manikganj Govt. High School Sadar Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
10	548302	Repair and Renovation works of Block-B Academic Building at Ghior Govt. College Ghior Upazilla Manikgang District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
11	548303	Coloring works of Block-C Administrative Building at Govt. Vekhu Memorial College Saturia Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am
12	548304	Repair & renovation works of Dormitory Building at Govt. Vekhu Memorial College Saturia Upazilla Manikganj District.	09-March-2021 15:00pm	10-March-2021 10:00am	10-March-2021 10:00am

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 15:00pm on 09-March-2021.

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

M. Mustafizur Rahman
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department, Manikganj

GD-332



ISPANHANI TEA

Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun and State Minister Kamal Ahmed Majumder hand over a crest to an official of Ispahani Tea for attaining first position in National Productivity and Quality Excellence Awards 2019 in the large industry category (foods) of the ministry on Monday.

Berger brings antimicrobial coatings to control the spread of infection

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Berger Paints Bangladesh has recently launched a "Magico Antimicrobial PU Coating".

Manufactured with a "unique silver ion technology", it helps to fight viruses, bacteria, and other contaminations, the company said in a press release.

"This is the first time any organisation in Bangladesh has brought a Polyurethane (PU) coating with antibacterial properties, which has been formulated by SBL Specialty Coating Pvt of Berger Group," it added.

Coming in glossy and matt finishes, this product is designed for industrial and decorative coating on various surfaces, as a topcoat and provide long lasting protection from deadly viruses and germs, it said.

The product can kill up to 99 per cent

of germs, such as bacteria, fungus, algae, protozoa viruses and many more, the press release added.

"Different industrial facilities (e.g. pharmaceuticals industries, food and beverage industries etc.) require a complete uncontaminated environment," said Mohsin Habib Chowdhury, senior general manager for sales and marketing.

"As we cope with the new normal situation created by Covid-19 pandemic, we have been constantly in search of preventive measures to thwart the threat posed by this deadly virus," he said.

"We, being the market leader in paint industry, felt obligated to develop a product that will ensure a complete uncontaminated environment for different industries and help protect our people and economy," he added.



ICCB gets new vice president

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICCB) Bangladesh has elected a new vice president.

The post fell vacant with the passing of Latifur Rahman, chairman and CEO of Transcom Group, on 1 July 2020.

The new VP, AK Azad, is the chairman and managing director of the Ila-Meem Group of Companies, president of Dhaka University Alumni Association and a director of Shahjalal Islami Bank, says an ICC Bangladesh statement.

Azad is a former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries. He is also the founder of The Daily Samakal.

Advertisement for Eastern Refinery Limited. Includes details about spare motor procurement, tender information, and contact details.



Ziauddin Adil becomes board director of BCCCI

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Ziauddin Adil, honorary consul of the Bangladesh Consulate of the Democratic Republic of Congo and CEO of the Top of Mind, has been elected member of the board of directors of the Bangladesh China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCCI).

"Being a part of the board of directors of such an important business organisation, I shall try my best to play a role in the country's economic and business development," said Adil, also the founder and CEO of Masthead PR.

Govt fixes edible oil price to tame volatility

FROM PAGE B1

Bangladesh requires 20 lakh tonnes of edible oil annually, and it meets 90 per cent of the demand through imports, according to Mahmudul Hasan, assistant chief of the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission, while presenting a paper at the meeting.

The country spent Tk 12,280 crore to import edible oil in the fiscal year of 2019-20, Bangladesh Bank data showed.

At the briefing, the commerce minister blamed the increased prices of soybean and palm oil in the international market and the abnormal hike in transportation costs for the spiralling price of the key cooking ingredient in Bangladesh.

The price of edible oil will be reviewed after 15 days as practised by the National Price Fixing Committee on Essential Commodities under the commerce ministry. Mostafa Kamal, chairman and managing director of Meghna Group of Industries, an edible oil processor, said the stock of edible oil was lower.

There were production challenges in major markets such as Argentina and Brazil, while China, a major importer, is buying a lot of cooking oil from international markets, he said.

Kamal urged the government for a quick release of imported goods from ports and assured that they would import an adequate quantity of edible oil to meet the local demand.

Abdur Rashid, a wholesaler in Chattogram's Khatunganj, one of the main wholesale markets for commodities, said the demand for cooking oil was increasing ahead of the fasting month of Ramadan.

"But the supply is not increasing in line with the growing demand," he said, adding that wholesalers have to wait for days to get

the delivery of edible oil.

"If anyone wants to get the delivery immediately, they must pay an extra Tk 100-120 for every delivery order," he said, adding that the delivery orders of soybean oil were selling at Tk 4,460- Tk 4,480 per maund. Anower Hossen, a retailer in Hamjarbag Bazar in the port city, said fixing the price will not control the oil market if the supply does not get a boost. "To keep the prices and the supply normal, the government should beef up monitoring from mill gates to retail markets."

Rising US yields cool down stocks

REUTERS, Milan

The rally in stock markets stalled on Wednesday as a surge in U.S. Treasury yields on optimism about a swift economic recovery put pressure on pricey company valuations.

Benchmark 10-year Treasury yields reached a one-year high to trade near pre-pandemic levels, as vaccine progress and encouraging economic data begin to drive investor focus on inflation. The MSCI world equity benchmark fell 0.1% by 1232 GMT, as weaker trading in Europe offset gains in Asia overnight.

The index, which tracks shares in 49 countries, ended flat on Tuesday to snap 11 straight positive sessions. S&P 500 and Nasdaq futures were trading flat and down 0.1% respectively, with eyes on U.S. retail sales data, which are estimated to have risen 1.1% in January.

Ten-year Treasury yields, up nearly 40 basis points this year, rose as high as 1.3330% before easing to 1.2989%.

"Regarding the bond market sell-off, things are finally starting to get serious as real yields are on the rise, driven by bets ... of central banks tightening sooner than previously expected," said Arne Petimezas, analysts at AFS in Amsterdam. "Risk assets are now becoming vulnerable to a pull-back." In the short term, however, investors expect central banks to keep monetary policy loose and minutes later on Wednesday from the U.S. Federal Reserve's January meeting are expected to reinforce that view.

New DMD for Bank Asia

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bank Asia has promoted its senior executive vice president, Sarder Akhter Hamed, to the post of deputy managing director, the bank said in a statement.

With Masters of Commerce degrees in finance and banking from the University of Dhaka, he started his career with British American Tobacco Bangladesh in 1995 and also worked at Brac United Commercial Bank. He joined Bank Asia in 2015, according to the statement.



Sarder Akhter Hamed

Women entrepreneurs need special financial support: experts

FROM PAGE B1

However, no women entrepreneurs have applied for this package, she said.

"There is a gap between women and bankers so we should try to minimise this gap and upgrade women's skills and capacity so that no bank can refuse them loans," she added. Shikha also said there was an upcoming opportunity in the IT sector for entrepreneurs who do not have a trade licence as they would still be able to avail a Tk 10,000 loan through bkash.

Similarly, Md Mubarak Hossain, deputy general manager of the SME & Special Programmes Department, agreed that the allegations of women facing troubles in availing SME loans were true.

The central bank directed the country's lenders to consider loan applications from female entrepreneurs even if they did not have considerable transactions in the preceding two years, he said. During the pandemic, 27,657 women have been brought under the refinancing scheme disbursing Tk 3,308 crore. The women who availed this facility were all small entrepreneurs, Hossain added.

Many women entrepreneurs have been unable to restart their businesses due to a lack of working capital, said Sangita Ahmed, the chamber's senior vice president.

"With limited financial and operational capacity, women entrepreneurs have fallen into a dire situation during the crisis," she added.

Ahmed also said during this period, women faced problems in their households and suffered acute mental stress. Veena Vidyadharan, a fellow of the Consumer Unity & Trust Society in Jaipur, India, said on an average, almost all female entrepreneurs incurred huge losses.

This is because they could not take any measures beforehand to help cope with the various business-related challenges that came up amid the pandemic.

And so, they were forced to take loans from relatives, non-government organisations and their dealers in anticipation of the yearly festivals but due to the pandemic situation, they could not sell those products.

"Here they faced a big loss but still had to pay back their loans with interest," Vidyadharan said, adding that many had to sell their ornaments and other assets to make ends meet. Women entrepreneurs from eight divisions informed that their export and import operations had totally been halted due to border closures and flight cancellations.

They also alleged that there were no special facilities for women entrepreneurs even though the government declared a stimulus package for businesspersons.

"That's why we are facing problems to take bank loans and this package is also not for women entrepreneurs of startups," they said.

Advertisement for Islamic Foundation Islamic Mission. Includes details about diagnostic center construction, tender information, and contact details.

Official notice from the Bangladesh Public Procurement Regulation Act-2008 regarding the procurement of a diagnostic center. Includes details about the project, tender information, and contact details.

Business in an era of digital trust



ARIJIT CHAKRABARTI

Businesses have significantly accelerated their pace of digital transformation. In Bangladesh, many companies have already embarked on their digital journey. Their adoption of modern infrastructure such as cloud-based infrastructure has increased manifold, particularly in this last one year after the outbreak of the pandemic.

Many companies have also started adopting cloud-based enterprise systems. Some of these organisations are upgrading their existing enterprise systems to cloud-based versions; some have opted for cloud-based enterprise systems in their initial adoption; some have begun adopting specialised packaged solutions, e.g., to automate the activities of their sales personnel.

With these organisations becoming more digital, their surrounding ecosystem is transforming as well. Companies around the world have started conducting business more digitally than earlier with their suppliers, customers and employees. However, while this transformation to the digital mode is encouraging, it also increases security-related risks. Worldwide, incidents of cyberattacks have increased significantly during the last one year.

Keeping this in mind, businesses in Bangladesh need to rethink their strategies for doing business.

The journey towards digitalisation is not only imperative but also irreversible. Companies will eventually fall by the wayside if they lag behind or fail to digitalise themselves.

And there is no doubt that the digitalised way of doing business improves efficiency, fosters innovation and brings additional transparency in the system. Along the way, stakeholders' trust in the digital ecosystem also grows. This is known as digital trust.

However, weaknesses in technology-enabled systems, processes and infrastructure make companies vulnerable to the risk of

erosion of digital trust. Cyber adversaries regularly exploit vulnerabilities to compromise associated systems, processes and infrastructure.

They steal sensitive data to harm companies' systems. They also attempt to commit crimes, e.g., extort money, after holding critical systems hostage remotely.

Quite often, such adversaries operate from outside the geographic boundaries of their target countries.

In such cases, bringing them under the ambit of a country's law enforcement framework is very difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, it is essential for business organisations in Bangladesh to take effective proactive measures to address this risk.

PwC conducted its Global Digital Trust Insights 2021 survey to understand the thoughts of business leaders around the world on this issue. Around 3,249 business and technology executives responded and shared their views about what is changing in cyber security and what is coming next.

Among their responses, two themes emerged very clearly. First, cyber security is no longer a reactive activity. It is now a part of more thoughtful exercises such as strategy and planning for a business. It is also more forward-thinking with a focus on preventing and pre-empting cyberattacks before their onset.

Secondly, cyber security is no longer only focused on technology. Today cyber security experts work closely with business leaders to understand their priorities and the risks they face, and to help their business teams strengthen their resilience to potential threats.

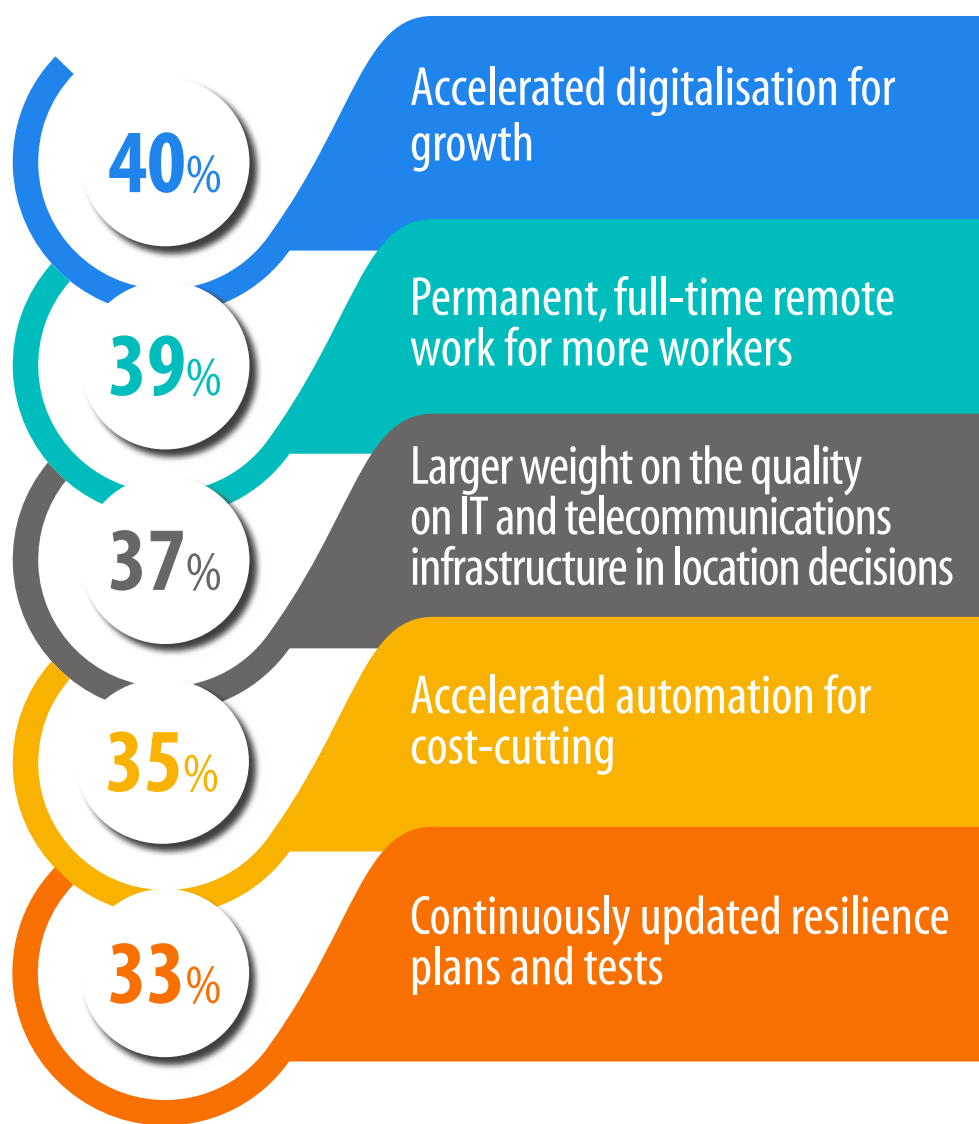
These two sets of activities are making the cyber world a more level playing field than earlier – for adversaries as well protectors.

Companies in Bangladesh have also begun realising the need for this shift in their thinking. Cyberattacks on infrastructure and assets in the country are not new. In fact, some nationally and internationally discussed cyber heists date back five years.

To counter such threats, business organisations in Bangladesh have shown a keen interest in developing their awareness and knowledge of cyber security and have been working on assessing the risk of cyberattacks on their organisations over the last couple of years. IT executives have become more conscious than earlier of cyber risks faced in undertaking new IT initiatives.

This collective awareness will be helpful in mitigating significant cyber risks in coming

Businesses are changing...



SOURCE: PWC GLOBAL TRUST INSIGHTS SURVEY 2021

days. Many organisations in Bangladesh have also carved out a specified role for a CISO, full time or part time.

Banks and financial institutions have been the first to create this role.

However, digital trust is not just about cyber security. Building digital trust requires foresight about the direction in which a business should move over the coming years.

And while digitalisation is inevitable, it is

also important to have a clear vision of the path the journey should take and its ultimate destination.

PwC's Global Digital Trust Insights 2021 survey clearly indicates that most of the companies surveyed have accelerated their digitalisation projects in pursuit of business growth. It also shows a rise in the number of full-time remote workers in their organisations.

Under the circumstances, it is clear that

there is a need for businesses to put in place location-independent technology infrastructure, so that their employees do not have to visit offices or workplaces to perform their work. And, while the outbreak of the pandemic has led to these changes, this work mode is likely to continue even after Covid-19 is controlled and the economy springs back to its normal trajectory.

In this scenario, what is evident is that such changes require a cyber security leader to play multiple leadership roles, such as that in business transformation, in customer experience delivery and in employee experience delivery.

In addition, this leader needs to be an authority on management of risks in an enterprise, a protector of enterprise-related data and a value creator who expertly leverages data.

Companies in Bangladesh are on their accelerated journey of digitalisation and business transformation. Therefore, cyber security leaders must upskill themselves with these capabilities to make themselves relevant for the future, and more importantly, to keep their organisations resilient.

It is evident that upskilling is an essential component in business leaders' strategy formulation in Bangladesh. However, upskilling should not be limited to desk job employees or factory workers. It needs to be implemented across organisations, including in the topmost positions.

COOs are also required to upgrade their digital acumen through this upskilling process and develop their understanding of how digital trust can be built and sustained in their companies. Very importantly, employees engaged in different functions need to develop their awareness of and expertise in practising a secure way of conducting business to protect digital trust in their organisations. Technology leaders in the CXO community should also upskill themselves to prepare themselves for their evolving roles in their businesses.

Many leading organisations have already begun thinking seriously about building digital trust in their businesses, and some have started working on achieving this goal. However, what is important is that in view of the promising national economic growth scenario envisaged in coming years, all businesses should expeditiously embark on building and enhancing digital trust in their organisations.

The writer is a partner with PwC. The views expressed here are personal.

'Fact-finding' panel to probe NBFIs scams: BB

Central bank officials will also come under scanner

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The central bank has formed a "fact-finding committee" to look into the scams at non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs).

The five-member body led by Bangladesh Bank Deputy Governor AKM Sajedur Rahman Khan was constituted on Monday as per the instruction of BB Governor Fazle Kabir.

The decision was taken as some alleged scamsters said a number of officials of the banking watchdog are also involved in the financial felonies.

At least two scamsters gave confessional statements at courts recently, saying two high officials of the central bank had assisted the swindlers in exchange of bribe.

Against the backdrop, the central bank withdrew its Executive Director Shah Alam, whose name surfaced in the confessional statements, on February 4, stripping him of the responsibility of monitoring two departments.



The committee will submit a report to the higher-ups of the central bank within the next three months, said Md Serajul Islam, an executive director and spokesperson of the BB.

It will also investigate the central bank officials who have been assigned to monitor NBFIs in the last couple of years.

The committee has been empowered to interrogate any officials of the central bank to unearth the

actual reasons behind the financial scams. It has been asked to place recommendations to protect NBFIs from further scams.

At least 10 NBFIs are in dire straits due to massive irregularities. Many of them are unable to pay back to depositors despite the maturity of the fund.

For instance, Bangladesh Commerce Bank and Janata Bank are struggling to recover Tk 633 crore from six NBFIs.

Private lender BCB and state-run Janata kept the fund with Peoples Leasing & Financial Services, First Finance, FAS Finance & Investment, Bangladesh Industrial Finance Company, International Leasing and Financial Services, and Premier Leasing & Finance Ltd several years ago.

Although the funds have matured, the NBFIs are unable to return the money to the banks.

The two banks requested the central bank to intervene to help them realise the funds. But they have received a feeble response from the regulator.

Nordic envoys urge their businesses to invest more in Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Nordic ambassadors and businesses yesterday suggested improving business environment for the companies already operating in Bangladesh to attract more investments from the Nordic countries.

"Improving the business and investment climate for the companies already present in the country will send a clear signal to others, waiting to bring their products, know-how and investment into the market," said Swedish Ambassador Alex Berg von Linde.

Bangladesh has the potential to be a competitive and modern business destination, she said while speaking on behalf of the Nordic embassies in Bangladesh at a webinar organised by the Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) in Bangladesh.

Linde said the Nordic countries remain committed to their partnership with Bangladesh to strengthen the possibilities of their companies to be agents for sustainable development in

Bangladesh.

"In this regard, we especially value our good and long-standing dialogue with the government of Bangladesh and its agencies and authorities on issues relating to the Ease of Doing Business in the country."

"Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's idea of Sonar Bangla, a fairer and prosperous country, bear resemblances to the Nordic success in the creation of more equitable and robust economies," said Salman F Rahman, private sector industry and investment adviser to the prime minister.

He mentioned that as the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has set the target to transform Bangladesh into a developed nation—the culmination of Sonar Bangla—by 2041, the government places the highest importance on the attraction of FDIs and diversifying export basket.

"As such, we aim to further our relations with Sweden, Denmark and Norway with focus on IT, telecom, energy, RMG and shipping." Around 94 per cent respondents

of a survey on Nordic businesses in Bangladesh said they are expanding their operations, said Sirazul Islam, executive chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority.

"I will urge existing Nordic investors to be our ambassadors and highlight just how profitable, comfortable and supportive Bangladesh is as an investment destination."

IFC Senior Private Sector Specialist Miah Rahmat Ali said Bangladesh government could consider bold and evidence-based reform initiatives to ensure more predictability in regulatory service delivery and private sector related policy formulation and create a level playing field for all businesses.

NCCI President Tareq Rahman said the Nordic companies can largely contribute to the long-term sustainable growth of Bangladesh through FDI in infrastructure, sustainable agriculture, power, healthcare, telecommunication, manufacturing and finance, with particular focus on innovation and climate sustainability.

GLOBAL BUSINESS

India set to clear some new investment proposals from China in coming weeks

REUTERS, New Delhi

India is poised to clear some new investment proposals from China in the coming weeks as frosty relations between the two neighbouring countries thawed amid an easing in border tensions, said three government officials with knowledge of the matter.

Last week, India and China began disengagement from the Pangong Tso area, in the Ladakh region of the western Himalayas, following a nearly nine-month-long standoff after the worst clash between the neighbouring countries since 1962.

At the height of the tensions, India framed various policies targeting China, including blocking the nation from participating in government tenders, compelling any Chinese company investing in India to seek approvals and banning dozens of Chinese apps.

The foreign investment rule change by the Indian government



Indian army trucks move along a highway leading to Ladakh, at Gagangeer in Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

said investments from an entity in a country that shares a land border with India would require government approval, markedly slowing investments flows from China.

The rule change had put in limbo over 150 proposals from China

worth more than \$2 billion, hurting the plans of Chinese companies in India. Among the proposals delayed was China's Great Wall Motors' acquisition of a General Motors' plant in India. "We'll start giving approvals to some greenfield investment proposals, but we will only clear those sectors which are not sensitive to national security," one of the officials said.

The officials, who asked not to be named as the discussions are private, did not give details of the proposals they plan to clear in the coming weeks. The prime minister's office did not immediately respond to an email seeking comments, while the home ministry did not respond to an email, call or message.

The government will also look to clear some other brownfield projects - new investments in existing projects - that are not a risk to national security after the first round of clearance to new investments, the above officials said.

AFP, Geneva

The coronavirus pandemic, log-jammed trade talks and a long-delayed meeting of member states are just a few of the crises awaiting Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala as she takes the helm of the World Trade Organization next month.

The WTO needs a kiss of life -- and fast -- and the first female and first African director-general of the global trade body will have to hit the ground running as she takes on the job in the middle of a major global recession. Here are the four main challenges the former Nigerian finance minister will face when she starts in Geneva on March 1.

The WTO's top decision-making body meets once every two years, usually at the end of the year. Many countries use it as a deadline to get trade negotiations moving forward. After the December 2017 conference in Buenos Aires, the next meeting should have taken place in Nur-Sultan in June 2020 -- having been put back six months to avoid the bitter winter in Kazakhstan's capital.

But the Covid-19 pandemic forced it

to be postponed indefinitely. Okonjo-Iweala wants the meeting held before the end of the year, but the WTO's 164 member states will have to reach a consensus on the date and location, most likely during the WTO general council meeting on March 1 and 2/-Reboot stalled trade talks -For years, the WTO has made virtually no progress on major international trade agreements.

Negotiations on cotton and fishing subsidies are stalling, while others such as electronic commerce, launched in January 2019, are struggling to take off -- all of which risks leaving the WTO looking like an institution stuck in yesteryear's problems. "I think the WTO is too important to allow it to be slowed down, paralysed and moribund," she told AFP in an interview. "That's not right." Okonjo-Iweala, 66, has raised environmental issues and has made the fishing subsidies talks one of her immediate priorities, to show that the WTO can still produce results.

Her predecessor Roberto Azevedo watched on helplessly as trade hostilities brewed between the United States, China and the European Union.