

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▲ 0.25%	▲ 0.17%	\$1,728.37	\$68.33	▼ 0.78%	▲ 0.17%	▲ 0.35%	▼ 0.96%	BUY TK 83.95	99.29	116.04	12.67
5,532.97	9,684.94	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	50,395.08	29,766.97	3,106.00	3,419.95	SELL TK 84.95	103.09	119.84	13.32



# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 16, 2021, CHAITRA 2, 1427 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

## Agrani Bank sole supplier of forex for Padma bridge

State lender providing \$2.4b out of the total project cost of \$3.56b

REJAU KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

State lenders in Bangladesh are sometimes in the news for all the wrong reasons. But they also carry the weight of the fast-expanding economy.

Agrani Bank Ltd is one such example. The bank is the sole supplier of foreign currencies to the Padma bridge project and made payments of \$1.2 billion to international contractors and consultancy firms as of December last year.

It came up with the greenbacks from its own earnings over the last seven years. It did not have to buy any foreign currency from the reserve of the Bangladesh Bank to finance one of the largest infrastructure projects in the country, said Agrani Bank officials.

The bank will pay a further \$700 million in foreign currency by this June. The rest of the payments will gradually be made until June 2022. The government pays back Agrani in local currency for the dollars.

After several deadline extensions and cost escalations, the Padma bridge project, which the



After several deadline extensions and cost escalations, the government now looks to complete the Padma bridge project by June 2022.

government looks to complete by June 2022, requires \$2.4 billion in foreign currency.

The total cost for the 6.15km bridge is Tk 30,193 crore, or \$3.56 billion.

Of this, \$2.4 billion needs to be paid in foreign currency and the rest in the local currency, according to the Bridges Division, the implementing authority of the project.

The Padma bridge project is being

implemented with the country's own funds after the World Bank and other international lenders cancelled financing in 2011 over allegations of corruption, which the government denied.

Allegations against government and project officials were later dismissed by the Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh and a Dhaka court. A Canadian court also found no proof of graft conspiracy involving the project.

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## Now jail term for trade-based money launderers

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Businesspeople will be sentenced to seven years in prison if they make the wrong declaration on exports, imports and investment abroad as the government has moved to rein in trade-based money-laundering, which costs Bangladesh billions of dollars every year.

The finance ministry issued an order on March 10 to this effect based on the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act -1947.

The central bank yesterday asked banks to follow the instruction to tackle trade-based money laundering.

The government amended the Act in 2015, keeping a provision to punish money launderers.

According to the Act, the government would have to issue a notification to implement the measure. As part of the move, the ministry has now issued the circular.

The provision against the money launderers will be in place until December 2026.

The government is now drawing up a new law titled "Foreign Exchange Management Act." The latest provision will be included in the new act.

"We have been requested the government for long to implement the provision of the law to refrain borrowers from trade-based money-laundering," said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Although the government has spent six years in issuing the notification after enacting the law, the initiative is time-befitting, he said.

According to the latest Global Financial



Integrity (GFI) report, 80 per cent of the total money laundered from Bangladesh was done through over- and under-invoicing.

Bangladesh lost a staggering \$7.53 billion on average between 2008 and 2017 to trade mis-invoicing, said the GFI report.

In the case of over-invoicing, importers show an inflated price concealing the genuine value of the imported goods and services in the commercial invoice of the letters of credit (LCs). They do not bring back the money to the country and invest abroad in most cases.

Exporters state a lower price than the actual one at the commercial invoice of LCs during under-invoicing. They commit misdeeds to launder the money to foreign countries as well.

Money-laundering is facilitated by collusion between importers and exporters, and bank officials are sometimes forced to get involved in illegal transactions, according to a survey carried out by the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management in 2018.

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## First river-borne food shipment goes to India today

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Bangladesh will send food items to India for the first time through waterways today with the maiden shipment of 25,000 cartons of litchi drinks of local conglomerate Pran.

After being loaded at Shitalakshya in Narsingdi, the ship will start to sail via Narayanganj-Sheikbaria of Khulna, said Kamruzzaman Kamal, director for marketing of Pran-RFL Group.

The ship will travel around 710 kilometres to reach Kolkata on March 24, he told The Daily Star.

The ship will start its journey under the protocol on inland water transit and trade between Bangladesh and India and Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, state minister for shipping, will attend the flag-off ceremony.

However, it is not the first time for a Bangladeshi company to use waterways for export of goods to India. Premier Cement, a leading local cement manufacturer, opened the door for Bangladesh on September 3 last year with the shipment of 50 tonnes of cement to India's north-eastern state of Tripura.

Now the cement maker sends five to six consignments a day.

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## Charuta accused of not paying Tk 30cr VAT

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The VAT Intelligence yesterday filed a case against Charuta Private, a construction and interior decoration firm, on allegation of evading paying Tk 30 crore in VAT, said the National Board of Revenue's (NBR) field office yesterday.

The VAT Audit, Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (VAIID) filed the case under the VAT law following an inquiry. It found a discrepancy between the company's income and expenditure, said Moimul Khan, director general of the VAIID.

"We have sent the case to the Dhaka North VAT Commissionerate for further action to realise the revenue for the state," he said.

The VAT Intelligence carried out an inquiry into financial transactions of Charuta from fiscal 2012-2013 to 2016-2017. It also summoned the company management for hearing and documents, said a statement of the VAIID.

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## Khatunganj lost over Tk 514cr to waterlogging in 2020: study

DWAIPIYAN BARUIA, Ctg

Traders in Chattogram's Khatunganj incurred direct financial losses of around Tk 514.38 crore last year solely for waterlogging, estimated a study made public yesterday.

The damage occurred not only to stocks of the country's once top commodity trading centre and commercial hub but also through reduction in sales.

There was also damages to infrastructure and properties, loss of capital assets, cost of repairment and renovation and relocation of business cost.

Some of the non-financial impacts include mental trauma, anxiety or psychological pressure, demotivation of doing business and reputational damage, the study found.

It feared that with changes in climatic conditions, such estimated economic impact would be even higher with time if no effective solution is undertaken.

The study suggested for regular dredging facilities for the Karnaphuli river and Chaktai canal and ensuring responsible waste management practices by the traders to get rid of the problem.

The report was the culmination of a yearlong research titled "Study on economic Impact of Waterlogging on Local Trade: The Case of Khatunganj, Chattogram".

The study was conducted by Associate Prof AKM Nazrul Islam, coordinator of Environmental Economics Programme of the Dhaka School of Economics;

### KHATUNGANJ TRADE HUB (Khatunganj, Asadganj, Chaktai and Qurbaniganj)

#### KEY FEATURES

Over **5,000** businesses

Main items: Edible oil, rice, lentil, sugar, onion, garlic, ginger, spices along with cement, tin and rod

Handles **30%** commodities imported through Ctg port

Annual transaction over **Tk 100,000cr**



#### LOST GLORY

Lost the 'Top Commodity Hub' title to Dhaka's Moulvibazar

15 years ago, half of the country's commodity trade was done through the hub.

#### DIRECT ECONOMIC LOSSES FROM WATERLOGGING (In crore taka) SOURCE: STUDY

2017	402.29
2018	228.75
2019	237.28
2020	514.38

#### STUDY FINDINGS

(Conducted by National Resilience Programme, jointly run by Planning Commission and UNDP)

Frequent waterlogging has been hurting the hub for the last **15** yrs

Waterlogging causing annual loss to hit a record of **Tk 514.38cr** in 2020

Tk **920.5cr** was spent to solve waterlogging in past **16** yrs, but to no avail

**102** encroachers in Chaktai canal had been identified in 2015, but none evicted yet

urban meteorologist Senior Assistant Prof Abu Taib Mohammad Shahjahan of American International University Bangladesh and Prof Md Reaz Akter Mullick of the Department of Civil Engineering of the Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology.

The three acted as consultants of a project of National Resilience Programme (NRP), which was run by Programming Division of the Planning Commission, funded by United Nations Development Programme and initiated and

supervised by the CCCI.

The study was presented at a seminar organised by the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at Bangabandhu Hall of World Trade Centre in the port city.

Chairing the event, CCCI President Mahbulul Alam said the age-old commodity trading hub on the banks of Chaktai canal has been facing frequent waterlogging for the last 15 years.

Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury as chief guest urged

for a platform to work in a coordinated manner to solve the problem not only for Khatunganj but the city as well.

The platform could be formed under the CCC comprising all the relevant organisations like Chittagong Development Authority, Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), Wasa and Water Development Board, he said.

Addressing as special guest, Planning Commission Programming Division Chief Khandker Ahsan Hossain said the government was giving priority

to such studies so that the risk management factors could be learnt which would help make private sector investments more sustainable.

The study found that low rainfall of around 75 mm per day leads to a water level of 2.5 metres at the Chaktai canal.

Meanwhile average rainfall generates a water level of 3 to 3.5 metre resulting in inundation at Khatunganj. Compared to it, the area's main road is about 2.9 to 3.1 metre.

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## BB to let banks, NBFIs pay higher dividends

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Bank is going to allow banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) to provide higher dividends to shareholders than what their respective ceilings were set at.

Coming at a meeting with the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) at the securities commission building chaired by BSEC Chairman Prof Shibli Rubayat Ul Islam, the decision would be made

public through a circular soon.

The BSEC informed of it through a press release yesterday.

The central bank recently issued two separate circulars saying that the banks were allowed to provide 30 per cent dividend while the NBFIs 15 per cent.

The banking watchdog said to have taken the decision in context to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Now the central bank will allow banks to provide up to 35 per cent while the listed NBFIs over 15 per cent

if they have the ability, according to the latest decision.

Both regulators will take necessary steps to encourage banks to form a special fund of Tk 200 crore in order to invest in the stock market.

On February 10, the banking regulator rolled out the package that allows banks to set up a Tk 200 crore fund by taking it from Bangladesh Bank through a repurchase agreement against treasury bills and bonds they own.

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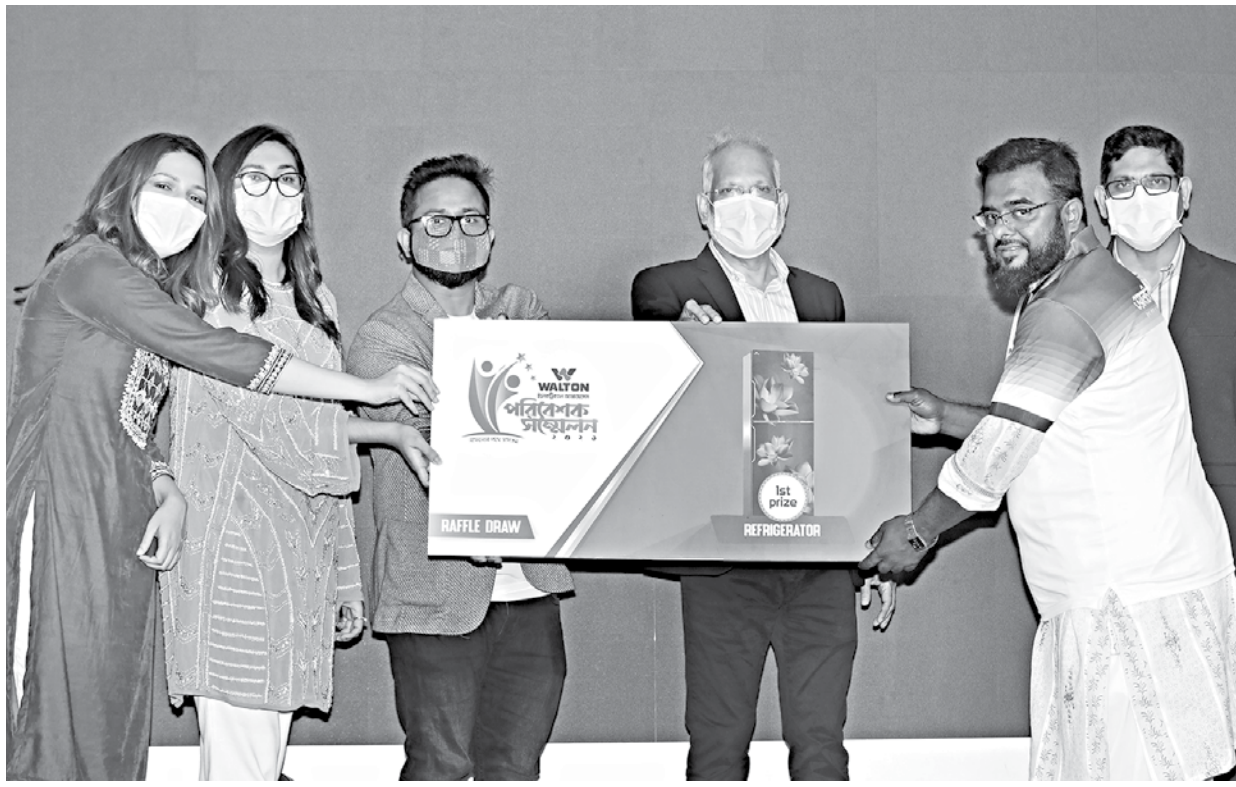
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A distributor of Walton electrical appliances receives an award from the company's top officials following a raffle draw at an "Electrical Appliance Distributor Conference" in the company's headquarters at Chandra in Gazipur on Saturday.



ACI Motors Executive Director Subrata Ranjan Das and Yamaha General Manager Jakir Hossain attended a "Riding Fiesta" organised by Yamaha Riders' Club at Bangabandhu Uddyan (Bell's Park) of Barisal on Friday.

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**Quotation Invitation for Lease of Toll Collection of RHD Different Bridge and Ferry Ghat**

01. Lease Quotation No.	PRD (Lease Quotation)-03/2020-2021 (4th Call).
02. Name of work	(a) Lease for Toll Collection of Pairakunja Ferry Ghat at 20th Km of Binapani-Kachua-Betagi-Mirzaganj-Patuakhali Road (Z-8052) Road under Patuakhali Road Division. (b) Lease for Toll Collection of Sheikh Kamal Bridge at 19th km of Amtoli-Khepupara-Kuakata Regional Highway (R-881) Road under Patuakhali Road Division. (c) Lease for Toll Collection of Sheikh Jamal Bridge at 31st km of Amtoli-Khepupara-Kuakata Regional Highway (R-881) Road under Patuakhali Road Division. (d) Lease for Toll Collection of Sheikh Russel Bridge at 36th km of Amtoli-Khepupara-Kuakata Regional Highway (R-881) Road under Patuakhali Road Division.
03. Time limit for lease	(a) For Pairakunja Ferry Ghat: 1096 days (From 01.07.2021 to 30.06.2024). (b) For Sheikh Kamal Bridge: 1096 days (From 01.07.2021 to 30.06.2024). (c) For Sheikh Jamal Bridge: 1096 days (From 01.07.2021 to 30.06.2024). (d) For Sheikh Russel Bridge: 1096 days (From 01.07.2021 to 30.06.2024).
04. Price of lease quotation schedule	Tk. 5,000.00 (Taka five thousand only) per group.
05. Earnest money	10% (ten percent) of quoted price within Bank Draft/Pay Order.
06. Last selling date & time of lease quotation	28.03.2021 up to 5.00pm.
07. Date & time of receiving lease quotation in seal condition	30.03.2021 up to 12.30pm.
08. Eligibility of lease quotation	VAT and tax certified company/person, all contractors of government/private/autonomous body.
09. Offices of selling lease quotation	(a) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Barisal. (b) Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Patuakhali. (c) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Patuakhali. (d) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Barguna. (e) Office of the Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Patuakhali/Kuakata Road Sub-Division/1st Line Workshop Sub-Division, Patuakhali.
10. Offices of receiving lease quotation in seal condition	(a) Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Barisal Zone, Barisal. (b) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Barisal. (c) Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Patuakhali. (d) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Patuakhali.
11. Place, date & time of opening lease quotation	Place: Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Patuakhali. Date: 30.03.2021 Time: At 3:00pm.
12. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Quotation/Lease.	

Md. Rakibul Jahangir  
Assistant Engineer (a.c.), RHD  
Road Division, Patuakhali  
GD-528

Mir Muhammad Kamrul Hasan  
ID No. 602171  
Executive Engineer (c.c.), RHD  
Road Division, Patuakhali

**NRB Bank gets new DMD**

STAR BUSINESS DESK

NRB Bank has appointed a new deputy managing director.

The appointee, Md Abdur Wadud, was previously serving in the same post at The City Bank, says a press release.

He started off his career as a management trainee at Eastern Bank in 1996 and joined City Bank in 2011 as head of credit risk management.

Wadud attained a Master of Science degree in statistics from Jahangirnagar University and another on business administration from Victoria University.

**Volkswagen plans six European battery cell plants by 2030**

REUTERS, Frankfurt

Volkswagen plans to have six battery cell production plants operating in Europe by 2030 to secure supply for the world's No.2 carmaker's electric vehicle ambitions. The plants, to be built in partnerships, will have a production capacity of 240 gigawatt hours a year, VW said.

**Taiwanese firms in Myanmar told to fly flags, put up signs following violence**

REUTERS, Taipei

Taiwan's de facto embassy in Myanmar has advised Taiwanese companies operating in the country to fly the island's flag and hang signs stating they are from Taiwan to avoid being confused with China, after Chinese-financed factories were set ablaze.

China's embassy said many Chinese staff were injured and trapped in arson attacks on Sunday by unidentified assailants on garment factories in the Yangon suburb of Hlaingthaya, and that it had called on Myanmar to protect Chinese property and citizens.

China is viewed as being supportive of the military junta that took power in Myanmar, overthrowing the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Taiwan is home to a large Sino-Burmese population and there are close cultural and business links.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said yesterday that only one Taiwanese company was caught up in the violence, with 10 of its citizens trapped inside the premises though they were safe. It said Taiwan's representative office in the country had got in touch with Taiwanese firms after receiving reports of the attacks on Chinese-invested firms.

The office "suggested Taiwanese businesspeople hang signs in Burmese reading 'Taiwanese company' at their factories and to hang our country's national flag, and explain to local workers and neighbours they are a Taiwanese factory, to avoid outsiders getting confused and misjudging."

**Mobile operators bemoan tax burden**

FROM PAGE B4

Before the next national budget proposal, all relevant stakeholders and the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) could discuss these issues to make recommendations for the National Board of Revenue, he added.

A new tax is imposed on the telecom sector every year, according to Abdus Salam, Bangladesh country manager of Ericsson, a Swedish multinational networking and telecommunications company. The number of licenses awarded to network providers has also created a complex ecosystem that is affecting the quality of service, he said.

And even though the recent spectrum auction was highly transparent, making it a praiseworthy initiative, a much larger spectrum base is needed to ensure quality service, Salam added.

A concerted effort from various stakeholders, including the BTRC, network operators and tower companies, is needed to improve this situation, said BTRC Chairman Shyam Sunder Sikder.

"Bangladesh's telecom sector has come far over the years but there is still much left to be done," Sikder said, adding that it is possible to solve the sector's issues through continuous dialogues or discussions between industry stakeholders.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব) এর কার্যালয়  
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

নং-৯৩-সি/১৩৭/৭৫০/৭৪৯/৭৩৮/অনবোর্ড/সিআরডি-৩/২০২১ তারিখঃ ১৪-০৩-২০২১খ্রিঃ

১। মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	রেলপথ মন্ত্রণালয়।
২। সংস্থার নাম	বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে।
৩। সংগ্রাহক সত্তার নাম	চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব)।
৪। সংগ্রাহক সত্তার জেলা	চট্টগ্রাম।
৫। যে কাজের দরপত্র আহবান করা হলো	ঢাকা-কিশোরগঞ্জ-ঢাকা রুটে চলাচলকারী ৭৩৭/৭৫০/৭৪৯/৭৩৮ নং 'এগারসিদ্ধুর প্রভাতী/গোধূলী' ট্রেনে অনবোর্ড সার্ভিস প্রদান।
৬। সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)।
৭। বাজেট ও তহবিল উৎস	জিওবি।
৮। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ	২১ মার্চ ২০২১ হতে ১১ এপ্রিল ২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)।
৯। দরপত্র গ্রহণের তারিখ ও সময়	১২ এপ্রিল ২০২১ তারিখ ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১২ এপ্রিল ২০২১ তারিখ বেলা ১২:১৫ ঘটিকা।
১১। দরপত্র বিক্রয়, গ্রহণ ও খোলার স্থানের নাম ও ঠিকানা (মূল)ঃ	চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব), বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম এর দপ্তর।
দরপত্র দলিলাদি বিক্রয় (অন্যান্য)	বিভাগীয় বাণিজ্যিক কর্মকর্তা, বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, কমলাপুর, ঢাকা এর দপ্তর।
১২। দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা	যে সমস্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানের বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতা, ভ্যাট, আয়কর ও অভিজ্ঞতা ইত্যাদির সনদ (হালনাগাদ) আছে।
১৩। কাজের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ	ঢাকা-কিশোরগঞ্জ-ঢাকা রুটে চলাচলকারী ৭৩৭/৭৫০/৭৪৯/৭৩৮ নং 'এগারসিদ্ধুর প্রভাতী/গোধূলী' ট্রেনে অনবোর্ড সার্ভিস প্রদান।
১৪। দরপত্র দলিলাদির মূল্য	প্রতি সেট দরপত্রের মূল্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা (অফিসের যোগ্য)।
১৫। আনবোর্ড সার্ভিসের পরিমাণ	এফএএন্ডসিএও(পূর্ব), বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম এর অনুস্মৃতে যে কোন তফসিলি ব্যাংক কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত ৫,০০,০০০/- (পাঁচ লক্ষ) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট বা পে-অর্ডার প্রতিটি দরপত্রের সহিত সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
১৬। দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মোহাম্মদ নাজমুল ইসলাম।
১৭। দরপত্র আহবানকারীর পদবী	চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব)।
১৮। দরপত্র আহবানকারীর ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন নম্বর	চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব), বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, সিআরবি, চট্টগ্রাম। টেলিফোন নম্বরঃ ০১৭১১-৫০৬১১৪।

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে কর্তৃক দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা খোলার নির্ধারিত দিনে যদি অনিবার্য কারণে দরপত্র গ্রহণ/খোলা সম্ভব না হয় তাহলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে দরপত্র গ্রহণ/খোলা হবে।

মোহাম্মদ নাজমুল ইসলাম  
চীফ কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার (পূর্ব)  
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

জিডি-৫৩৭

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন) এর কার্যালয়  
চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, চট্টগ্রাম

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি-০৫/২০২০-২১**

নিম্নলিখিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে "পিপিএ-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮" এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী অনুযায়ী চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ রেশন স্টোর ২০২০-২০২১ আর্থিক সনের ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের জন্য (০১ এপ্রিল/২০২১খ্রিঃ হতে ৩০শে জুন/২০২১খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত সময়ের) (ক) দেশীয় ছোট দানার উন্মত্তমানের ১,২১,০০০ (এক লক্ষ একশ হাজার) কেজি "মস্তর ডাল" ক্রয় এবং (খ) উৎকৃষ্ট মানের প্রাস্টিক কন্টেইনার পাত্রের মাধ্যমে ১,২০,০০০ (এক লক্ষ বিশ হাজার) লিটার ব্রান্ডের "সয়াবিন তৈল" ক্রয়ের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় যোগাযোগসম্পন্ন সরবরাহকারী/ফার্ম/দরদাতা'দের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১. মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ।				
২. সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।				
৩. এলামাল ক্রয়কারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	পুলিশ কমিশনার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম।				
৪. কি কারণে দরপত্র আহবান	(ক) উন্মত্তমানের দেশী ছোট দানার মস্তর ডাল ক্রয় ও (খ) উৎকৃষ্ট মানের প্রাস্টিক কন্টেইনার পাত্রের মাধ্যমে সয়াবিন তৈল ক্রয় সংক্রান্তে।				
৫. দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।				
৬. দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	০৫/০৪/২০২১ইং, সর্বশেষ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।				
৭. দরপত্র গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৬/০৪/২০২১ইং, সময়ঃ দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা।				
৮. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৬/০৪/২০২১ইং, সময়ঃ দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।				
৯. দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন তারিখ ও সময়	০৮/০৪/২০২১ইং, সময়ঃ দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা।				
১০. ডিজিট ও অর্থের উৎস	জিওবি (রাজস্ব)।				
১১. দরপত্র প্যাকেজ নং	০৫/২০২০-২০২১				
১২. দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম ও ঠিকানা	নামঃ হাসান মোঃ শওকত আলী, উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন) সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম এর কার্যালয়।				
১৩. দরপত্র খোলার দপ্তর	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম এর দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ অফিস কক্ষে। (একটি মাত্র স্থানে)				
১৪. এলামাল সংগ্রহ অথবা কাজের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ	দরপত্র তফসিল মোতাবেক।				
১৫. দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	দরপত্রের সাথে ২০২০-২০২১ইং আর্থিক সনের নিম্নবর্ণিত হালনাগাদ কাগজপত্রাদি দাখিল করতে হবে। ক) ব্যবসায়িক ট্রেড লাইসেন্স। খ) আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র। গ) ভ্যাট পরিশোধের সনদপত্র। ঘ) দরপত্রদাতাকে ব্যাংক কর্তৃক আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতার প্রত্যয়নপত্রসহ দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্ববর্তী ০৬ (ছয়) মাসের ব্যাংকের সহিত লেনদেনের স্টেটমেন্ট ৩) জাতীয় আইডি নাম্বারের সনদ/জাতীয়তার সনদপত্র। চ) মস্তর ডালের ক্ষেত্রে এগ্রিকালচারাল লাইসেন্স। ছ) ছবিসহ ফার্মের মালিকানাধীন হলেফনামার কপি এবং প্রতিনিধির ক্ষেত্রে ছবিসহ প্রাধিকারপত্র লাগবে। উপরে বর্ণিত প্রত্যেকটি কাগজের সত্যায়িত কপি'সহ অতিরিক্ত উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ) সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম বরাবরে সিডিউল প্রান্তির আবেদনপত্র দাখিল করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হল।				
১৬. সিডিউল প্রান্তির স্থান/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	(ক) সিএমপি রেশন স্টোর, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্, চট্টগ্রাম। (খ) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, হাশিমহর, ছোট পুল পুলিশ লাইনস্, চট্টগ্রাম। (গ) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, কোর্ট বিল্ডিং, চট্টগ্রাম।				
১৭. দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	(ক) উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রামের দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস্ কার্যালয়। (খ) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, হাশিমহর, ছোট পুল পুলিশ লাইনস্, চট্টগ্রাম।				
১৮. দরপত্র গ্রহণ/মূল্যায়ন	পিপিআর-২০০৮ এর বিধান অনুসারে করা হবে। (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীসহ)				
১৯. কাজের বিবরণ	লট নং	দরপত্রের বিষয়	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফিসের যোগ্য)	দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্র জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	কাজের সময়সীমা
	০১	উন্মত্তমানের ছোট দানার "মস্তর ডাল" টাকা মাত্র	১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা	৪,২০,০০০/- (চার লক্ষ বিশ হাজার) টাকা	০১/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ হতে ৩০/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (০৩ মাস)
	০২	উন্মত্তমানের সয়াবিন তৈল (ব্রান্ডের) টাকা মাত্র	১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা	৪,২৫,০০০/- (চার লক্ষ পঁচিশ হাজার) মাত্র টাকা	০১/০৪/২০২১খ্রিঃ হতে ৩০/০৬/২০২১খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (০৩ মাস)
২০. বিশেষ নির্দেশনা	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল এমনকি সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, কোন কারণে দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার দিন অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী অফিস খোলার দিন যথাসময়ে টেন্ডার দাখিল ও খোলা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ প্রয়োজনে চাহিনার পরিমাণ হ্রাস বৃদ্ধি করতে পারবেন।				

হাসান মোঃ শওকত আলী  
বিপি-৭১৯৯০২০৮৬১  
উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন)  
পক্ষে পুলিশ কমিশনার  
চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ  
চট্টগ্রাম

জিডি-৫৩৪



# 2,000 women entrepreneurs to get Tk 50,000 each

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government will distribute Tk 10 crore among 2,000 women in Bangladesh in order to encourage women entrepreneurship in the country's e-commerce market.

The fund, to be provided on the occasion of Mujib Borsho, will be taken as non-refundable seed money from the ICT Division's Idea Project, said State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

"We will provide this money to make women more self-reliant," he added. Palak also emphasised the need to raise awareness and enforce strict laws to ensure safety for women in cyberspace.

To eliminate gender inequality, morals and values should be taught by parents as well as educational institutions.

The ICT minister's comments came yesterday during an online discussion styled, "Women in Digital: Employment & Entrepreneurship".

The event was organised by Aspire to Innovate (A2I), a wing of the ICT Division.

Various initiatives are being implemented by the ICT Division to empower the country's female entrepreneurs.

These include allocating 30 per cent of the space in Bangladesh's high-tech parks to women as well as the She-Power project, which aims to create more skilled female entrepreneurs in the country. NM Ziaul Alam, senior secretary of the ICT Division, moderated the event.

# Khatunganj lost over Tk 514cr to waterlogging in 2020: study

FROM PAGE B1

An average rainfall of 125 mm a day creates water inundation of about 6 inches to 1 foot over the main road while a heavy rainfall of 200 mm a day with a climate change scenario gives around 4.1 metre water level, meaning around 1 meter depth of water inundation on the road.

All the 224 structures on both sides of Khatunganj main road become vulnerable on a day of heavy rainfall.

The study recommended revitalising the Chaktai canal by demolishing all RCC works from the bottom of it and widening the canal to allow adequate flow of water to revive biodiversity.

It stressed the need for revitalisation and reconnection of water-based transportation in the supply chain by reactivating Chaktai canal by demolishing current bridges over it and construct a new bridge allowing vessel navigation underneath.

Other recommendations include creating a multimodal transport hub to integrate road connection with the waterway and setting up a "waste to energy plant" to manage solid waste at the city and on a local scale.

It called for taking proper planning on land use to maintain water retention areas in the canal catchment and to increase water retention capacity of Chaktai canal by dredging and by widening roadside drains to keep the canal free from blockage.

Analysing the land at the site, currently building structures cover around 55 per cent of the whole area where water storage capacity in terms of water bodies covers only 7 per cent.

To get rid of waterlogging the study recommends to increase water holding capacity to 52 per cent and to reduce building structure in the area to 46 per cent.

# Italy's OVS to retain 'limited presence' in Myanmar

REUTERS, Rome

Italian clothing retailer OVS said yesterday that it would keep its "limited presence" in Myanmar but would stop its business with suppliers acting in a discriminatory way towards workers involved in rallies against the country's junta.

"Given the modest size of current production (in Myanmar) OVS could easily abandon the country, however it will keep its limited presence," the group said in a statement.

The company did not say how much business it had with suppliers in Myanmar.

# Now jail term for trade-based money launderers

FROM PAGE B1

Misdeclaration of pricing of the imported and exported products is a grave concern for the country, the BIBM said.

The institute carried out another study on the issue in 2019 titled "Addressing Trade-based Money Laundering in Bangladesh: An Assessment."

It said: "Banks should develop data banks on their own to prevent billions of dollars from being siphoned out of Bangladesh through trade-based money laundering."

At the same time, banks should have self-initiatives to make data available to other private banks.

The Finance Act 2020-2021 imposed a penalty against launderers, which is at least twice but not exceeding four times the tax evaded by giving misdeclaration on exports, imports and investments in other countries.

# Charuta accused of not paying Tk 30cr VAT

FROM PAGE B1

After verifying documents, the VAT detectives found that the company evaded paying VAT of Tk 30.36 crore, said the VAID. Contacted, Syed Raquib Uddin, personal secretary to the managing director of Charuta, denied the allegation.

"Dodging VAT is beyond question. Firms for which we work deduct VAT at source. The jobs of embassies that we have done are exempted from VAT and we have submitted our documents," he said.



EXPORT IMPORT BANK OF BANGLADESH  
Md Anwarul Azim Arif, chairman of Social Islami Bank and Islamic Banks Consultative Forum (IBCF), virtually presided over the 60th meeting of the IBCF on Sunday.

# First river-borne food shipment goes to India today

FROM PAGE B1

Pran has taken all required permission from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority to export food products to India, said Mobarak Hossen Mojumder, deputy director for public relations at Pran.

"The consignment will be a symbolic one. Exporters and importers will be hugely benefited from the use of river routes as a single ship can carry products of nearly 50 trucks."

"River routes cost 30 per cent lower than the roads. Besides, there is also a risk for the goods to get damaged and loose quality in case of exports through roads," said Kamal.

"It is quite environment friendly also." For road transports, businesses have to face the hassles of managing and renting trucks and it increases manifold in case of disruptions on the way, which is common phenomenon, he said.

Pran has been exporting food products to India since 1997. In the first shipment, it sent chana chur, a traditional snack item, to Tripura.

Pran exports around 150 products to India, including fruit drinks, chips, snacks,

sauce, ketchup, noodles, jelly and spices.

It sends its items to 28 Indian states, including Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Tripura, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Export through river route has huge potential of bilateral trade now, Kamal said.

There is a huge demand for Bangladeshi processed food products in India, especially in the West Bengal and seven sister states, he said.

Pran is constantly trying to supply products that meet the needs of the people of India and its exports to the country is growing at an average rate of 10 per cent a year, he said.

The export volume to India came down slightly since the beginning of the ongoing pandemic, he said.

However, the export activities are getting its momentum back again now.

It is a matter of pride for Bangladesh as the products of Pran are now competing with the renowned brands and making a place in Indian super shops and retail stores, he said.

Pran's 500 products are now exported to 145 countries, Kamal said.

REUTERS

Microsoft stands to receive nearly a quarter of the Covid relief funds destined for US cybersecurity defenders, angering some lawmakers who do not want to increase funding for a company whose software was recently at the heart of two big hacks, according to sources.

Congress allocated the funds at issue in the Covid relief bill signed on Thursday after two enormous cyberattacks leveraged weaknesses in Microsoft products to reach into computer networks at federal and local agencies and tens of thousands of companies. One breach attributed to Russia in December grabbed emails from the Justice Department, Commerce Department and Treasury Department.

The hacks pose a significant national security threat, frustrating lawmakers who say Microsoft's faulty software is making it more profitable.

"If the only solution to a major breach in which hackers exploited a design flaw long ignored by Microsoft is to give Microsoft more money, the government needs to reevaluate its dependence on Microsoft," said Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, a leading Democrat on the intelligence committee.

"The government should not be rewarding a company that sold it insecure software with even bigger government contracts." Microsoft previously said it prioritizes fixing attacks that it sees in wide use.

A draft spending plan by the Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency allocates more

than \$150 million of their new \$650 million funding for a "secure cloud platform," according to documents seen by Reuters and people familiar with the matter.

More precisely, the money has been budgeted for Microsoft, according to four people briefed on the choice, largely to help other federal agencies upgrade their existing Microsoft deals to improve security of their cloud systems.

A CISA spokesman declined to comment.

A key service Microsoft provides, known as activity logging, allows its clients to keep watch on data traffic within their part of the cloud and spot inconsistencies that could reveal hackers at work. Officials have sought access to Microsoft's premium tracking capability after discovering the lack of logs made it much harder to investigate recent hacks tied to nation states.

Microsoft said Sunday that while all its cloud products have security features, larger organisations may require more advanced capabilities such as a greater depth of security logs and the ability to investigate those logs and take action. It did not address the fairness issues raised by lawmakers.

While some senior US cyber officials feel they have no choice but to pay up, Wyden and three other lawmakers have publicly raised concerns about the plan. Most major software has been penetrated by well-financed teams of hackers at one time or another, but the ubiquity of Microsoft's products makes it a prime target.

The alleged Russian spying, known for exploiting software from SolarWinds, hit

nine government agencies and 100 private companies, many of whom were exploited through manipulation of a Microsoft system.

More recent sprawling hacks into tens of thousands of servers around the world running Microsoft Exchange by a handful of attackers, including some tied to the Chinese government, relied on four previously unknown flaws in the way those servers handled web versions of Outlook email. China has denied backing the attacks.

In a hearing on the SolarWinds breach Feb. 26, Rhode Island Congressman Jim Langevin challenged Microsoft President Brad Smith about charging extra for logging, asking: Is this a profit center for Microsoft, or is it a service being provided at cost to the customers? We are a for-profit company, Smith responded. Everything we do is designed to generate a return, other than our philanthropic work.

Microsoft has turned security offerings into a significant source of revenue, with the business generating \$10 billion annually, up 40% from the previous year.

Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger of the House appropriations committee said Congress must look into "why security is an afterthought in the procurement process" and move away from approving only the lowest bidders.

The government could impose new regulations, said Curtis Dukes, a former head of the defensive mission at the National Security Agency now at the nonprofit Center for Internet Security, which works closely with CISA. Maybe with additional size, vendors should have to do more.

# Microsoft set to reap a quarter of relief funds for cyber defenders

# Agrani Bank sole supplier of forex for Padma bridge

FROM PAGE B1

The forex reserve of the country stood at \$42.98 billion on March 10, up 33 per cent from \$32.42 billion year-on-year, BB data showed.

Buoyed by rising foreign exchange reserves and export earnings, the government in 2012 decided to go ahead with the project with its own resources. Then came the question of making payments to the international contractors and consultancy firms in foreign currency.

During a meeting on February 3, 2014, on the management of the foreign currency, the Bridges Division decided that Agrani Bank, with which the division had already opened an account, would provide the money from its own foreign currency reserve or from the inter-bank forex market.

If there was still any shortfall, the BB would sell foreign currency to Agrani Bank, it was agreed in the meeting. Starting with \$6.26 million in 2013, Agrani Bank has so far paid out \$1.2 billion. Last year, it contributed \$126 million, according to the bank's data.

"Initially, we thought we would buy foreign currencies from the Bangladesh Bank's reserve. But we have been able to pay solely from our own sources, especially from the foreign currency that our bank has earned," said Zaid Bakht, chairman of Agrani Bank.

"We are proud to have been working on such a transformational project," he told The Daily Star.

He hoped that the bank would be able to make foreign currency payments in the future from its own earnings.

The total money for the project

comes from the government's own funds. To build the bridge, the government makes allocations in the Annual Development Programme.

Both local and foreign payments are being made through Agrani Bank, said Shafigul Islam, director of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE PADMA BRIDGE

The construction of the Padma bridge started in November 2014 to connect the country's 21 south and south-western districts with the capital via road and rail. The first span was installed on September 30, 2017.

Now fully visible, with the completion of the last span installation in December last year, the two-level steel truss composite bridge is expected to be a major boost to trade and economic activities.

Once in service, the mega bridge -- the top deck accommodating a four-lane highway for vehicles and the lower deck for a set of railway tracks -- will connect multi-lane expressways and railway lines with Dhaka to Mongla port and the deep-sea port at Payra.

The fast-track project is expected to boost the country's gross domestic product by 1.2 per cent.

The progress of the project was 82.5 per cent as of November last year. Around 91 per cent of work of the main bridge is done, while 76 per cent work of river training has been completed, according to project documents.

The original cost -- Tk 10,161 crore -- for the bridge was estimated in 2007 on the basis of a feasibility study. It did not include the cost of railway lines on the bridge at the time.

After several revisions, the cost of

the project rose to Tk 30,193 crore.

Now, the installation of the roadway deck and railway stringers is going on in full swing.

One of the major issues that are yet to be finalised is the bridge toll. A committee is working to finalise the rate.

Belayet Hossain, secretary of the Bridges Division, hinted that the rate was likely to be higher than that of Bangabandhu Bridge over the Jamuna river.

The Padma bridge is longer than the Bangabandhu bridge, he said. "So, the toll of the Padma Bridge may be higher than that of the Bangabandhu Bridge."

The rate will be fixed after getting the recommendations from the committee, he added.

# BB to let banks, NBFIs pay higher dividends

FROM PAGE B1

Till now, 26 banks have formed funds of around Tk 2,900 crore utilising the Bangladesh Bank incentive. Of the funds, around Tk 1,037 crore has already been invested.

The BSEC and the BB will work together to ensure secondary trade of treasury bonds and bills, reads the press release.

They also will work together to trade banks' perpetual bond.

The central bank officials will work to allow the cost price instead of market price in accounting of market exposure of banks and the NBFIs, the press release added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
District: Shariatpur  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)



Memo. No. 46.02.8600.000.07.002.20- 657

Date: 15-03-2021

## e-Tender Notice No: 22/2020-2021

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

Sl. No.	Tender/ Proposal ID	Name of Scheme with Package No.	Last selling Date and Time of Tender Document	Last Date and Time for submission tender
1	557936	CRMIDP/SRP/W-347/312 Construction of Two2 Storied Rural Market Building With 04 Storied Foundation in Dubishibar Hat Kazir Hat Under Zajira UpazilaDist.Shariatpur.	18-Apr-2021 16:00	19-Apr-2021 13:00
2	557930	DDIRWSP/Shariatpur/Naria/20-21/BR-01 Construction of 52.00 m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Janzira Naria Sureswar Road at Ch.1371 Km under UpazilaNaria DistrictShariatpur. Road ID No-386652006	18-Apr-2021 16:00	19-Apr-2021 13:00

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 16:00 on 18-Apr-2021.

Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) and also for e-mail: [xen.shariatpur@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.shariatpur@lged.gov.bd) or call to: 0601-61454.

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# Onion seed growers expect bumper crop



Onion seeds are in full bloom in a vast field in Faridpur, one of the largest seeds and onion growing regions in the country. The seed harvesting begins next month.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

SUZIT KUMAR DAS, Faridpur

Onion seed growers in Faridpur, one of the largest onion-producing districts, expect bumper yields this year thanks to favourable weather.

Farmers have cultivated different varieties of bulbs for seeds such as Rajshahi Tahirpur, Superking, Sukhsagar, BARI-4, and Nasik King, apart from hybrid onion seeds.

Faridpur has been a major hub for onion seed production for years because of suitable weather and soil.

"My grandfather used to cultivate onion seeds, and I am doing this too. Most of the farmers of our area have been cultivating onion seeds for generations," said Abul Hasan Tuhin, a farmer at Vasanchar village in the sadar upazila of the district.

Faridpur is the second-biggest onion-producing district, followed by Pabna. It accounted for 15 per cent of the total annual production of 18 lakh tonnes in the fiscal year 2018-19, data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics showed.

In Bangladesh, farmers produce about 700 tonnes of onion seeds annually, and Faridpur accounts for 60-65 per cent of the production.

The first week of November to the second week of December is suitable for onion cultivation, and the harvesting begins in the first week of April.

Tuhin cultivated onion seeds on 2.5 acres of land this year. He invested Tk 70,000. "I hope I will be able to bag 5.25 maunds of onion seeds," the 34-year-old said.

Growers have extended the cultivation of onions for seeds to 1,711 hectares in nine upazilas in Faridpur, up 22 per cent from 1,400 hectares the previous year, data from the district office of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) showed.

During a visit to Vasanchar village, this correspondent found that onion growers were passing busy time. Some farmers were hopeful about a bumper yield.

Md Halim Mollah, an onion seed grower in Uttar Alipur of Faridpur upazila, grew onion seeds on four acres this year and said he expected a good yield this year.

Last year, the 70-year-old farmer took home 3.1 maunds of seeds and sold them at Tk 7 lakh.

"The farmers in my locality cultivate onion seeds as it is more profitable than other crops. So, we grow them in all of our lands," said Saidur

Rahman, another former from Vasanchar village. Shahida Begum, a seed grower in Gobindapur village of Faridpur, planted onion seeds on 35 acres of land at an investment of Tk 84 lakh.

She is expecting 350 maunds of onion seeds. Last year, she bagged 200 maunds of onion seeds and sold each maund at Tk 2 lakh.

Farmers are more interested in cultivating the bulb after the prices of the popular cooking ingredient went through the roof in the last two years following an export ban by India.

Farmers cultivated onions on 2.53 lakh hectares of land this year, up 7 per cent year-on-year, DAE showed.

Farmers say they usually sell one maund of onions seeds at Tk 1 lakh. The price rose because of the high demand from producers at the beginning of the cultivation season.

"We will be able to make a profit if we can sell each maund at Tk 1.2 lakh," said Begum, who sells seeds to farmers from Rajbari, Pabna, Gopalganj, and Madaripur.

Hazrat Ali, deputy director of the DAE in Faridpur, said: "Farmers are turning to onion seed cultivation as it is more profitable than other crops."

"We are expecting 1,000 tonnes of onion seeds this year if no natural disaster strikes."

# Anlima Yarn's stock prices soar on rumours

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The price of Anlima Yarn Dyeing's stocks has been rising continuously for the past couple of days riding on rumours in spite of the fact that its profits had declined in the last two quarters.

Furthermore, the company had informed its investors of having no undisclosed price sensitive information that could lead to a rise in stock prices.

Yet, the price of each share rose 22 per cent to Tk 45.5 in the past seven days.

In a span of the past three months, it was a rise of 45 per cent starting off from Tk 29, as per the Dhaka Stock Exchange data.

A stock broker, preferring anonymity, said the Anlima stock price has been rising solely for rumours.

"There is nothing but pure gambling. It has no huge profits or news that can improve its situation," he said.

The dyeing company's profits dropped 28 per cent year-on-year to Tk 30.45 lakh in the first half of 2020-21.

Some investors explained that their peers were buying the stocks despite knowing that unscrupulous actors were at play, coordinating efforts to take the shares to a high level.

"Such investment may even erode their money but who cares. As the company's paid-up capital is small, the number of

shares is small and a handful of investors can influence prices of the stocks," said the broker.

The company's paid-up capital is Tk 17.8 crore. It provided 2 per cent cash dividend for fiscal 2019-20, which ended on last June 30.

The company posted Tk 8.08 crore in



sales in the first half of fiscal 2020-21, down 12 per cent year-on-year from Tk 9.23 crore.

About the profit fall, the company in its half yearly annual report said it provides yarn dyeing services to export-oriented knit and woven fabric manufacturers.

Sales of sewing thread is dependent upon orders from garment factories. Total sales are seasonal and dependent upon the style of exports. As such, the sales revenue varies from quarter to quarter depending upon the export order behaviour, it said.

The company generated Tk 1.14 crore less in sales revenue in the second quarter of 2020-21 compared to the corresponding quarter of 2019-2020.

"Due to decrease in sales the earnings per share have declined to Tk 0.17 from Tk 0.24 in the corresponding quarter of 2019-2020," it said.

# Mobile operators bemoan tax burden

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Although mobile network services have become essential amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the taxes levied on operators hamper the industry's growth and also burden consumers, according to experts.

"The consumption tax for mobile network services is higher than all other industries," said Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, president of the Association of Mobile Telecom Operators of Bangladesh (AMTOB).

If a customer spends Tk 100 on a mobile service, Tk 53 goes to taxes while another Tk 20 is used to avail various services from other licensees in the sector.

Besides, the corporate tax is as high as 45 per cent and even if a network provider fails to make a profit, it still has to pay 2 per cent turnover tax.

"So, the tax structure needs to be reformed and unified licensing needs to be enacted so that mobile operators can provide more services," he added.

Ahmed, also managing director and chief executive officer of Robi Axiata, made these comments on Sunday while speaking at an online discussion styled, "Mobile Communication in Bangladesh: Challenges of the Future".

The event, jointly organised by AMTOB and Daffodil International University, was a part of a series of webinars beginning in January.

"It is possible to solve the telecom sector's problems through a coordinated effort from relevant government departments, including the telecom and tax regulatory bodies," said Md Kamruzzaman, additional secretary of the Posts and Telecommunications Division.

READ MORE ON B2

# Bitcoin ATMs gain traction in US

REUTERS

A new feature has appeared at smoke shops in Montana, gas stations in the Carolinas and delis in far-flung corners of New York City: a brightly-lit bitcoin ATM, where customers can buy or sell digital currency, and sometimes extract hard cash.

The machines have multiplied quickly through the United States over the past year, fueled by a frenzy in crypto trading that sent bitcoin prices over \$58,000. Kiosk operators such as CoinFlip and Coin Cloud have installed thousands of ATMs, scouring areas competitors have not yet reached, executives told Reuters.

"I just assumed there was demand and people wanted bitcoin everywhere," said Quad Coin founder Mark Shoiket, who flew to Montana after scanning a US map for bitcoin ATM deserts.

During a week-long road trip, he found seven places to install machines, including 406 Glass, a store in Billings, Montana, that sells tobacco, vape juice and colorful glass pipes. As of January, there were 28,185 bitcoin ATMs in the United States, according to howmanybitcoinatms.com, an independent research site. Roughly 10,000 came within the prior five months.

Bitcoin's growing popularity has been the primary driver for new installations.

The reasons people use ATMs rather

than transacting online vary. Some get paid in cash, some lack bank accounts, some want to send remittances abroad or want anonymity, while others feel more comfortable interacting with a physical machine.

Rebecca White, a 51-year-old bitcoin investor who lives in the Pittsburgh area, makes larger investments online and uses bitcoin ATMs when her family has extra money. "When we do our grocery shopping and we have \$60 left, I will stop at the bitcoin ATM," said White, who works in the nuclear power industry.

Some machines only offer bitcoin, while others let customers invest in various digital currencies. Few bitcoin ATMs can actually spit out cash, and they cost more than regular ATMs or transacting online.

Fees range from 6 per cent to 20 per cent of a total transaction, said Pamela Clegg, director of financial investigations and education at cryptocurrency compliance firm CipherTrace. Fees vary depending on the location and Bitcoin ATM operator.

"The growth of the ATM market - it is not even a gentle increase, it is almost a 45 per cent increase," Clegg said. "The growth is quite astonishing." Government agencies have raised red flags about some machines because of their cost and the potential for illicit activity.



Bitcoin ATMs are rapidly gaining popularity in the US, where a frenzy of crypto trading has shot bitcoin prices above \$58,000.

REUTERS

# GLOBAL BUSINESS

# China's factory output surges as recovery accelerates

REUTERS, Beijing

China's industrial output growth quickened in January-February, beating expectations, as the vast manufacturing sector started 2021 on a firm footing and the economy consolidated its brisk recovery.

Retail sales in the period also rose in a boost to domestic demand, giving a strong lift to business activity on top of the recent upsurge in exports growth.

Industrial output rose 35.1 per cent in the first two months from a year earlier, up from a 7.3 per cent year-on-year uptick seen in December, shows data from China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). That was stronger than a median forecast of a 30.0 per cent surge in a Reuters poll of analysts.

China's ability to contain the coronavirus pandemic before other major economies were able to do so has allowed it to rebound faster, with the recovery helped by robust exports, pent-up demand and government stimulus.

While the impressive numbers are in part due to distortions from last year's massive slump in activity, other measures show the recovery is broad-based with industrial output up 16.9 per cent compared with the first two months of 2019, before the pandemic struck.

An NBS official said that positive factors for China's economy are increasing but the foundation for the recovery is not yet solid.

A rebound in foreign demand drove export growth in February to a record pace, while factory gate prices posted the biggest expansion since November 2018.



China's economic recovery from the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has been fueled by increased industrial output amid growing activity in the retail sector.

REUTERS/FILE

China's economic activity is normally distorted and volatile in the first two months because of the week-long Lunar New Year holiday, which fell in February this year.

Retail sales increased 33.8 per cent from a year earlier in the first two months, compared with a rise of 32 per cent tipped by analysts, marking a significant jump from 4.6 per cent growth in December and after a 20.5 per cent contraction for January-February of 2020.

Sales grew 6.4 per cent compared with the first two months of 2019. Fixed asset investment

increased 35 per cent in the first two months from the same period a year earlier, slower than a forecast 40.0 per cent jump. That compared with 2.9 per cent year-on-year growth in 2020, and a 24.5 per cent plunge in January-February last year.

Investment grew 3.5 per cent compared with the first two months of 2019.

Private-sector fixed-asset investment, which makes up 60 per cent of total investment, rose 36.4 per cent in January-February, versus a 1.0 per cent increase for the full year of 2020.

# Bank strike cripples Indian state lenders

AFP, Mumbai

Operations of Indian state-owned banks were hugely disrupted on Monday after hundreds of thousands of workers went on a strike to protest the privatisation plans for two public banks, unions said.

Transactions worth more than \$400 billion were affected in Maharashtra state, which includes the financial capital Mumbai, union leaders said.

Some state-owned banks closed, while others saw cash and clearing activities hit on the first of the two-day strike.

"Right from the sweeper to the bank manager, we are seeing complete participation in this strike," said Devidas Tuljapurkar, convener of the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine unions that claims one million members.

The UFBU called the strike to protest the recent privatisation of IDBI Bank, as well as the plan to

sell off two more public banks, as outlined by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Tuljapurkar said the government would be "handing over the hard-earned savings of the common man to corporates who have already duped the banking system so many times before".

While many branches of State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and Punjab National Bank were closed due to the strike, operations at private banks such as HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank were unaffected.