

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES				
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY	
▲ 0.26%	▲ 0.41%	\$1,758.71	\$82.00	▼ 0.93%	▲ 1.05%	▲ 0.51%	▲ 0.90%	BUY TK	84.65	96.71	113.87	12.87
7,351.04	12,926.09	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	59,189.73	27,528.87	3,083.88	3,568.17	SELL TK	85.65	100.51	117.67	13.53



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Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY OCTOBER 7, 2021, ASHWIN 22, 1428 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Burgeoning local demand to spur call centre business

Operators going for expansion as govt and private firms offer various services thru helplines



Industry began journey in 2008

Call centres also offer services through email, mobile app, chat, social media

Traditional concept has changed in the last few years

Top players: Genex Infosys, Synesis IT

There are **212** call centre licensees

Jobs created: **60,000**

Govt outsources dozens of services from local entities

AT A GLANCE

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The country's call centre industry is set to undergo fast growth as the government alongside private entities such as banks has started to provide many services through helplines.

Local entrepreneurs are now hopeful of further expansion of the sector as the government now provides anything from legal assistance to health services through call centres run by private entities.

The sector got a shot in the arm in 2018 when the government launched helpline 333 to address social problems.

The government outsources the service from private call centres to provide information on the procedures of receiving public services and addressing social problems.

Connected to it are thousands of government websites and vast complaint management mechanisms to facilitate the helpline service.

Genex Infosys, the leading outsourcing provider of customer experience management, catered to over 3.5 crore calls for the 333 call centres during the pandemic,

facilitating services such as food assistance, health services and government information.

Genex, which started its journey in 2012 with two persons, now employs over 4,000 people.

There are about 3,000 employees who only work at its call centres in Dhaka and Chattogram. It caters to, among others, incoming calls, outbound operations for some clients in the UK and US and customer lifecycle management.

All of the local private telecom companies are its clients alongside Uber and Samsung.

"As the government started providing citizen services through call centres, the sector will grow further," said Prince Mojumder, CEO and co-founder of Genex Infosys.

"Besides, banks are also outsourcing from call centre organisations to reach out to customers and solve customers' problems," he said.

Bangladesh Bank has allowed commercial banks to outsource their customer care services and already several banks are availing such services from third parties.

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E-COMMERCE

Firms' registration begins in a month

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The government will begin registering e-commerce and F-commerce firms within a month in a bid to restore discipline in the nascent industry and protect customers and merchants from unscrupulous business practices.

The commerce ministry has already finalised the draft of the registration form to provide a unique number to online e-commerce platforms.

"We are trying to start the registration process as soon as possible," Hafizur

KEY POINTS

- Registration of all e-commerce and F-commerce platforms will start within a month
- Commerce ministry is finalising the new registration form
- Initially 2,500 e-commerce and 2.5 lakh F-commerce platforms will be registered
- The registration is free of cost and will be done online
- Ministry formed 16-member committee to amend law



Rahman, additional secretary of the ministry, told The Daily Star.

"We are hopeful that we will be able to start the registration within the next one month."

Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh said the registration form would be approved soon so that online firms could register quickly.

The companies that are currently running e-commerce operations in Bangladesh following registration with the Register of Joint Stock and Companies and Firms will also have to register with the commerce ministry.

The government has moved to introduce the unique number for the e-commerce as well Facebook-based digital

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Withholding tax collection automated

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday said it developed an automated system to reduce hassles faced by authorities dealing with tax deducted at source (TDS) in complying with rules and bring about transparency and accountability in collections.

The NBR collects more than Tk 85,000 crore in income tax and 60 per cent of the money comes as withholding tax, also known as the TDS.

Taxmen say nearly 3 lakh public and private agencies are responsible for the TDS on 53 sources of income, namely interest income of depositors and source tax on export proceeds of exporters.

They also have to deposit the money to the state coffers through banks and file returns with the field level tax office. They are needed to furnish 24 monthly returns and two on half-yearly basis.

And they have to do the whole job manually, costing them time and labour.

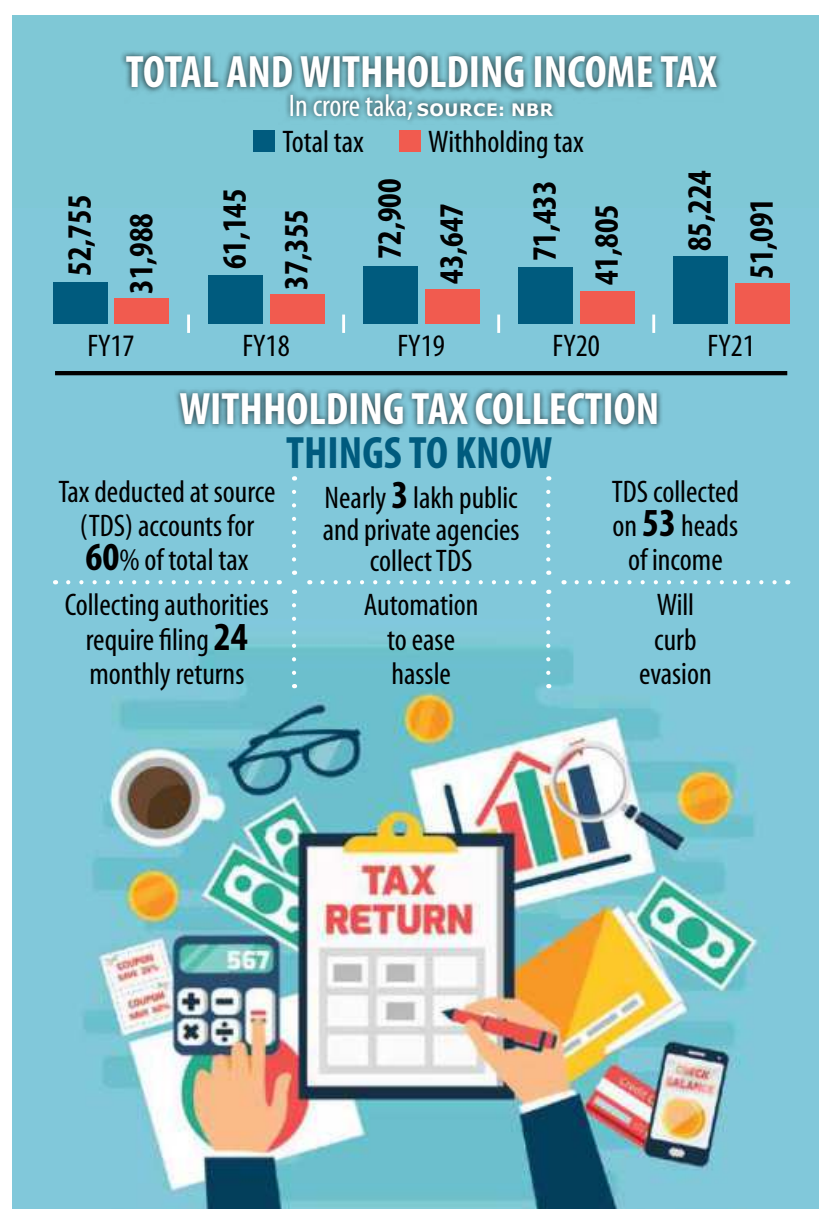
Termed as e-TDS system, the automated platform will enable public and private agencies to deduct tax at source, prepare challan online and deposit the money to the state coffers simply through some clicks on their computers.

Introduction of the platform, developed by a 21-member team of the NBR, will allow the TDS authorities to deduct tax against proper codes and heads of income and ensure monitoring.

It will also enable paying tax through mobile, internet banking, debit and credit cards, said the NBR after launching the system at its headquarters yesterday.

Piloted earlier in four tax zones in Dhaka, including Large Taxpayers Unit of income tax, the NBR opened the platform for all the tax zones in the country.

Already 1,000 TDS authorities, mainly private companies, have registered with the new system, which is integrated with the government's automated challan system (A-Challan) meant for electronic payment of various government fees.



WITHHOLDING TAX COLLECTION

THINGS TO KNOW

- Tax deducted at source (TDS) accounts for 60% of total tax
- Collecting authorities require filing 24 monthly returns
- Nearly 3 lakh public and private agencies collect TDS
- Automation to ease hassle
- TDS collected on 53 heads of income
- Will curb evasion

Some 40 banks already collect government fees under the A-Challan system, said NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem at the event.

Besides, public and private agencies will also be able to pay the withholding tax over the counter.

Inaugurating the eTDS system, Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury suggested regular monitoring for the continuation and success of the e-TDS platform.

This will be to take collection of withholding tax rise to 85 per cent of total income tax receipts in the next couple of years from the present 60 per cent, he said.

Refund process also should be made automatic and seamless, he said.

Chowdhury also suggested bringing government agencies under the e-TDS system in order to ensure proper collection of withholding tax.

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RAW MATERIALS FOR EXPORTERS

Govt eases rules for duty-free import

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Export-oriented industries in Bangladesh have been allowed to import the raw materials needed for six months duty-free under the bonded warehouse facility, the government said yesterday, in a major boost to the manufacturing sector.

Earlier, manufacturers could bring in the raw materials and packaging materials for four months of their capacity.

The decision came as the cabinet committee on economic affairs approved an amendment to the import policy order yesterday, Shamsul Arefin, additional secretary of the cabinet division, told reporters after the meeting.

The committee also gave its consent to another amendment to the order, which sought to double the volume of grey fabrics and yarn that export-oriented specialised textile, woven, dyeing and spinning mills are allowed to import under the bonded

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Rise in non-farm income cuts domestic migration

BIDS study finds

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A one per cent increase in non-farm income reduces domestic migration to other districts by 4 to 7 per cent in rural areas and municipalities, a new study found.

The impact is stronger for the households in the municipalities where the likelihood of migration goes down by 6-10 per cent, said the study, "Local Nonfarm Opportunities and Migration Decisions: Evidence from Bangladesh."

The Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) conducted the study. The findings were disclosed at a programme at the auditorium of the think-tank in Dhaka yesterday.


There are some indications that higher non-farm income encourages migration in rural areas.

"The impact is more pronounced for the income rich, land poor and educated households," said Kazi Iqbal, a senior research fellow of the BIDS who led the study, while making a presentation.

In order to check the robustness of the results, the researchers used the location of the SME clusters and found that the likelihood of migration was lower from the union with SME cluster.

"If infrastructure develops in the rural areas, the investment will increase in the SME sector there," said Binayak Sen, director-general of the BIDS.

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CREDIT RATING REPORT

Particulars	Previous	Current (Valid till 30 June 2022)
Long Term	AA2	AA2
Short Term	ST-2	ST-1 (Highest Grade)
Outlook	Stable	Stable

Credit Rating Agency of Bangladesh Ltd. has assigned "AA2" rating in the Long Term and "ST-1" (Highest Grade) in the Short Term to Trust Bank Limited.

The Bank rated in "AA2" is considered to have very strong capacity to meet its financial commitments.

The Bank rated in "ST-1" is considered to have the highest capacity for timely repayment of obligations.

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