

Md Arfan Ali, managing director of Bank Asia Ltd, and AMM Golam Towhid, managing director of Syngenta Bangladesh, exchanged signed documents of an agreement at the Bank

Asia Tower in Dhaka recently. The deal will promote microloans among smallholder farmers and SME loans among retailers. Mohammad Ziaul Hasan Molla and Alamgir Hossain,

deputy managing directors of Bank Asia, and Mohammad Hedayet Ullah, head of sales, and Mainur Rahman Bhuiyan, company secretary of Syngenta Bangladesh, were present.

Factory inspection begins this month FROM PACE B4

At least two factories will be inspected per day by each team, he said.

Chowdhury further said that the inspection team would send reports based on which Bida will prepare recommendations, if any, for the factory in question.

Later, the recommendations will be forwarded to the relevant officials of both government and industrial agencies.

Following a tragic fire at the Hashem Foods factory in Narayanganj that left over 50 dead earlier this year, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) announced a 24-member committee headed by Salman F Rahman, the prime minister's adviser for private industry and investment, to help prevent such incidents in the future.

After that, the PMO ordered the relevant authorities to launch an inspection campaign across Bangladesh, appointing Bida to lead it in coordination with business associations, such as the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

Chowdhury said a total of 46,100 factories across the country will undergo safety inspections in phases.

However, he said they are yet to fix the deadline to complete the inspection.

Melamine market growing steadily

FROM PAGE B1

Other influencers include their durability, colour stability with smooth surface finish and being odourless, he said.

Customers like melamine products due to affordable price and attractive design," he noted. He believes the demand would continue to grow in line with economic growth in rural Bangladesh.

Sharif Melamine has simultaneously explored its export market so far in 14 countries, namely the US, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Finland, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, United Arab Emirates, India, Bhutan and Australia.

It looks and feels like ceramic, is a food safe plastic free from Bisphenol A, perfect for indoor and outdoor use, easy to clean and is dishwasher safe, said Fahim Hossain, deputy general manager for Pran-RFL Group's Italiano brand.

Apart from local demand annually increasing by 10 per cent to 15 per cent

during the past decade, there is huge potential in the global market, he said.

Italiano products are regularly being exported to 18 countries, including the US, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, India and Spain, he added.

Hossain believes the sector employs around 10,000 people. However, there was no reliable data about the total investment, he said.

Mrimoy Kanti Das, assistant general manager of Bengal Melamine, said the Bengal Group of Industries entered the melamine sector just four years back taking note of the market's rapid growth.

He said the market was growing rapidly as people, particularly in rural and semiurban areas, like melamine products for their beautiful designs and durability.

Besides, the price of melamine products is reasonable compared to those of ceramic, he added.

Govt conducts feasibility study for FTA with Thailand

FROM PAGE B1

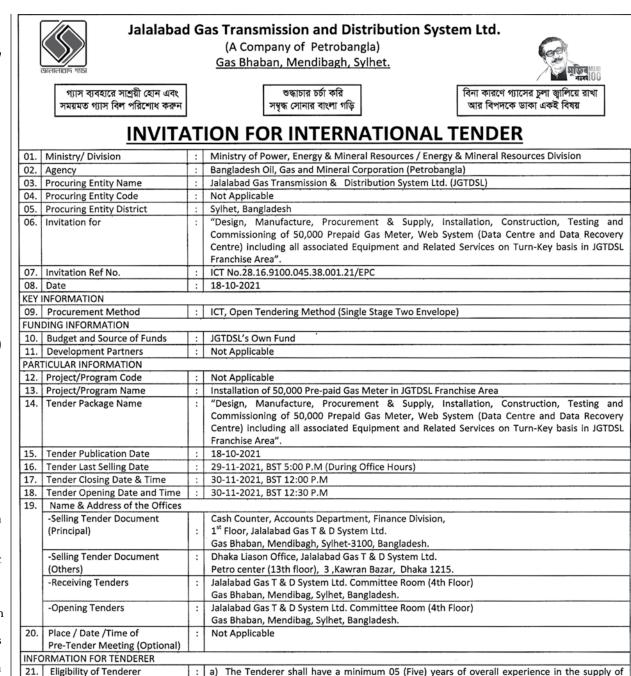
plastics and rubber articles, products of chemical or allied industries, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; mineral fuels, prepared foodstuffs, beverages, spirits and vinegar and man-made fibres.

Currently, Bangladesh enjoys duty benefit on export of some goods to Thailand under the least developed country (LDC)

However, the preferential trade benefit to Thailand will come to an end in 2026 with the LDC graduation.

Haque said the commerce ministry has been negotiating with many countries like India, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand and some other East Asian nations to sign FTAs, preferential trade agreements (PTAs) or comprehensive economic partnership agreements (CEPAs).

This is to continue availing duty waivers even after Bangladesh make the United Nations status graduation from an LDC to a developing county in





Ashim Kumar Roy, general manager of Pubali Bank Ltd. and Mohammed Jakir Hossain. general manager of Best Electronics Ltd (BEL), exchange signed documents of a

category.

2026, he said.

memorandum of understanding at the bank 5 nead onice yesterday. The woo will enable
the credit cardholders of the bank to enjoy EMI facilities at the outlets of Best Electronics.
Safiul Alam Khan Chowdhury, managing director of the bank, Mohammad Ali, additional
managing director, and Syed Asaduzzaman, managing director of BEL, were present.

So far, only one PTA has been signed with Bhutan in December last year.

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GD- 1862 Munshiganj Road Division						

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Equipment Procurement & Supply of 50,000 Prepaid Gas Meter (Diaphragm type; G-1.6), Hardware Software for Web System (Data Centre & Data Recovery Centre, Tech. Support Centre, I Smart communication module etc.), Meter Calibration System (test bench), Supply of Diffe Equipment, Fittings, Regulators, Spare Parts, Tools and associated goods on Turn-Key bas JGTDSL Franchise Area as specified in the Tender document for uninterrupted, safe, effic and effective operation of the online (web-based) Pre-paid Gas Metering (PGM) system.						y Centre, Tech. Support Centre, POS, stem (test bench), Supply of Different ssociated goods on Turn-Key basis in tent for uninterrupted, safe, efficient		
3. Brief 0	Description of Se	rvices			•	under the contract, but not		
	Detailed Engineering, Design, Manufacturing, Procurement & Supply, Inspection & Testing, QA/QC documents, Insurance, Packing & freight to JGTDSL's project site, Transportation up to site, Storage of materials, Installation of Meter Calibration System, Prepaid Gas Meter at customer premises, Installation of Web System (Data Centre & Data Recovery Centre, Tech. Support Centre, POS etc.) at designated location, Development of Smart Phone/Mobile phone application software, Capacity building/Technology Know-how Transfer, Site Training, Testing & Commissioning of complete online (web-based) Pre-paid Gas Meter (PGM) System and handing over it (gas meters, systems including necessary hardware, APIs and Software including Source code etc.) to the JGTDSL, Providing Contract Management Services for the project, Associated Civil, Electrical, Instrumentation, Mechanical works and related services, Services during Defect Liability Period as specified in the Tender Document for uninterrupted, safe, efficient and effective operation of the online (web-based) Pre-paid Gas Metering (PGM) system.							
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7					Engr. Liton Nandi Project Director Installation of 50,000 Pre-paid Gas Meter in JGTDSL Franchise Area			
8. Addres	ss of Official Invit	Official Inviting Tender : Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.						
9. Contac	9th Floor, Gas Bhaban, Mendibagh, Sylhet-3100, Bangladesh. Contact Details of Official Inviting Tender : Telephone: + 880-821-717005, Mobile: +880-1712641244 E-mail address: pdjg50kpgm@gmail.com : :							
a) T b) If	it is not possible	ity reserve to receiv	e/open t	the te	accept or reject any o nder on the schedule	r all Tenders without assign	le circumstances or holiday, the same	
							Project Director	