**C** 16218

ধাইম এমএসএমই

**Earn Interest** 

from MSME



# BUSINES

🔳 DHAKA WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24, 2021, AGRAHAYAN 9, 1428 BS 🔵 starbusiness@thedailystar.net 🛭 🛭

# Bad loans surpass Tk 1 lakh crore again

Relaxed policies failed to rein in NPLs

#### AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

In an upsetting development, default loans in the banking sector in Bangladesh have surpassed Tk 1 lakh crore after more than one and a half years despite a relaxed loan classification policy adopted by the central bank.

Up until September this year, non-performing loans (NPLs) stood at Tk 101,150 crore, up 14 per cent from nine months earlier and 7.1 per cent year-on-year, Bangladesh Bank data showed. Defaulted loans totaled Tk 116,288 crore in September 2019.

The rise in the NPLs came despite the central bank' relaxed policy, introduced soon after the coronavirus pandemic hit the country in March last year, an ominous sign for the economy.

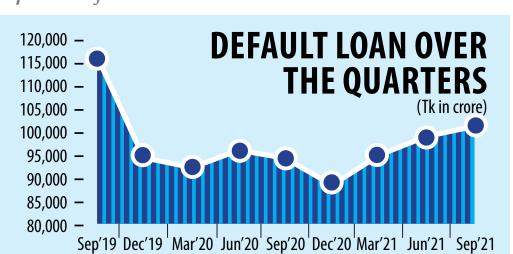
The central bank had declared a loan moratorium policy last year. The facility has ended as the economy shook off the impacts of the pandemic.

Borrowers can now avert slipping into the defaulted zone by repaying only 25 per cent of their total instalments.

The NPLs also increased 2 per cent in September compared to June when the volume stood at Tk 99,205 crore.

"The pandemic has had an adverse impact on the economy, creating hardship for businesses. But, many clients are also showing unwillingness to repay loans despite managing profits," said Md Arfan Ali, managing director of Bank Asia.

"The tendency not to pay back loans has spread alarmingly," he said, adding that the



#### **FIVE BANKS FACING HIGHEST NPLs**

BANK		PERCENTAGE OF DEFAULT LOANS		
Janata	Tk <b>13,837</b> cr	14%		
Sonali	Tk <b>10,294</b> cr	10%		
Agrani	Tk <b>7,872</b> cr	8%		
BASIC	Tk <b>7,619</b> cr	7.5%		
AB	Tk <b>5,333</b> cr	5%		
SOURCE: BANGLADESH BANK				





number of habitual defaulters was on

The delinquent borrowers think that they will not face any music if they embezzle depositors' money, so the NPLs might increase further once the relaxation is lifted, he said.

The NPLs declined massively in the final quarter of 2019 on the back of another regulatory forbearance policy in 2019. extended by the central bank.

The BB had allowed banks to reschedule defaulted loans by accepting a down payment of only 2 per cent of the outstanding amount, way lower than the existing 20-50 per cent.

Both Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, and Emranul Huq, managing director of Dhaka Bank, said their banks had recently classified some loans, which were rescheduled based on the relaxed

READ MORE ON B3

Salman F Rahman

#### Weak banks should consider mergers: adviser

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Financially weak banks should consider mergers in a bid to reduce the pressure of default loans, according to Salman F Rahman, the prime minister's adviser on private industry and investment.

"There are systematic issues in our banking industry as borrowers are allowed to take shortterm loans for long-term investments, resulting in many bad debts," he said during a press meet at the Dhaka Reporters Unity vesterday.

Rahman then suggested that establishing more specialised banks for investment could help relieve the country's financial constraints in this regard.

Besides, the economic impact of Covid-19 increased the amount of non-performing loans (NPLs) worldwide and Bangladesh is no exception as borrowers struggled to pay back instalments amid the coronavirus-induced economic downturn.

compliance

Refayet Ullah Mirdha The Tazreen Fashions fire, one of the nation's deadliest industrial incidents, was an eye-opener for the garment sector, showing that the cost of non-compliance in business operations was very high.

NINE YEARS OF TAZREEN FASHIONS FIRE

The cost of non-

On this day exactly nine years ago, 112 workers were killed and 90 severely injured when the devastating fire broke out at an eight-storey building housing a garment factory at Ashulia, some 35 kilometres north of the capital Dhaka. Synthetic fabrics and highly flammable chemical products stockpiled on different floors and staircases enabled the fire to spread quickly, generating plumes of suffocating black smoke.

The screaming workers kept running from one to end to another to get as far away as possible from the fiery blaze.

But some guards had kept a number of exits locked in an apparent attempt at preventing theft of goods by workers. This effectively trapped the victims, robbing them of any chance to escape the deadly smoke and flames.

Some tried to break the walls but could not. A few who did manage to escape by jumping off a window suffered severe injuries from the impact of the fall.

READ MORE ON B3



Abandoned for nine years now, the Tazreen Fashions garment factory still stands at Ashulia following a devastating fire that broke out on this very day in 2012, READ MORE ON B3 | killing 112 workers. The photo was taken yesterday.

#### Top taxpayers to be honoured today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The National Board of Revenue will honour the country's top taxpayers today to celebrate their compliance and commitment to paying taxes regularly.

At the national level, the tax collector will honour 141 individuals who paid the highest amount of tax, including 75 people, who paid the largest amounts of income tax in fiscal 2020-21, at a ceremony at the Officers' Club Dhaka.

In addition, it will also recognise 525 taxpayers in two categories -- highest amounts and longest periods -- at the city corporation and district levels, said NBR Spokesperson Syed A Momen.

At the event, the NBR will also honour 63 of the biggest and long-running taxpayers. Field offices of the tax administration will recognise the remaining top taxpayers throughout the country.

READ MORE ON B3

### To Kaus Mia, paying tax is a responsibility

SUKANTA HALDER

Taxpayers in Bangladesh are familiar with the name of Md Kaus Mia.

90-year-old businessman, known much for his Hakimpuri Jarda, has been the highest taxpayer since the National Board of Revenue (NBR) started



recognising the top taxpayers of the country in 2010-11 in order to create a tax compliance culture.

Kaus was named as the best taxpayer in the Mujib Borsho, which is marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The NBR last week unveiled the names of the best

list in the businessmen category. This is because to Kaus Mia, paying tax is a responsibility, not a legal This is a stark contrast to a tax habit in a country where non-compliance is rife and tax collection is

taxpayers of last fiscal year. As usual, he topped the

one of the lowest in the world. Born in August 1931 in Chandpur district, his ancestors were the residents of the then state of Tripura. His father wanted him to study. But Kaus was obsessed with business. He began his journey as a

businessman at a very young age with Tk 2,500 from

READ MORE ON B3

# Bangladesh capable of extending trade benefit to LDCs

Bangladesh has the capability to extend trade facilities to least-developed countries after its graduation from the group to a developing nation in 2026, said Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh yesterday.

As an LDC, Bangladesh has been enjoying trade privileges in the markets of the developing and developed countries since its independence.

"Bangladesh will have to give the same trade benefit to other LDCs after graduation. And Bangladesh has the capability," he said, citing the recent examples of the government's loans and debt relief respectively to Sri Lanka and

WTO Ministerial Conference organised by the Economic Reporters' Forum in Dhaka.

The secretary said Bangladesh's economy had grown over the last 50 years to a level that made it capable of giving the trade benefit to other poor countries.

Currently, Bangladesh is demanding trade benefits from other countries for the postgraduation era and is in talks with major trading partners to sign deals, including free trade agreements, to retain the duty benefit after 2026.

It is expected that the export from Bangladesh will not face any negative impacts up to 2029 in Says commerce secretary



**Tapan Kanti Ghosh** 

Ghosh made the comments at a workshop on the European Union, where 67 per cent of the garment item is shipped, as the bloc will keep granting the preferential trade treatment for three more years.

> "We have eight years to take preparations to compete after graduation," Ghosh said.

"By this time, the local exporters, especially the backward linkage industries of the garment sector, will be capable of supplying raw materials to the local garment sector," Ghosh said.

Local garment exporters would be able to compete with other countries after graduation, he said. Of the total garment exports, 73 per cent is shipped under the LDC category.

The members of the World Trade Organisation may extend the LDC facility to the graduating countries for six or nine years. "The negotiation is underway," Ghosh said.

Bangladesh is also negotiating to obtain the GSP Plus status in the EU market. The UK will continue the same duty benefit as the EU.

The commerce secretary said the proposed EU GSP regulation had a lot of good sides for

Bangladesh. The new GSP will come into effect from January 2024 and will continue up to 2034.

Although Bangladesh's economy is welldiversified, the export items have not reached

"Other sectors will also grow in the future as the government will give incentives and provide policy support to the emerging industries. Hafizur Rahman, director-general of the WTO

Cell under the commerce ministry, said the negotiation on the continuation of the fisheries subsidy was at the final stage as the member countries agreed on it.

Apart from seeking extension of the trade benefit for nine years, the LDC group will also demand special and differential measures at the ministerial conference. The negotiation is going on for the development of micro, small and medium enterprises and women entrepreneurship.

# Olympic to invest Tk25cr to expand bakery business

Olympic Industries Ltd, the maker of popular biscuit brands such as Energy Plus, Tip and Nutty, has announced that it would invest Tk 25.65 crore to expand its production capacity to meet growing demands.

The top bakery and confectionery product manufacturer in the country disclosed the information yesterday in a regulatory filing on the website of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Its stock rose 1.25 per cent to Tk

According to the disclosure, the company would finance the investment from its own sources or working capital loans.

The company has retained earnings of Tk 723 crore, said the financial

report for 2020-21. Of the Tk 25.65 crore planned investment, Tk 6.49 crore will be invested in the first phase to import

#### **OLYMPIC'S EXPANSION BID**

Plain cake production: 475.2 lakh pcs yearly

Custard cake production: **316.80** lakh pcs yearly Construction of a 5-storey complex with **73,000** sft floor area



#### and set up cupcake making line to produce plain and custard cakes, along with buying packaging line,

and other items from China. Thanks to the investment, the plain cake production capacity would be 475.2 lakh pieces annually and custard cake production capacity would be 316.80 lakh pieces. The line will be established in its factory in Lolati, Narayanganj

nitrogen generator, metal detector,

On the back of rising demand for biscuits, and snacks items, the listed company has decided to enhance the production capacity.

Its sales rose 11.86 per cent to Tk 1,803 crore in 2020-21. It logged profits of Tk 203 crore, slightly up from the previous year's Tk 202 The export of biscuits and

confectionery items rose 8 per cent to Tk 25.65 crore in 2020-21. READ MORE ON B3

#### Stocks fall as investors book profits

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The stock market fell for the third consecutive day yesterday due to the profit booking tendency prevailing among investors. The DSEX, the

benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), dropped 9 points, or 0.13 per cent, to 7,013. Turnover, an important

indicator of the market, however, went up 7 per cent to Tk 1,314 crore from the previous day's Tk 1,226 crore. As most stocks rose last week, investors booked profits in the last three days, according to a merchant banker.

The market is now in motion, which is a good sign and now it is easy for general investors to book profits, he said.

READ MORE ON B2

# Poverty rate unchanged at 20.5pc

Says planning minister

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Planning Minister MA Mannan yesterday claimed that the poverty rate in Bangladesh remains unchanged at 20.5 per cent despite the economic fallout of Covid-19.

"Many private organisations say the poverty rate has increased according to their calculations, but we won't engage in this debate for now as the government is carrying out its own study on the matter," he said.

"The media will be informed about our findings in due time," he said after a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec).

The planning minister o went on to say that the 🗜 size of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) has reached \$411 billion as per calculations of the Bangladesh Bureau Statistics (BBS).

"The GDP size has

expanded thanks to the new base year adopted by the BBS," he said. By changing the base year to 2015-16 from 2005-06, many new types of businesses and products were included in

the GDP size. A base year is a benchmark with reference to which national account figures such as GDP, gross domestic saving and

the economy, leading to the expansion of

gross capital formation are calculated.





Arif Quadri, acting managing director of United Commercial Bank Ltd, and Khwaja Shahriar, managing director of LankaBangla Finance Ltd, exchange signed documents of a memorandum of understanding at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. Mastercard Titanium and Visa Platinum cardholders of LankaBangla Finance can access UCB Imperial Airport Lounge at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport under the deal.



Mohammed Monirul Moula, managing director of Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd (IBBL), inaugurates the bank's 200th sub-branch at Azimpur in Dhaka yesterday. Md Mahboob Alam and Mahmudur Rahman, IBBL's senior executive vice-president and head of Dhaka Central Zone respectively, and Hasibur Rahman Manik, councilor of the Dhaka South City Corporation, were present.

#### No bank fees, please: Central Bank Digital Currency will deliver remittances like emails

But such costs are well over 10 per cent when the remittances are routed through highest-cost banking

The BB has received more than \$24 billion remittance in 2020-21 and 57 per cent of it (\$14.3 billion) came from Singapore and GCC countries. But the remaining 43 per cent (\$10.6 billion) came through the highest-cost corridors, incurring more than 10 per cent intermediary bank charges. And that is more than \$1 billion collective loss to the Bangladeshi migrant workers and the country's reserve.

Remittance inflow through formal channels grew by 11 per cent in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic in 2019-20 fiscal year. But it leapfrogged by 36 per cent in the incentivised remittance through formal channels.

of remittance for Bangladesh in 2020-21. Some \$3.5 billion came from the US (44 per cent growth), and Malaysia and the UK posted 63 per cent and 48 per cent growth, respectively, with each pumping \$2 billion. Australia's \$142 million (141 per cent growth), Japan's \$80 million (61 per cent growth), and Italy's \$810 million (16 per cent growth) contributed to the higher receipts.

Leading mobile financial service bKash has disbursed \$134 million of remittance in 2020 and it expects to post 87 per cent growth this year by pumping \$250 million. Extensively located nationwide MFS outlets like those of bKash have set the stage for domestic and cross-border CBDC in Bangladesh.

technology Market navigates towards unintended consequences. following fiscal year, as the pandemic GSM technology was developed as movers. The government has also standard. But it became the developing the market failures of conventional world's lifeline for universal access to banking for good. telecoms. Subsequent introduction of As a result, the annual growth of mobile financial service became the The author is senior policy fellow at inflow jumped from the major sources revolutionary unintended crucible LIRNEasia.

of universal access to banking. The fusion of internet and smartphone has now made talking, texting and video conferencing absolutely free.

Similarly, the world's leading governments' mission to dwarf cryptocurrencies with CBDC is poised to cross-pollinate with unimaginable unintended consequences instantaneous settlements within and beyond political borders.

The Bangladesh Bank should get actively engaged with the BIS to execute CBDC following the steps of its Asian peers. The goal should be to fix billions of dollars' leakage in the pipelines of inward remittance. Stopping further billions of dollars' hemorrhage from export-import settlements will strengthen the country's financial health. And CBDC will concurrently unshackle the



"The market does not he said, adding that if anyone conducts trade Date: 22.11.2021

"Then, the market

Among the major sectors, services and real estate, travel and leisure and ceramics experienced price appreciations, while information technology, tannery and fuel and power sectors faced corrections. At the DSE, 156 stocks

Brief description of goods

Brief description of related services

2021-2022 (GW-2a)

Designation of official inviting tender

Address of official inviting tender Contact details of official inviting tender

PROCUREMENT ENTITY DETAILS

Name of official inviting tender

Identification of work

Supply of double lane steel truss for Highway

Bridges with provision of concrete deck slab

for 1 (one) span of 100.00 meter (in between

P9 & P10) including supervision during

installation for the under construction Bridge

over the River Kalni of Azmiriganj, Habiganj

under Habiganj Road Division of Moulvibazar

Road Circle of Sylhet Zone during the year

(2) CPTU website: www.cptu.gov.bd

Price of tender document (Tk)

Lot

No.

26

28

29

GD-2135

advanced, 176 dropped and 36 remained the same. **Emerald Oil Industries** 

topped the gainers' list, rising 9.96 per cent, followed by Acme Pesticides, Sena Kalyan Insurance Company, One Bank, and Golden Son.

GPH Ispat shed the most, dropping 11 per cent, followed by Navana CNG, Dominage Steel Building Systems, Provati Insurance Company, and Rahim Textile Mills.

Stocks of Beximco were 161 crore, followed by One Chittagong Stock Exchange

index of the CSE, fell 43 points, or 0.20 per cent, to 20,515. Among the 281 stocks to undergo trade, 101 rose, 147 fell, and 33 were unchanged.



The Westin Dhaka celebrates Global Customer Appreciation Week 2021 in a festive manner recently with the slogan of "The Power of Connecting". The celebration is part of the culture of Marriott International, whose global sales team thanked its customers from all industries and visited quests' offices with gifts, hosted get-togethers and participated in food donation drives as a token of appreciation.

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD Road Zone, Sylhet Sarak Bhaban, Tupkhana, Sylhet

E-mail: acesyl@rhd.gov.bd/acesylrhd@gmail.com

#### Invitation for Tenders

		ivitation for Tenders			
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, Roa	ad Transport and Highwa	ays Division.	
2	Agency	Roads & Highways Department.			
3	Procuring entity name	Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Road Zone, Sylhet.			
4	Procuring entity code	Not applicable.			
5	Procuring entity district	Sylhet.			
6	Invitation for	Goods.			
7	Invitation Reference No.	Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Road Zone	, Sylhet.		
8	Date				
	INFORMATION				
9	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (International).			
	DING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and source of funds	GOB fund under ADP.			
11	Development partners (if applicable)	None.			
_	TICULAR INFORMATION	204207400			
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	224297100  Construction of Sullah-Jalshuka Portio	a of Company and Man	Januar Danai Cullah	
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)		n of Sunamganj-Mad	anur-Derai-Sulian-	
11	Tondor Dookogo No	Julshuka-Azmiriganj-Habiganj Road (Sullah-			
14 15	Tender Package No. Tender package name	06(six)/ADP(Steel Truss)/ACE/SZ/2021-20 Supply of double lane steel truss for Highw		n of concrete dock	
15	Tender package name	slab for 1 (one) span of 100.00 meter (in	botwoon DO & D10) inc	oluding eupoprision	
1		during installation for the under construction			
1		Habiganj under Habiganj Road Division of			
1		during the year 2021-2022 (GW-2a).	Modividazai Road Oile	de di Symet Zone	
16	Tender publication date	22-11-2021			
17	Tender last selling date	03-01-2022 during office hour.			
18	Tender closing date and time	Name of office	Date	Time	
1 '	(Primary place)	Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Road	04-01-2022	Up to 12:30 hrs	
1	(1.111111)	Zone, Sylhet.		(BST)	
1	Tender closing date and time	Name of office		Time	
1	(Secondary places)	Superintending Engineer, RHD, Road	04-01-2022	Up to 12:30 hrs	
1	, , ,	Circle, Moulvibazar.		(BST)	
19	Tender opening date and time	Date	Time		
		04-01-2022	At 16:00 hrs (BST)		
20	Name & address of the office(s)	Address:			
1	Selling tender document (Principal)	Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Ha			
1	Selling tender document (Others)	a) Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet D			
1		b) Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Sylhet/ Mulovibazar/ Sunamganj.			
1		c) Executive Engineer, RHD, Planning Division-1, Sarak Bhaban, Dhaka.			
1		d) Executive Engineer, RHD, Documentation & Procurement Division, Sarak			
1		Bhaban, Dhaka.  Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Road Zone, Sarak Bhaban, Tupkhana,			
1	Receiving tender document (Primary	•	D, Road Zone, Sarak E	Bhaban, Tupkhana,	
1	place)	Sylhet.	dhat Division Ordhat		
1	Receiving tender document (Secondary	(A) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, S		ihazar	
1	places)	(B) Office of the Superintending Engineer, R			
1	Opening tender document	(C) Office of the Superintending Engineer, R Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, R			
1	Opening tender document	Tupkhana, Sylhet.	NHD, Sylliet Road Zoll	ie, Salak bilabali,	
21	Place/date/time of	Place	Date	Time	
- 1	pre-tender meeting (optional)	Office of the Additional Chief Engineer		11:00 hrs	
1	pre-tender meeting (optional)	Sylhet Road Zone, Sarak Bhaban, Tu		(BST)	
1		Sylhet.	okriana,	(501)	
INFO	PRMATION FOR TENDERER	Jinot			
22	Eligibility of tenderer	All tenderers regardless of whether enlists	d or not enlisted with	the Employer may	
1	Englishing of toridoror	All tenderers regardless of whether enlisted or not enlisted with the Employer may submit Tenders provided that they are otherwise qualified. Tenderers of the categories			
1		specified in the TDS of Tender Document ar			
1			- Jane - Panaspan		
1					

during the year 2021-2022 (GW-2a).

Location

Road

Division

refundable) for each set.

Tushar Kanti Saha.

02-997700165

#### Bangladesh Water Development Board book profits Office of the Executive Engineer FROM PAGE B1

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর ঝালকাঠী পানি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ বাপাউবো, ঝালকাঠী ফোনঃ ০৪৯৮-৬৩৪৪০ (অফিস)



বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

Jhalakathi WD Division, BWDB, Jhalakathi Phone: 0498-43440 (Office)

Email: xen.jhalakathi@gmail.com Memo No. EE/Jhalakathi/e-Gp/Do-1/

e-Tender Notice No. 02/2021-2022					
Ar	An e-Tender has been invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the				
Procur		following [work/goods].			
SI. No	Tender ID	Package No. & description	Location of the works/ supply	Tender/proposal document last selling date & time	Tender/proposal closing & opening date & time
.01	630527	Re-construction & Repair of irrigation dyke respectively from km. 0.000 to km. 0.470 = 470m & from km. 0.600 to km. 1.130 = 530m at right bank of Main Khal and from km 0.580 to km. 0.910 = 330m at Right Bank of Secondary Khal; Total = 1330m of NP-1 Pump under BIP-1 at Nalcity upazila of Jhalakathi District under Jhalakathi WD Division, BWDB, Jhalakathi from NDR budget during the year 2021-2022.	Jhalokáthi District	09.12.2021 17:00 hours	Tender/proposal closing date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours Tender/proposal opening date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours
02	630530	Re-excavation of Diversion Channel from km 0.000 to km 0.080 = 80m & from km 0.093 to km 0.183 = 90m, Total= 170m and Construction of Cross Bundh in Irrigation Canal at different Location for NP-1 Pump of BIP at Nalcity Upazila of Jhalakathi District under Jhalakathi WD Division, BWDB, Jhalakathi during FY 2021-2022.	Jhalokathi District	09.12.2021 17:00 hours	Tender/proposal closing date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours Tender/proposal opening date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours
03	630531	Re-construction & Repair of Irrigation Dyke Respectively Chainages from km. 0.825 to km. 1.090 = 265m & from km 1.190 to km 1.220 = 30m at Right bank and Chainage from km 0.450 to km 0.745 = 295m at Left Bank of Bhairobpasha Main Khal; Total = 590m in c/w NP-2 Pump of BIP at Nalcity upazila of Jhalakathi District under Jhalakathi WD Division, BWDB, Jhalakathi during the FY 2021-2022	Jhalokathi District	09.12.2021 17:00 hours	Tender/proposal closing date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours Tender/proposal opening date & time: 12.12.2021, 09:30 hours

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 document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to banking 17.00 hours on

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) (01762625528-31), (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

পানি-২৯৩/২০২১-২০২২ ъ"хо GD-2139

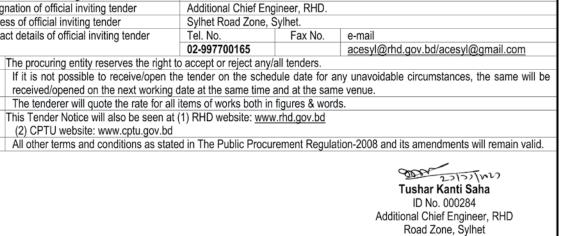
Md. Raqib Hossain ID No. 901203002 Executive Engineer (C.C.)

need any artificial boost," illegally or breaches rules and regulations, the stock market regulator should work on that.

will rise on its own if it primarily falls.

traded the most, worth Tk Bank, First Security Islami Bank, Fortune Shoes, and Kattali Textile. The (CSE) also dropped.

The CASPI, the main



Completion time in

months

6 (six)

months

Supply of double lane steel truss for Highway Bridges with provision of concrete deck

slab for 1 (one) span of 100.00 meter (in between P9 & P10) including supervision

during installation for the under construction Bridge over the River Kalni of Azmirigani,

Habiganj under Habiganj Road Division of Moulvibazar Road Circle of Sylhet Zone

BDT. 5,000/- (five thousand) only or USD 58.50 (fifty-eight point five zero) (non-

Tender security

amount (Tk)

BDT 50.00 lac (Taka fifty lac) only

in the shape of Bank Draft or Pay-

Order or Irrevocable Bank

Guarantee from any schedule bank

or USD 58350.00 (USD fifty-eight

thousand three hundred fifty only)

in favour of Additional Chief

Engineer, RHD, Road Zone Sylhet.

Inspection, Supply and Supervision of the installation of Steel Truss.

Gree's 30-year

in Bangladesh

Electro Mart and Trade

International Industries, local

distributors of air conditioner

organised a programme at Dhaka

Club to celebrate Gree's 30-year

journey in the world market.

With a slogan "Change

the Future with Gree", the

companies also announced

a discount on "Green Season

Opening Offer-2022", says a

"The Gree brand will be

able to meet up to 80 per cent

of air conditioner demand

in near future by introducing

newly environment-friendly

technology," said Md Nurun

Newaz Selim, chairman of both

Md Nurul Amin, managing

director of both concerns, Md

Nurussafa Mazumder and Md

press release.

concerns.

manufacturer Gree, jointly

STAR BUSINESS DESK

journey celebrated

### Berger experience zone inaugurated in Khulna

**BUSINESS** 

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Berger Paints Bangladesh yesterday opened a new "Berger Experience Zone" on Khanjahan Ali Road at Ferighat intersection in Khulna to provide one-stop painting solutions to all kinds of requirements.

"Now the people of Khulna can avail genuine, top of the line paint solutions without any hassle," said Mohsin Habib Chowdhury, senior general manager for sales and marketing, according to a press release.

Ata E Muneer, divisional sales manager; Shabbir Ahmed, head of project, prolinks and experience zone; Sayed Shorif Russel, category manager for marketing, and Shakil M Humayun, branch manager of Khulna sales, were present.

#### Bad loans surpass Tk 1 lakh crore again

"We have taken the decision as there is no ray of hope to realise the funds," said Huq.

Because of the loosening of rules, the delinquent loans did not go past the Tk 1 lakh crore mark between January 2020 and August this year.

The ratio of the default loans declined to 8.12 per cent in September in contrast to 8.18 per cent in June this year. Rahman credited the disbursement of the stimulus loans of the government for the fall.

He said many borrowers were now showing reluctance to repay due to the relaxed policy, pushing up the outstanding loans.

Md Abdus Salam Azad, managing director of Janata Bank, said that the state lender had given all-out efforts in recovering NPLs.

Among all lenders, Janata Bank now faces the highest amount of default loans, amounting to Tk 13,837 crore.

The bank is expected to reschedule the default loans to the tune of Tk 3,500 crore of AnonTex Group within a "This will help us bring down the NPLs," said Azad.

BB data showed more than 47 per cent of the defaulted loans were with the nine state-run banks. Their collective defaulted loans increased 0.4 per cent to Tk 47,715 crore in September from three months ago

Forty-one private banks held defaulted loans of Tk 50,743 crore, up 3.15 per cent from a quarter earlier. NPLs in nine foreign banks rose to Tk 2,691 crore in contrast to A BB official said that the majority of the NPLs had

turned into bad loans, which are the worst category of the delinquent loans, towards the end of September. The bad loans accounted for 89 per cent of the default

loans in the banking sector. As per the central bank rules, term or project loans, with a repayment tenure of more than a year, are considered as bad if borrowers don't pay instalments for 18 months in

Similarly, continuous loans, whose repayment tenure is a maximum of one year, are treated as bad when clients fail to pay any instalment for 12 straight months.

#### Olympic to invest Tk25cr to expand bakery business

FROM PAGE B1 Its popular brands such as Energy Plus, Tip, and Nutty have 25 to 30 per cent shares in the domestic biscuit market. The company has also decided to develop newly purchased land at

Lolati at an estimated cost of

Tk 9 crore. It will invest around Tk 8.50 crore to construct a 5-storey building with a total 73,000 square feet floor area and undertake an extension of 7,300 square feet tin shed area in its Kutubpur unit. The investment is aimed at meeting the shortage of storage space to keep raw materials, packing materials and finished goods.

It plans to invest around Tk 1.66 crore to enhance the production capacity of the corrugated carton unit at Kutubpur from 6-6.50 million cartons to 8 million cartons per month.

#### Poverty rate unchanged at 20.5pc

FROM PAGE B1 "Since the GDP has expanded, production volumes increased and per capita income rose," Mannan added.

The foreign exchange reserve is now close to \$50 billion, the planning minister said, adding that the literacy rate has reached 75.2 per cent.

According to the new base year, Bangladesh's economy is worth Tk 34,840 billion considering product prices in FY21, up 15.7 per cent from Tk 30,111 billion as per the previous base year.

In terms of constant prices, it stood at Tk 27,939 billion in FY21, up from Tk 12,072 billion as per the old base year, a BBS document

Per capita income rose to \$2,554 in FY21 as per the new calculation while it was \$2,227 previously.

## The cost of non-compliance

Some survived climbing to the top floor crossing the thick smoke engulfing the staircases.

The next day revealed a queue of charred bodies, hapless victims who had been trying to get to the window. Remains revealed victims trapped on the second and first

Since then, the garment sector has undergone massive reforms at strengthening workplace safety and improving the standard of business operations maintaining compliance to regulations.

The 2012 fire also brought down Tuba Group, the mother company of Tazreen Fashions. Tuba Group owner Delwar Hossain was jailed for the non-compliance.

The year preceding the fire, he had exported garment items worth Tk 500 crore employing over 10,000 workers in his five factories. The fire led to him losing almost all of his factories, assets and business.

Now out on bail from the High Court, he is working on sub-

The adviser also emphasised

widening the tax net to increase

government revenue as the tax to

gross domestic product (GDP)

ratio in Bangladesh is among the

national budget is about 10 times

what it was back in 2009, when

the current government assumed

office," Rahman said, adding that

regular taxpayers bear the brunt

of this expense as many people

Development Authority (Bida)

would provide the necessary support required to facilitate

foreign direct investment through

Potential clients can already

avail more than 40 services from

the OSS, an online platform

integrating relevant government

regarding certain policies of the

National Board of Revenue are

always raised by both foreign and

domestic investors," Rahman said.

Service

streamline

procedure

He went on to say that

Investment

complexities

remain outside the tax net.

Bangladesh

One-Stop

agencies

investment

Bangladesh.

"However,

platform from next year.

to

"Still though, the size of the

lowest in the world.

running a small factory at Badda employing 125 workers.

I am running this factory only to survive although I am hopeful that I will be able to turn around as an entrepreneur again in future as I know the business very well," said Hossain.

Making headlines globally for the devastating fire, he has been trying to reemerge as an entrepreneur paying back bank loans and settling insurance claims worth Tk 26.46 crore.

"I am hopeful that the insurance company will settle the claim as soon as possible as a court case is going on," said Hossain. He said though his properties

had an alleged value of more than Tk 150 crore, which was enough to pay back a Tk 100 crore bank loan, most were mortgaged with banks. "As a result, I could not sell the assets for meeting my liquidity crisis," Hossain told The Daily Star

over the phone. He says he wants to restart business retrofitting the Tazreen

prices, Rahman said it was tough

for the government to bear the

huge amount of subsidies required

And although fuel prices

recently fell in the international

market, the demand is rising as the

Responding to a question about the capital market, he said

there was weakness in the market as 80 per cent of all investments

come from retail investors and institutional investors make up

The case should be the opposite,

"We are working to improve

he said, adding that the market is

quite dependent on equity instead

the bond market. Bangladesh

Commission is also sincere in this

remittance outflow, Rahman said

local companies often hire foreign

experts for senior positions due

to the lack of skilled domestic

experts are being employed by

the garment industry, its emerging

manmade fibre segment requires

And although more local

Explaining the reasons behind

global economy has reopened.

to keep costs low.

the rest.

of bonds.

Securities

workers.

contracts for the local markets Fashions factory building, burnt and left abandoned for nine years.

Hossain opened Tazreen Fashions in 2004 and attained huge business sub-contracting from 2009 to 2011. In total, he said to have exported Tk 2,000 crore worth of garment items from the Tazreen Fashion factory.

"It will not be easy like earlier as he will have to follow the rules of business strictly and pay back bank loans," said Shahidullah Azim, vice-president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The BGMEA will also scrutinise all his issues seriously if he wants to come to business after settling all his disputes, as the sector had to face a severe image crisis for the fire, he said. "If he follows the law of the land, he can come back."

Bangladesh had to face a lot criticism due to non-compliance. However, the garment sector can now claim to have the safest workplaces in the world for the

subsequent remediation, Azim Weak banks should consider mergers: adviser

But since these foreign

employees spend much of

their income while staying in

Bangladesh, outgoing remittance

does not exceed more than \$300

the health sector, Rahman said

the treatment for all maladies

would eventually be available

in Bangladesh. In addition, local pharmaceutical companies

are gearing up to manufacture

will set up a dedicated facility

for Covid-19 jabs within the

next six weeks while Incepta Pharmaceuticals has signed a

deal with Chinese companies to

manufacture vaccines," said the

Beximco is in talks with the

Serum Institute of India, Pfizer,

Moderna, and other global vaccine

makers to manufacture Covid-19

the future as well since there is

a possibility that the Covid-19

will

"So, local vaccine manufacturing

Vaccines will be required in

vice-chairman of Beximco Ltd.

vaccines in Bangladesh.

is required," he added.

pandemic

indefinitely.

Pharmaceuticals

continue

Covid-19 vaccines next year.

Regarding developments in

foreign expertise.

million per year.

"Beximco

#### Nurul Afser, deputy managing directors, and Mohammed

Sazzad-Un-Newaz and Md Nurul Azim, directors, were present. Gree currently offers air curtains, coolers and purifiers

and water dispensers in the Bangladesh market.

#### Top taxpayers to be honoured today

FROM PAGE B1 Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal is expected to honour the highest taxpayers at the event in Dhaka.

The NBR started recognising top taxpayers in 2010-11, beginning with the top taxpayers in two categories -- individuals and companies. It aimed to motivate people to pay tax regularly in the country which has a tax-GDP ratio of less than 10 per cent, the lowest in South

At present, 3.5 per cent of the total population of around 17 crore are registered taxpayers and 2 per cent file returns of their income regularly.

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer District: Manikgani www.lged.gov.bd

"শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি"

Memo No. 46.02.5600.000.07.001.21-3200

#### Invitation for Tender (Works) e-Tender Notice No.12/2021-2022

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following packages.

SL No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of works	Tender method	Tender proposal document last selling & submission date and time
1	626488 DDIRWSP/Manikganj/ Sadar/21-22/BR-01	Construction of 16.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Manikganj Bangladesh Hat - Tilli - Kolia - Sonka - Nagarpur GC Road at Ch. 6000.00m under Upazila: Sadar, District: Manikganj. (Road ID No. 356462001)		08-December-2021, 16:00
2	626489 DDIRWSP/Manikganj/ Sadar/21-22/BR-02	Construction of 18.00m Long RCC Girder Bridge on Dhaka Aricha NHW at Nayadingi - Katigram GC Road (Sadar UZ Portion) at Ch. 760.00m under Upazila: Sadar, District: Manikganj. (Road ID No. 356462003)	ОТМ	& 09-December-2021 16:00

These are online tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. 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 branch. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

> (Md. Faizool Huq) Executive Engineer LGED, Manikganj Ph: +8802-7710911, Fax: +8802-7710517 E-mail: xen.manikganj@lged.gov.bd

GD-2145

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Divisional Electrical Engineer Bangladesh Railway, Dhaka

e-Tender Notice No. 54.01.0000.212.07.267.21-22/02

Date: 23.11.2021

#### Invitation for e-Tender

e-Tender is invited in National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works, details are given below:

tollowing works, detaile are given below.					
SI No.	Tender ID	Package No.	Description of works	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
1.	631642	eGP WED- 04/21-22:	At Dhaka: Decorative lighting arrangement at Rail Bhaban, Railway Admin & Control Building, Dhaka Railway station, Sylhet Railway station under Dhaka Division for fifteen night on 16-12-2021 Victory Day.	09-Dec-2021 09:00	09-Dec-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 banks branches up to one hour before tender last selling time.

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

Md. Ariful Islam

S(21)(316)Divisional Electrical Engineer Bangladesh Railway, Dhaka GD-2144

# To Kaus Mia, paying tax is a responsibility

Soon, he moved to Old Dhaka where earlier this year. he expanded to 40 types of businesses at one time. Although he is known for his jarda

businesses, it has not been his main activity. He began making jarda in If you evade, it is a mistake. If you

"My main business was stationery," he told The Daily Star in an interview recently.

of Kaus Chemical Works, has been paying taxes since 1958. "I pay tax because it is a good thing to do. How will the state bear

The businessman, the proprietor

its expenses if we don't pay tax?" What is more, Kaus has never paid lower than the tax due. Instead, he has paid higher taxes than the actual amount on many occasions so that taxmen can't raise questions about him, and the reputation and goodwill

of his family remains clean.

রেজিস্ট্রার দপ্তর

GD-2143

"Money is not the ultimate thing; Kaus started out in Narayanganj. it is the honour that matters," he said

> When people ask him why he is so passionate about paying taxes, he replies, "I pay tax as I make a profit." "None can be rich by evading taxes.

> make a profit, paying tax is a good thing."

He describes young businessmen as the future of the country.

"They will take the country forward," added Kaus, whose family was recognised as the Kar Bahadur (tax icon) in the fiscal year of 2016-17.

"He is unparalleled," said NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem at an event in March.

"I hope the mentality and yearn to pay taxes and his sense of responsibility will be instilled into other taxpayers, and they will pay taxes regularly to strengthen the economy of the country."

# Steel, cement producers log higher profits as sales rocket

He credited strengthening digital

footprint, maximising the market outreach by further getting closer to end customers, relaunching of Supercrete, one of its flagship brands, and driving seamless cost effectiveness programmes for the strong results. "In addition, our new product

launches are highly successful."

Backed by the steady economic development, rapid urbanisation, public infrastructure projects, and the growth of the real estate sector, Bangladesh's cement industry has grown at 11.5 per cent annually in the last decade.

There are 37 active cement factories in the country with a combined annual production capacity of 58 million tonnes against a demand of 33 million tonnes.

#### যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় যশোর-৭৪০৮, বাংলাদেশ।



#### Office of the Registrar

Jashore University of Science and Technology Jashore-7408, Bangladesh

স্মারক নং-যবিপ্রবি/১০০২/রাজস্ব জনবল (নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি)/পার্ট-৬/২১-৩২০৯ তারিখঃ ২৩/১১/২০২১খ্রি. র্ণত শর্তসাপেক্ষে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

তাদের পুনঃরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

যশোর বি	বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্মোক্ত পদগুলো পূর		বণি
ক্রঃ	পদের নাম, পদসংখ্যা ও স্কেল	সর্বোচ্চ	
নং		বয়স	
٥٥	বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্রকৌশলী (প্রধান প্রকৌশলী), ০১টি	৫০ বছর	7
	স্থায়ী পদ,		١
	বেতন ক্ষেলঃ ৫৬০০০-৭৪৪০০/-		৳
०२	উপ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী,	৪৫ বছর	١,
	০১টি স্থায়ী পদ, (পুনঃবিজ্ঞপ্তি), (যোগ্য প্রার্থীর		7
	অপ্রাপ্যতার ক্ষেত্রে উক্ত পদের বিপরীতে <b>সহকারী</b>		।
	প্রকৌশলী (বিদ্যুৎ) নিয়োগ দেয়া হবে)		9
	বেতন স্কেল: ৪৩০০০-৬৯৮৫০/-		(
00	উপ-পরিচালক (বাজেট) ০১টি স্থায়ী পদ,	৪৫ বছর	۱ :
	বেতন স্কেল: ৪৩০০০-৬৯৮৫০/-		7
08	সহকারী পরিচালক (পরিকল্পনা, উন্নয়ন ও পূর্ত),	৩৫ বছর	F
	০১টি স্থায়ী পদ		3
	বেতন স্কেলঃ ২৯০০০-৬৩৪১০/-		इ
90	মেডিকেল অফিসার, ০১টি স্থায়ী পদ	৩০ বছর	(
	বেতন স্কেলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-		Ť
০৬	সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (বিদ্যুৎ), ০১টি অস্থায়ী পদ	৩০ বছর	8
	(উপ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী পদের বিপরীতে)		1
	বেতন স্কেল: ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-		3
٥٩	ল্যাব এটেনডেন্ট, সিএসই বিভাগ,	৩০ বছর	f
	০১টি স্থায়ী পদ,		3
	বেতন স্কেলঃ ৮৮০০-২১৩১০/-		9
			f
			١:

আবেদনকারীকে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমে প্রয়োজনীয় সকল কাগজপত্রসহ ০২ সেট আবেদন <mark>রেজিস্টার, যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, যশোর-</mark>৭৪০৮ বরাবরে আগামী ২১/১২/২০২১খ্রি. তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে পৌছাতে হবে। রেজিস্ট্রার, যবিপ্রবি এর কার্যালয় অথবা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েব সাইটঃ www.just.edu.bd হতে আনেদন ফরম ও যোগ্যতার বিস্তারিত বিবরণ সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। প্রার্থীকে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে নিমুলিখিত কাগজপত্রের ছায়ালিপি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে- (ক) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা (যদি থাকে), প্রশিক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত ও অন্যান্য সকল প্রকার মূল/সাময়িক সনদপত্র ও নম্বরপত্র (খ) সদ্য তোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ০৩ কপি ছবি (গ) জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র (ঘ) নিজ নিজ এলাকার ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/ পৌর মেয়র/ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র। বয়স গণনার ক্ষেত্রে গত ২৫/০৩/২০২০খ্রি; **তারিখ** পর্যন্ত হিসাব করতে হবে। চাকুরীতে নিয়োজিত প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। ত্রটিপূর্ণ/অসম্পূর্ণ এবং বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র (নির্ধারিত সময়ের পর) গ্রহণ করা হবে না। দরখান্তের সাথে **"রেজিস্ট্রার, যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়"** এর অনুকূলে অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিঃ এর যে কোন শাখা হতে ক্রমিক নং ০১ হতে ০৩ এর জন্য ১১০০/- টাকা, ক্রমিক নং ০৪ এর জন্য ১০০০/- টাকা, ক্রমিক নং ০৫ হতে ০৬ এর জন্য ৯০০/-টাকা এবং ক্রমিক নং ০৭ এর জন্য ৫০০/- টাকা মূল্যের পে-অর্ডার/ ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (অফেরতযোগ্য) অবশ্যই সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। প্রত্যেক প্রার্থীকে তার প্রার্থীত পদের নাম, দপ্তর/ বিভাগের নামসহ খামের উপর স্পষ্টাকারে লিখতে হবে। ক্রমিক নং ০৭ এর ক্ষেত্রে মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তান, প্রতিবন্ধী এবং উপজাতি প্রার্থীদেরকে সর্বশেষ নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের সনদপত্রসহ আবেদনপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানদের ক্ষেত্রে প্রার্থীর পিতা-মাতার অনুকুলে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক প্রদন্ত সনদের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি আবেদনপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে। উপাচার্য মহোদয় অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন বিভাগীয়/অভ্যন্তরীণ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার যে কোন ০১ (এক) টি শর্ত শিথিল করতে পারবেন। প্রার্থীর যোগাযোগের বর্তমান ঠিকানা লিখিত ১০(দশ) টাকার ডাকটিকেট সংযুক্ত ২৫x১১ সেঃমিঃ/১০x৪.৫ ইঞ্চি সাইজের দুইটি ফেরত খাম আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযোজন করতে হবে। বিদ্রঃ স্মারক নং- যবিপ্রবি/১০০২/রাজস্ব জনবল (নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি)/পার্ট-৫/১৯-৯৫৮, তারিখঃ ১০/০৩/২০২০খ্রি. মোতাবেক প্রচারিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে যারা উপ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী পদে আবেদন করেছেন

> /স্বাক্ষরিত (প্রকৌশলী মোঃ আহসান হাবীব ) রেজিস্টার যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

# \*BUSINESS

# Steel, cement producers log higher profits as sales rocket

AHSAN HABIB and JAGARAN CHAKMA

Most of the listed rod and cement producers in Bangladesh posted higher profits in the July to September period riding on higher sales as economic activities picked up thanks to the improving coronavirus situation.

Among the five steel makers listed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), three have made financial disclosures for the quarter, with all reporting massive jump in profits. Earnings of BSRM Steel and

BSRM Ltd more than tripled in July to September, year-on-year.

deputy Tapan Sengupta, managing director of BSRM Ltd, attributed lower production cost thanks to the efficiency gains, increased sales volume, and an efficient distribution channel for the higher profit margin.

Earnings per share (EPS) of BSRM Ltd, the largest steelmaker in Bangladesh, rocketed 202 per cent to Tk 4.29, while that of BSRM Steel surged 204 per cent to Tk 2.89, DSE data showed.

GPH Ispat's EPS soared 63 per cent to Tk 1.13.

"We had a stock of raw materials. As a result, the company logged better profits," said Kamrul Islam, executive director for finance and business development of the steel

Globally, the price of melting scrap, the raw material of steel products, rose to \$630 per tonne recently, from \$300 to \$350 per tonne last October.

Cost control and efficiency also paved the way for the better profit gains. GPH Ispat boosted production, giving a boost to sales, he said.

Because of the higher input costs and unprecedented sea freight rates, the price of the 60-grade rod in Bangladesh rose to an all-time high of Tk 81,500 per tonne, data from the state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh showed.

Among seven listed cement six disclosed their financial reports for the quarter. Two producers reported higher



A worker gives the finishing touches while packaging products at a warehouse of steel manufacturer GPH Ispat in Chattogram. Most listed rod producers in Bangladesh posted higher profits in the July to September period riding on higher sales. The photo was taken two weeks back.

# LISTED CEMENT AND STEEL MAKERS' EARNINGS PER SHARE

profits while it narrowed for two companies.

Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director of Premier Cement, said most cement manufacturers made profits in the last quarter as the volume of sales rose compared to a quarter ago.

However, the sales volume is yet to reach the pre-pandemic level, he of raw materials is increasing

Haque says millers used raw materials that were purchased before the latest price hike in the global market owing to supply shortage, elevated shipping cost and supply constraints.

He warns that the price of cement would increase further as the price continuously in the international

"Then, manufacturers will have no other way but to adjust the price." The EPS of LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, a multinational company, rose 44 per cent to Tk 0.81. Crown Cement, a local company, reported higher earnings.

The EPS of Premier Cement fell 85 per cent to Tk 0.12 in July-September. Confidence Cement also saw its profit decline.

The profit of Meghna Cement has remained the same, while Heidelberg Cement kept incurring

Rajesh Surana, chief executive of LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, said his company delivered yet another exceptional quarter backed by strong cost control and efficiency improvements.

READ MORE ON B3

# No bank fees, please: Central **Bank Digital Currency will** deliver remittance like emails



Cross-border payments are inefficient, often slow, opaque and expensive. Worldwide businesses did \$23.5 trillion cross-border transactions in 2020, which is equivalent to 25 per cent of global GDP. The businesses have also paid bank fees of \$120 billion (excluding foreign exchange conversion costs), which amounts to Singapore's one-third of GDP, said a recent J.P. Morgan analysis.

That is business-to-business payments. In person-to-person transactions, the migrant workers sent \$551 billion homebound remittances in 2019. Intermediary bank fees of these payments have averaged 6.8 per cent, or \$37.5 billion, revealed a March 2021 report of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), quoting the International Monitory Fund and the World Bank.

In response, the BIS is stewarding the distributed ledger technology-based Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) to bring down cross-border remittance costs. And the J.P. Morgan report says that businesses could save 80 per cent of annual intermediary costs (\$100 billion) if CBDC is applied in cross-border payments.

CBDC is a highly secured digital version of a country's official currency. Bypassing commercial banking system, citizens will have individual accounts directly with central banks. And they will use "retail CBDC", instead of paper money, for all payments. Digital mobile wallet will be their tool of such transactions.

Corresponding central banks mutually agreeable conversion standards of respective CBDC and bypass intermediary banks for cross-border transactions. Time to settle the businesses' and migrant workers' payments would be as instantaneous as exchanging emails because the CBDCbased payment systems operate round-theclock and throughout the year.

The 63-member BIS is setting out common foundational principles and core

features of CBDC. Its primary mission is to contain the anarchic rise of blockchainbased cryptocurrencies. A 2021 BIS survey has found that 86 per cent central banks are actively researching the potential for CBDCs while 60 per cent were experimenting with the technology and 14 per cent were deploying pilot projects. But tangible outcome of the western central banks-led CBDC initiative is actually coming from the unassuming communist China.

People's Bank of China (PBOC), the country's central bank, launched CBDC as digital yuan (e-CNY) in April 2020. More than 20 million e-CNY wallets have been created and \$5.4 billion or 35.5 billion yuan has been settled in China's CBDC network, said PBOC's July 2021 report.

Beijing has already told McDonald's to adopt e-CNY payments system at all outlets nationwide ahead of the Winter Olympics in February 2022. Authorities have also asked Visa, a top Olympics sponsor, and Nike, a US team sponsor, to follow the hamburger chain and integrate e-CNY in their payment systems.



Four BIS-led projects exploring CBDCs for cross-border payments are also underway. They are assessing if CBDC allows transactions to be settled "more cheaply and easily". The central banks of Australia, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates are engaged in these four groups. Regrettably, no South Asian central bank is visible in this mission.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh Bank (BB) data shows a brisk 36 per cent uptick of inward remittance in 2020-21 fiscal year. Average cost of sending 200 US dollars was 4.9 per cent while remittance originating from Singapore and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries costs below 3 per cent, according to the World Bank.

READ MORE ON B2

#### **GLOBAL BUSINESS**

#### Eurozone business recovery again gains pace

AFP, Brussels

The recovery of the eurozone economy is again gaining pace after dipping last month, a closely watched survey said on Tuesday.

The IHS Markit purchasing managers' index (PMI), which measures corporate confidence, rose to 55.8 in November after dropping to 54.2 in October. This is good news for job creation as the single

currency area recovers from the lingering damage of the coronavirus pandemic and global supply chain But it comes along with increasing inflationary pressures, with prices and wages rising more steeply. Chris Williamson, chief business economist at

IHS Markit said: "A stronger expansion of business activity in November defied economists' expectations of a slowdown. But this is "unlikely to prevent the eurozone from suffering slower growth in the fourth quarter,

especially as rising virus cases look set to cause renewed disruptions to the economy in December." Economist Rory Fennessy of Oxford Economics agreed that the uptick in the PMI was a surprise, and

seemed mainly driven by growth in services. And he warned that a new wave of coronavirus and ongoing supply chain bottlenecks mean that "the near-term outlook is quickly turning more

#### IMF urges El Salvador against using bitcoin as official currency

The International Monetary Fund on Monday warned El Salvador against using bitcoin as official tender given the risks associated with the cryptocurrency, a day after the country announced plans for the world's first "Bitcoin City"

El Salvador, which has used the US dollar for two decades, became the first country in the world in September to legalize bitcoin as legal tender.

'Given Bitcoin's high price volatility, its use as a legal tender entails significant risks to consumer protection, financial integrity, and financial stability, the IMF said in a statement after concluding a monitoring mission to the small Central American country. "Its use also gives rise to fiscal contingent liabilities. Because of those risks, Bitcoin should not be used as a legal tender."

The Washington-based lender thus recommended "narrowing the scope of the Bitcoin law" that made it official currency and urged "strengthening the regulation and supervision of the new payment

The IMF statement came a day after President Nayib Bukele said El Salvador plans to build a "Bitcoin City" powered by a volcano and financed by cryptocurrency bonds.



Federal Reserve Board Chair Jerome Powell (L) speaks as Lael Brainard (R) listens during an announcement at the South Court Auditorium of Eisenhower Executive Office Building on November 22 in Washington, DC.

# Investors bet Powell's Fed will get more aggressive on inflation

REUTERS, New York

Investors are betting that newly renominated Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell will need to step up the pace at which the central bank is normalizing monetary policy to better grapple with surging consumer

For months, Powell has insisted the current bout of inflation is likely to be transitory, and said the central bank will be "patient" in deciding when to begin raising its benchmark rate from near-zero.

The Fed kicked off the taper of its \$120 billion per month bond buying program in November, with a plan to end purchases altogether in mid-2022.

Some investors, however, believe the Fed will need to taper faster and raise rates sooner than expected to tame rising consumer prices, which grew at the quickest pace in more than three decades in October. Their view has been reinforced by recent public

quickly to help tame inflation.

One barometer of investors' monetary policy expectations, futures on the federal funds rate, on Monday afternoon had priced in a 100 per cent chance that the central bank will raise rates by July, from 92 per cent last week.

News of Powell's nomination on Monday also sent yields on shorter-dated Treasuries, which are more sensitive to rate views, to their highest level since early 2020. Powell is widely seen as more hawkish than Fed Governor Lael Brainard, who was also vying for the top job.

Investors are "challenging the Fed to some extent and becoming more concerned about the Fed falling behind the curve on inflation," said Mike Sewell, a portfolio manager at T Rowe Price.

Sewell is buying shorter-dated Treasuries and the US dollar, betting that the Fed will need to raise rates three times next year volatility in the bond market, stands near its debate among some Fed officials on whether to tame inflation. The central bank's dothighest levels since April 2020.

to withdraw support for the economy more plot, released in September, showed half of policymakers penciling in one rate increase

Analysts at Jefferies wrote Monday's rise in Treasury yields, which move inversely to prices, "is predicated on the idea that the prospects for a June 2022 rate hike have increased significantly on the back of Powell's renomination," though the bank believes a June rate increase is unlikely.

Bets on shorter-dated Treasuries have also drawn Gary Cloud, a portfolio manager of the Hennessy Equity and Income Fund.

"We're in an era that investors haven't seen before because you have a significant uncertainty as to whether the Fed will act in time" to prevent inflation from spiraling higher, he said

Diverging views on how aggressively the Fed will move have helped stir volatility in Treasury markets. The ICE Bank of America MOVE Index, which shows expectations of

#### Amazon, Apple handed \$225m in Italian antitrust fines

Italy's antitrust authority has fined US tech giants Amazon. com and Apple Inc a total of more than 200 million euros (\$225 million) for alleged anticompetitive cooperation in the sale of Apple and Beats products.

Contractual provisions of a 2018 agreement between the companies meant only selected resellers were allowed to sell Apple and Beats products on Amazon.it, the watchdog said, adding that this was in violation of European Union rules and affected competition on prices.

Both Apple and Amazon said they plan to appeal against the fines. The authority imposed a fine of 68.7 million euros on Amazon and 134.5 million euros on Apple, ordering the companies to end the restrictions to give retailers of genuine Apple and Beats products access to Amazon.it in a nondiscriminatory manner.

"To ensure our customers purchase genuine products, we work closely with our reseller partners and have dedicated teams of experts around the world who work with law enforcement, customs and merchants to ensure only genuine Apple products are being sold," Apple said, denying any wrongdoing.

In a separate statement Amazon said it strongly disagreed with the decision of the Italian authority and that the proposed fine was "disproportionate and unjustified".

"We reject the suggestion that Amazon benefits by excluding sellers from our store, since our business model relies on their success. As a result of the agreement, Italian customers can find the latest Apple and Beats products on our store, benefiting from a catalogue that more than doubled, with better deals and faster shipping," Amazon said.