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ACI to expand footprint in marine engine market

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

ACI Limited, one of the biggest conglomerates in Bangladesh, is set to expand its footprint in the country's marine engine business segment in order to capture a piece of a market that is growing 12 per cent annually.

Chinese engines dominate the \$61-million market in Bangladesh with a 33 per cent share, followed by Japan with 21 per cent, and the United States with 15 per cent.

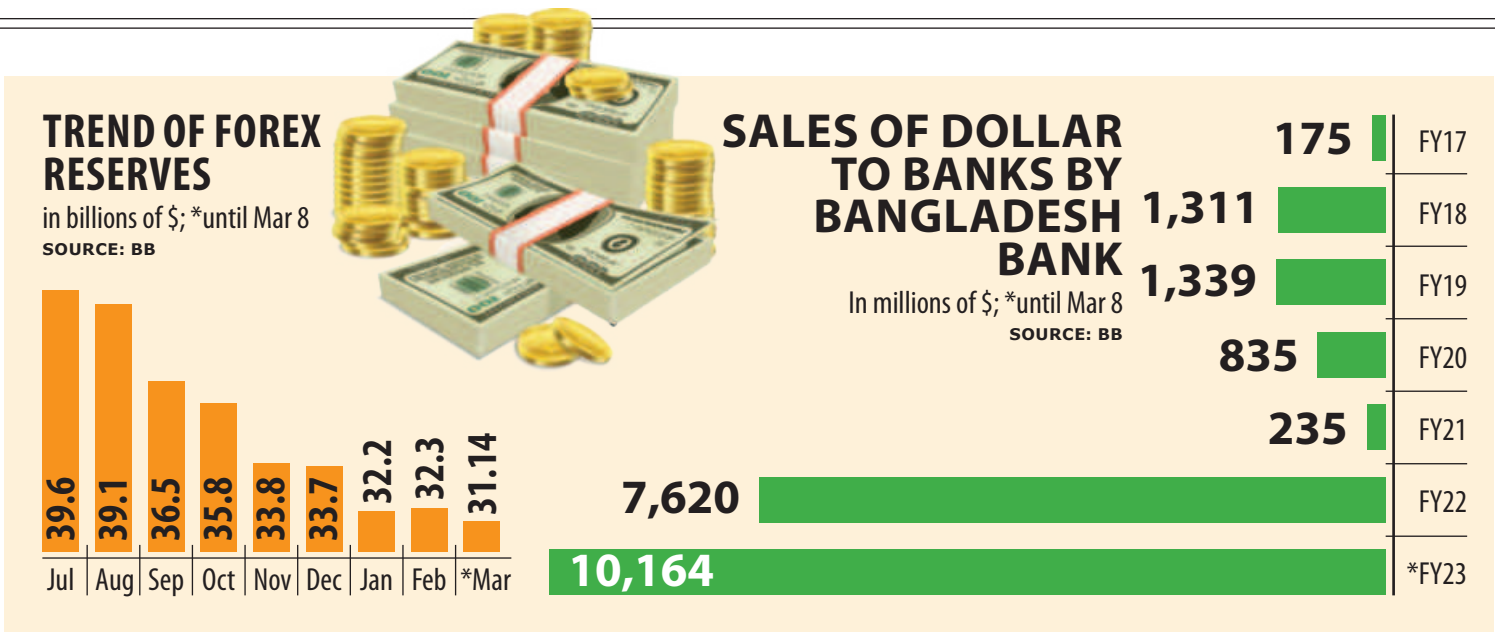
According to ACI, the marine engine market was around \$24 million in 2019-20 and it doubled to \$52.2 million in the following financial year as demand from operators rose. The number of ocean- and river-going ships is also going up.

Subrata Ranjan Das, executive director of ACI Motors, said roughly 10,000 inland and coastal ships operating in Bangladesh carry 90 per cent of the total oil products, 70 per cent cargoes and 35 per cent of passengers.

Bangladesh requires 586 units of vessels every year and another 350 lighter ships would be required by Payra seaport once it opens, according to an assessment of ACI.

More than 50 shipyards and 100 shipbuilders are active in the shipbuilding sector. They can build around 250 vessels annually.

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Forex reserves slip to six-year low

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Bangladesh's foreign currency reserves have slipped to a six-year low of \$31.15 billion after the central bank cleared import bills to the tune of \$1.05 billion with a number of Asian countries, official figures showed.

This means the reserves have fallen by about 30 per cent from \$44.14 billion recorded in March last year.

The current level of the reserves is the lowest since the financial year of 2016-17 when it stood at \$33.49 billion.

The BB settled the import payments through the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) on Monday.

The ACU, headquartered in Tehran, is an arrangement to settle payments for intra-regional transactions among member countries: Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, Iran, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The countries settle bills every two months.

The forex reserves of Bangladesh have witnessed a major slide in recent months after

every ACU payment is made, said a central banker.

The reserves surged to \$48 billion in August 2021, the highest in history. However, due to the escalated import payments resulting from high commodity prices amid the Russia-Ukraine war, the reserves have been declining since May 2022.

The sharp decrease in foreign exchange reserves has caused macroeconomic instability amid an acute dollar shortage. The taka has lost its value by about 25 per cent against the American greenback in the past one year.

And Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, warned that the reserves might face an additional loss of \$10-12 billion before the national election if the ongoing slide continues.

"We are slowly but surely heading towards a bad situation if existing policies are not fundamentally changed."

Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, says only

the withdrawal of the ceiling of interest rate on loans and the introduction of a floating exchange rate can stop the deterioration of the reserves.

Although the deficit in trade and current accounts have decreased significantly in the last couple of months, the shortfall in the financial account widened to a large extent, worsening the volume of the reserves. Under such a situation, the central bank is injecting dollars into banks almost every working day.

The BB supplied a record \$10.16 billion to the market between July 1 and March 8 this fiscal year. It injected \$924 million in February and \$216 million so far this month.

The central bank provided \$7.62 billion to banks in the last financial year to help them clear import bills, which rocketed to over \$82 billion.

Mansur also said the central bank should withdraw the interest rate ceiling on loans and make the exchange rate flexible.

Bangladesh's forex reserves might face further squeeze in the coming months as the

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Bangladesh Business Summit starts tomorrow

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Business Summit will kick off tomorrow with the aim of creating new opportunities for trade and investment by showcasing the country's economic potential before a global audience.

The three-day event will be hosted by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka.

Ministers from seven countries, including the UK, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, China and Bhutan, along with more than 200 foreign investors and business leaders are expected to participate in the summit.



The event is being organised as a part of the FBCCI's 50th founding anniversary celebrations.

The summit will highlight the success stories that have set the foundation for Bangladesh's sustainable growth, according to FBCCI President Md Jashim Uddin.

"This summit will play an important role in tapping Bangladesh's full economic potential, expanding trade and attracting investments," he said during a press conference at the FBCCI office yesterday.

Business representatives from both home and abroad are having to pay considerable sums as a registration fee to participate in the event.

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Govt to buy more LNG

Focusing Ramadan, summer irrigation

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has approved the purchase of another shipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the international spot market, the fourth since February, to ramp up electricity production ahead of Ramadan and the summer season.

The cabinet committee on purchase, during a meeting yesterday, approved the procurement of 33.60 lakh MMBtu of LNG from TotalEnergies Gas & Power of Switzerland for Tk 618.21 crore.

This time the price of the super-chilled fuel was \$14.66 per MMBtu.

It was \$16.10 last week when Bangladesh bought the same amount of fuel from Singapore-

based Vitol Asia.

The country depends on imported LNG for about 25 per cent of its gas demand. It was forced to ration gas supplies last year as global prices were driven up by the Russia-Ukraine war.

The higher prices also forced Bangladesh to pause the purchase of LNG from the international spot market to save its foreign currency reserves.

Since the start of 2023, LNG prices plunged by more than 70 per cent from August's record \$70 per MMBtu on slower demand and high inventory levels in Europe and North Asia.

With the summer and irrigation season coming up, Bangladesh

ramped up its participation in the international spot market for LNG, issuing tenders regularly from the first week of February after seven months.

If the price stays at less than \$20 per MMBtu, Bangladesh is likely to end up purchasing 10 to 12 shipments between February and June.

When Bangladesh halted spot LNG purchases in June, it had paid \$24.25 per MMBtu.

Asian spot LNG prices slipped to \$19.50 per MMBtu in the week to February 3, the first time it has fallen below \$20 since September 2021, as inventories remain high with peak winter demand due to end soon.

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THE RISE OF ILLIYEEN

A Tale of Sartorial Elegance and Tech-Centric Innovation

ILLIYEEN, The High-End Retailer, synonymous with exclusivity and innovation, is a tech-based luxury brand. From a humble start and a passion for serving customers with outstanding and unparalleled products and services, ILLIYEEN has transformed into a global brand delivering an incessant flow of high-end products and services. The brand's journey is a story of innovation, creativity, and a relentless commitment to excellence.

Officially launched in 2017 as an omnichannel business model with only two Display Centers in the heart of Dhaka along with a sophisticated Online Store, the brand quickly established a reputation for its exceptional product lines - men's clothing, footwear and accessories - consistently defined by tailoring brilliance and distinct aesthetics. Over the past six years, ILLIYEEN continued to evolve and innovate introducing numerous iconic menswear collections that pushed the boundaries of fashion in exclusive ways. At present, there are ten stunningly detailed and aesthetically designed Display Centers in the country - eight in the capital, one in Sylhet, and another in Chattogram.

The artistry of ILLIYEEN's lifestyle collections has won the

brand worldwide acclaim. This is reflected in their meticulous attention to detail, use of the finest materials, and impeccable expressions. With a blend of creative clairvoyance, bespoke tailoring mastery, and modern minimalism, ILLIYEEN's styles take center stage in the fashion world, inspiring designers and captivating customers with every collection.

Aiming to fulfill the diversified needs of the ever growing customer base, ILLIYEEN has introduced MARKETPLACE, The Most Trusted Digital Platform that offers a wide range of quality products from reliable sources. ILLIYEEN is also collaborating with iconic brands and tech giants like Apple and SAMSUNG, and their flagship products are available on its platform.

Stepping forward, the High-End Retailer has introduced exclusive watches in the brand's distinguished Sahara and Platinum Collections. These high-end timepieces, meticulously constructed to impress both watch aficionados and collectors, represent the brand's dedication to combining style with technology and luxury. Boasting precision-engineered Japanese automatic movement engines with 21 jewels, the watches feature a durable non-corrosive build, and a sleek styling that



projects impeccable attention to detail.

In a relentless pursuit of excellence, ILLIYEEN is poised to emerge as a tech-centric luxury brand. By leveraging the latest technology in every aspect of business operations, from data-driven product design and engineering, advanced analytics, IT-enabled supply chain management to digital commerce and beyond, it is able to provide customers with superior products and services that meet their evolving needs and expectations. As a luxury brand driven by technology, ILLIYEEN remains dedicated to surpassing traditional limits of innovation and

establishing novel benchmarks of excellence within the industry.

Today, ILLIYEEN is a symbol of luxury and style, and its commitment to craftsmanship and tech-centric innovation continues to set it apart from the competition, with an ever-growing following of discerning customers worldwide. As the brand looks ahead to the future, the story of ILLIYEEN is starting to unfold, and its dedication to pushing the boundaries of what's possible in the world of luxury and high-end retail shows no signs of slowing down.

Advertisement

WE MOURN

Mr. Talibur Rahman Tusin

(1964-2023)

We express our deepest compassion on the demise of former national basketball player **Mr. Talibur Rahman Tusin**, son of Late Md. Fazlur Rahman and younger brother of Mr. Reshadur Rahman Shaheen, Director and Former Chairman of Dhaka Bank Limited and Honorary Consul General of Poland in Bangladesh.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the members of his family and hope that they will overcome the irreparable loss with time.

May Almighty Allah grant his departed soul eternal peace.




www.dhakabankltd.com



Md Motasem Billah, director of payment systems department of Bangladesh Bank, Hasan A Arif, head of portfolio investment of Startup Bangladesh, Ali Reza Iftikhar, managing director of Eastern Bank, Syed Mohammad Kamal, country manager of Bangladesh Mastercard, and Sadia Haque, chief executive officer of ShareTrip, were present.

PHOTO: EASTERN BANK

PHOTO: MASTERCARD




Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Upazila Engineer

Sadar, Mymensingh

www.lqed.gov.bd



উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র
শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র

Memo No. 46.02.6152.000.07.001.20-1648


Date: 06/03/2023

Corrigendum Notice

This is to notify for all concerned that the **e-Tender Notice No. 08/2022-23 (LTM)** from the office of the undersigned vide Memo No. 46.02.6152.000.07.001.20.1580, Dated 16/02/2023 the following Changed have been made due to unavoidable circumstance.


Tender ID No.	791780
Last selling date & time	15/03/2023 17:00 instead of 06/03/2023 17:00
Last time for tender security submission	16/03/2023 13:00 instead of 07/03/2023 12:00
Closing date & time	16/03/2023 14:00 instead of 07/03/2023 14:00
Opening date & time	16/03/2023 14:00 instead of 07/03/2023 14:00

All other terms & conditions will remain unchanged.


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GD-431


E-mail: ue.mymensingh-s@lqed.gov.bd



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর

নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত)
৭৯/২ কাকরাইল, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০

E-mail: smdp.dme@gmail.com



পাঠ্যক্রম পরিষদ

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-নিমাই-৬৯৪

তারিখ: ০৯/০৩/২০২৩ খ্রি:

কারিগরি ও মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা বিভাগের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরে আওতাধীন বাস্তবায়নধীন 'নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত)' সম্পূর্ণ অঙ্গীকারিতা ভিত্তিতে প্রকল্প মেয়াদ কালের জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত পদে জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র: নং	পদের নাম ও বেতন স্কেল/গ্রেড	পদের সংখ্যা	বয়সসীমা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা
০১	উপসহকারী প্রবোধী (সিভিল) (গ্রেড-১০) ১৬,০০০-৩৮,৪৮০/- (সাকুল্য বেতন)	০২	১৮-৩০ বৎসর	ক) সিভিল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিষয়ে কালিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড হতে ৪ বছর মেয়াদী ডিপ্লোমা। খ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হবে। গ) আই.সি.টি বিষয়ে পারদর্শী হতে হবে।
০২	হিসাবরক্ষক (গ্রেড-১৪) ১০,২০০-২৪,৮৮০/- (সাকুল্য বেতন)	০১	১৮-৩০ বৎসর	ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে হতে বাণিজ্য বিভাগে ২য় শ্রেণীর স্নাতক ডিগ্রি। খ) কম্পিউটারে ওয়ার্ড প্রসেসিং/সহ কম্পিউটার চালানার দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে। গ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।
০৩	অধিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক (গ্রেড-১৬), ৯,৩০০-২২,৪৮০/- (সাকুল্য বেতন)	০১	১৮-৩০ বৎসর	ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত শিক্ষা বোর্ড হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/এইচ এস/সি/সমান্বরে পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ। খ) কম্পিউটার প্রিন্টিং প্রোগ্রাম এবং কম্পিউটারে মুদ্রাক্ষরিকের সর্বনিম্ন প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২০ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দ হতে হবে। গ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেয়া হবে।

শর্তাবলী:

- জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক প্রণীত চাকুরির নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম A4 সাইজ কাজে পূরণপূর্ণ স্বাক্ষরসহ প্রকল্প পরিচালক, 'নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত)', মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ৭৯/২, কাকরাইল রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০ ব্যবসে আবেদন করতে হবে। জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েব সাইট www.mopa.gov.bd থেকে আবেদন ফরমটি ডাউনলোড করা যাবে।
- আবেদনপত্র আদানী ২০/০৩/২০২৩খ্রি: তারিখের মধ্যে অধিস চলাকালে প্রকল্প পরিচালক, নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত), মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ৭৯/২ (২য় তলা), কাকরাইল, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০ ব্যবসে জাকযোগ্য/কুরিয়ার সার্ভিসে স্টোভাতে হবে।
- আবেদনপত্রের সাথে নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প- এর অনুসূচী ১নং পদের জন্য ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা এবং ২ ও ৩ নং পদের জন্য ২০০/- (দুইশত) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
- আবেদনের সাথে শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতার সন্দেহ সত্যায়িত কপি সংযোজন করে দিতে হবে। সকল প্রকার মূল সনদপত্র (অভিজ্ঞতার মূল সনদপত্রসহ) যৌথিক পরীক্ষার সময় উপস্থাপন করতে হবে।
- আবেদন ফরমে সঠিক তথ্যাদি ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজ ছবি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। খামের উপরে পদের নাম উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
- নির্ধারিত ফরম ব্যতীত অন্য মুদ্রিত আবেদন গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
- সরকারী অথবা স্বায়ত্বশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীদেরকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে।
- উপস্থিত প্রার্থীদের নিমিত্ত/যৌথিক/ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান প্রার্থীদের প্রদত্ত যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা/চিঠির মাধ্যমে এবং মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরে ওয়েব সাইট (www.dme.gov.bd) -এ দেখা হবে। আবেদনকারীর বর্তমান পত্র যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা সম্বন্ধিত ১০ (দশ) টাকার অব্যবহৃত ডাকটিকেটসহ ৪.৫x৯.৫ সইয়ের ফেরত থাম আবেদনের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
- নিয়োগের ব্যাপারে কোনো প্রকারের সুশাসিত বা অতিরিক্ত প্রার্থীর অযোগ্যতা বলে বিবেচিত হবে। আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ, বাছাই ও বাতিল করার পূর্ণকর্তব্য কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে।
- মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা ও পুত্র/কন্যার পুত্র/কন্যা এবং প্রতিবন্ধীরা ক্ষেত্রে সরকারী বিধি মোতাবেক বয়সসীমা বিলম্বযোগ্য।
- মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তান, মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানের সন্তান হিসেবে প্রার্থীকে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা-এর সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি (সরকারের সর্বশেষ প্রজ্ঞাপন অনুযায়ী সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি) সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
- প্রকল্পের মেয়াদ পর্যন্ত নিয়োগকৃত জনবল বলবৎ থাকবে। প্রকল্প শেষ হওয়ার সাথে সাথে চাকুরি সক্রিয়ভাবে সমাপ্ত হবে এবং নিয়োগপত্রটি অস্থায়িত পত্র হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।
- কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোনো সময়ে কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে নিয়োগ সঙ্কট/যে কোনো বিষয় বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
- নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের সর্বশেষ নিয়োগ বিধি/বিজ্ঞপ্তি অনুসরণ করা হবে।

(যে: বীন ইসলাম)
প্রকল্প পরিচালক (যুগ্মসচিব)
নির্বাহিত মাদ্রাসাসমূহের উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত)
মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর
কারিগরি ও মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা বিভাগ, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়

GD-435


Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Directorate General of Health Services
Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.

Memo no. DGHS/Hosp/IP/Sandor/2023/512

Date: 09/03/2023

Request for Expressions of Interest (Firm)

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH			
1.	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
2.	Agency	:	Directorate General of Health Services
3.	Procuring Entity Name	:	Director (In-Charge), Hospital & Clinics
4.	Procuring Entity District	:	Dhaka
5.	Expressions of Interest for Selection of	:	Procurement of Services of Independent Panel for Sandor Dialysis Services Bangladesh Pvt. Ltd.
6.	EOI Ref No	:	DGHS/Hosp/IP/Sandor/2023/512
7.	Date	:	09/03/2023
KEY INFORMATION			
8.	Procurement Method	:	QCBS (Quality and Cost Based Selection)- NCB
FUNDING INFORMATION			
9.	Budget and Source of Funds	:	GoB
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
10.	Project/Program Name (applicable)	:	Hemodialysis Centers at NIKDU & CMCH under PPP Project.
11.	EOI Closing Date and Time	:	Date: 27/03/2023 Time: 4:00 PM
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT			
12.	Brief Description of Assignment	:	<p>Hemo Dialysis Centers at NIKDU & CMCH under PPP Project operated by Sandor Dialysis Services Bangladesh Pvt. Ltd. on design, build finance Diseases.</p> <p>The key function of an independent panel.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduction inspection and Tests of Equipment and issuing Completion/Provisional Certificate b) Review the data and information provided by the Concessionaire in accordance with the Agreement.
13.	Experience, Resources and Delivery Capacity Required	:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) General experience in healthcare section, public or private, as Lead consultant/ Sub-consultant shall be at least 5 (five) years. b) Specific experience as of at least 1 (one) contract of similar nature, within 2 (two) years with a value of at least of Tk. 30 (thirty) lac. [Similar nature means, supervision, monitoring, evaluation, inspection etc] c) The required average annual turnover shall be at least of the amount of Tk. 40 (forty) lac over the last 2 (two) years d) Work with government bodies/agencies in Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects or projects with private sector participation. e) Have skilled professionals as mentioned below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. a person who is or has been superintendent of a 200-bedded hospital for at least 3 (three) years, to serve as chairperson, and II. 3 (three) doctors, one each from the fields of general medicine, surgery and nephrology, each one of whom is or has been a professor of the relevant field for at least 2 (two) years in, a recognized medical college. III. A civil engineer having work experience in healthcare projects
14.	Association with external firm	:	Individual Consultant
15.	Phasing of Services	:	No Later than 3 (three) Years
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
16.	Name of Official Inviting EOI	:	Dr. Sheikh Daud Adnan
17.	Designation of Official Inviting EOI	:	Director (In-Charge), Hospital & Clinics, DGHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka
18.	Address of Official Inviting EOI	:	Shastho Bhabon, New Building (4 th) Floor, T.B Gate, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.
19.	Contact Details of Official Inviting EOI	:	Tel. No. 02-55067151 e-mail: directorhospital@d.dgshs.gov.bd
The procuring entity reserves the right to delet or reject all EOI's.			


 Dr. Sheikh Daud Adnan
 Director (In-Charge), Hospital & Clinics,
 Directorate General of Health Services
 T.B Gate, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

GD-442

5,200 tonnes of jute seeds to be imported from India

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has given go-ahead for the import of around 5,200 tonnes of jute seeds from India this season.

The National Seed Board took the decision in a meeting yesterday chaired by Agriculture Secretary Wahida Akhtar.

The board also settled on annual demand for jute seeds to be 6,369 tonnes this season, the agriculture ministry said in a press release.

The annual demand has been fixed considering the farmers' annual demand for seeds of jute and jute crops this year.

Of the total demand, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation will supply 1,300 tonnes of seeds, and 5,200 tonnes of seeds would be imported from India, it said.

In 2023-24 fiscal year, a target has been set to cultivate jute on about 7.64 lakh hectares of land.

In the last season, 4,166 tonnes of jute seeds were imported against a demand for 5,000 tonnes.

IDCOL to finance 300MW solar projects by 2025

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) has set a target to finance rooftop solar power system projects of a total generation capacity of 300 megawatts by 2025 in line with a government vision, said IDCOL Executive Director Alamgir Morshed recently.

The government aims to generate 4,200 megawatts of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030.

Morshed was addressing a workshop styled "Installation of rooftop industrial solar system" organised by the IDCOL and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View on Tuesday, said a press release.

The cost of generating electricity from rooftop solar power systems is cheaper than that of grid tariff for which financing such projects makes financial sense, he said.

The IDCOL not only provides low-cost financing but also technical support, quality equipment purchases and capacity building, he said.

CCCI President Mahbubul Alam, among others, was present.



Md Sohail Rana harvests wheat from 51 decimals of land (100 decimals equal 1 acre) he had cultivated in Rajbari's Baliakandi upazila investing Tk 10,000. He hopes to take home 14 maunds to 15 maunds (one maund equals around 37 kilogrammes) of wheat this year. Each maund was selling for Tk 1,400 to Tk 1,500 in local markets. The photo was taken at Charfaridpur village yesterday. PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

Leather goods makers seek environmental clearance quickly

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Leather goods manufacturers based in the capital's Hazaribagh have urged the government to simplify the process of issuing environmental clearance certificates so that they can tap export opportunities easily.

They made the plea at a discussion on the prospects of the leather product cluster in Hazaribagh and the task ahead, organised by the SME Foundation at the Parjatan Bhaban in Agargaon yesterday.

Tania Wahab, an entrepreneur of the cluster and managing partner of Karigar, said leather goods and footwear are the most promising industry in Bangladesh after garments.

"So, the sector should be given more priority."

She said several entrepreneurs have been supplying products to big bands of Bangladesh for many years. Many are exporting in small volumes as well.

Wahab, also the president of the Leathercraft Association, a platform representing leather goods makers, recalled when she started business in Hazaribagh 18 years ago, landowners were not encouraged to rent out to a showroom to sell leather products.

"Now, the situation has changed."

At the discussion, a number

of entrepreneurs said the Department of Environment (DoE) took a long time in issuing the environment clearance certificate. As a result, they could not tap the export opportunities.

Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director of Apex Footwear Limited, and president of the Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh, questioned how would Bangladesh survive in the competition with other countries if the lead time can't be reduced?

"The Hazaribagh cluster can play a big role if the lead time can be shortened. This is because many people have gained skills by working in the cluster for a long time," he said.

Mirza Nurul Gani Shovon, president of the National Association of Small and Cottage Industries of Bangladesh, said entrepreneurs in the cluster are facing various obstacles when it comes to foreign trade.

"These problems must be resolved."

According to Mafizur Rahman, managing director of the SME Foundation, the cluster has the ability to meet the demand of the domestic market as well as earn a huge amount of foreign exchanges.

He said if the government and the SME Foundation took

coordinated initiatives for the development of the cluster, the growth of the zone would be accelerated.

"Then, this will play an important role in bringing about socio-economic change in the area."

Abdul Hamid, director general of the DoE, said the government is trying to make it easier to obtain environmental clearance for factories in the cluster.

"The government also plans to allocate space to leather goods manufacturers besides the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate."

Hazaribagh has transformed itself into a leather products manufacturing hub from a tannery zone in a span of six years since rawhides processors were shifted to Savar, logging an annual trade of Tk 60 crore.

More than 400 shops and showrooms have been set up in different places in the area, including around the Institute of Leather Engineering and Technology, Hazaribagh Bazar and Dhanmondi 15.

They produce products such as leather belts, wallets, shoes, parts and official bags for both local and export markets.

The number of factories, big and small, in Hazaribagh would be about 1,200, employing 55,000 to 60,000 people, according to the SME Foundation.

Apparel exhibition in Dhaka on March 16

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A conference and exhibition on sustainable clothing production will be held in Dhaka on March 16.

About 20 exhibitors are expected to present green production technologies at the Sustainable Apparel Forum (SAF), according to a press release.

The fourth edition of the SAF will focus on several agendas, including circularity, carbon emission reductions and climate action and shifting to renewable energy.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi, LGRD Minister Md Tazul Islam, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid, State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Md Atiqul Islam and many other distinguished guests will be present at the event.

The event will include a range of plenaries, seminars, green growth exhibitions and informal networking opportunities. More than 60 renowned speakers will speak at the exhibition.

In the press release, Mostafiz Uddin, the organiser of the SAF, said at every major fashion brand, the conversation is the same right now. "It is how we can reduce our carbon emissions to meet net zero targets."

Ethics in the unethical world

MAHTAB UDDIN AHMED

There was once a young and talented woman who got a job at a corporate giant. Her dedication and sincerity impressed everyone, and she seemed to have a brilliant start until her employer voiced his expectations. He warned that he expected her to work long hours and do anything to get the job done, even if it meant bending the rules.

Soon it dawned on her that her boss's ethics didn't quite align with hers. With each passing day, the ethical compromises weighed heavier on her until she decided to quit.

Walking out stronger from experience, she decided to start her own company, and within a short time, her business came to be known as one of the most ethical in the industry. Then one day, she came across her former employer, who wanted to know the secret of her success. She replied, "I followed your advice. I worked long hours and did whatever it took to get the job done. The only difference is, I did it ethically." Ethics ensure the long-term sustainability of a nation and an organisation.

Last week, I had a very interesting chat over dinner with some friends, including an old colleague-cum-mentor, sharing experiences on ethics and the malpractices that go around in the corporate world under the veneer of ethics.

Present at the table was a former CEO who shared his fate of getting framed and fired by a compliance team after daring to oppose his Group CEO's views. Another recalled how a company had fired a CEO in the name of ethics only to replace him with someone fired by another company.

These stories are all too familiar to those of us who belong to the corporate world, although they may not surface in open discussions.

While we pride ourselves on our progress in almost every sphere of life, we often overlook how ethical standards around us are fast-depleting. Honest police officers struggle to do their job ethically in fear of receiving calls from higherups, honest customs officers often get posted to a non-important station, migrant travellers are often deprived of fair treatment at the airport, the rich know the art of evading taxes at the cost of the poor, and the list can go on.

From my experience, a government organisation had intentionally or "unintentionally" lost my file with them, so a hefty sum could be collected to regularise it. When I protested against paying, the officer suggested going to court.

Generally, we only complain about the ethical standards of government officials and political leaders etc. Ethical malpractices are also prevalent in sophisticated local and multinational companies to various degrees. The common factor in all these cases is that the more power you have, the more likely you will emerge as the winner, while the losers are commonly those at the bottom of the pyramid of the company or the country.

The question is, where do we turn to when we are victims of injustice or oppression? To courts? Delays in our legal system have often proved that justice delayed is justice denied. Even the geo-political scenario is no different as Bangladesh hesitates to fight for justice with big players like India, China or the US.

Living ethically in an unethical world can be challenging and requires an uncompromising personal commitment to integrity, personal courage and setting an example for others. Those who are looking for success by compromising on ethics must bear in mind that there is something known as karma or natural justice that does not spare anyone. Living ethically is a journey, not a destination.

The author is founder and managing director of BuildCon Consultancies Ltd



Prime mover sales down over 62%

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Sales of prime movers, which are the front part of semi-trailer type trucks, fell over 62 per cent year-on-year in 2022 in Bangladesh amid a fall in imports and surge in their prices alongside that of fuel.

According to distributors, sales came down to 300 units in 2022 whereas annual sales averaged at around 800 units for the last five to seven years.

Bangladesh imports most of its prime movers from India, the UK and China.

They can have engine capacities of around 5,660cc and pull loads of some 40 to 45 tonnes, including heavy machinery, import and export containers and goods meant for mega projects.

According to market insiders, there are 7,850 prime movers in the country.

"The sales trend of prime movers along with heavy-duty trucks is one of the parameters to understand the economic situation of a country," said Abdul Matlub Ahmad, chairman of Nitol Niloy Group, the local distributor of India's Tata Motors.

The demand for prime movers and trailers increases when export and import activities run in full swing as businesses need logistics support to move goods between ports and factories.

Overall imports stood at \$5.03 billion in February whereas it was \$8.13 billion during the same month in 2021, as per data from the National Board of Revenue.

According to Ahmad, an increase in the import of raw materials and goods is considered positive for the economy and indicates an increase in industrial production.

Besides, it also gives rise to the possibility of an increase in export earnings, he said.

READ MORE ON B2



Prime movers, which are the front part of semi-trailer type trucks, can have engine capacities of around 5,660cc and pull loads of some 40 tonnes to 45 tonnes, including heavy machinery, import and export containers and goods meant for mega projects. According to market insiders, there are 7,850 prime movers in the country. PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Extending Ukraine grain deal complicated

Russia says

AFP, Moscow

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Thursday that extending a deal that allowed grain exports from Ukraine to resume was becoming "complicated" as he claimed it was not being properly implemented.

Russia's military intervention last February saw Ukraine's Black Sea ports blocked by warships until a deal last summer allowed for the safe passage of exports of critical grain supplies.

The UN and Turkey-brokered deal will automatically renew on March 18 unless Moscow or Kyiv object.

But Lavrov said clauses in the agreement that provide for Russian grain and fertiliser exports were not being upheld.