

## Shahab Uddin elected KBCCI president

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Shahab Uddin Khan, chairman of Zeeshan Group, has been elected as president of the Korea-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KBCCI) for a two-year term.

Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) President Jahangir Saadat has been elected as senior vice-president and LG Bangladesh Managing Director Ko Youngil, vice-president, MKP Designers Managing Director Million Park, secretary general, Woori Bank Country Manager Kim Dong Heon, treasurer, and Meghna Group of Industries (MGI) Chairman Mostafa Kamal, adviser, of the new committee respectively.

Mostafa Kamal, previous president of the chamber, presided over an annual general meeting held at Sheraton Dhaka in Banani recently, where the new committee



## Belal Ahmed new chairman of Social Islami Bank

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Belal Ahmed was elected as chairman of Social Islami Bank Limited yesterday.

Ahmed had been working for the bank as vice chairman before taking up the new charge, said a press release.

He started his career with Unitex Group.

He is the managing director of Unitex Spinning Ltd, Unitex Composite Mills Ltd, Unitex LP Gas Ltd, Unitex Petroleum Ltd, Unitex Cement Ltd and Unitex Steel Mills Ltd.

He was a director of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2013-2015), vice-chairman of Union Bank, and Global Islami Bank.

Ahmed has been representing Social Islami Bank Limited at the Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB).

He studied from the University of Toronto in Canada.

## Mokammel Hoque reappointed as Union Bank MD

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ABM Mokammel Hoque Chowdhury has been reappointed as the managing director of Union Bank Limited.

Chowdhury has been serving the bank in capacity of managing director since 2020, said a press release.

He started his banking career at First Security Islami Bank Limited in 2001 as a probationary officer.

He joined Union Bank Limited in 2013 and worked in different capacities.

Mokammel Hoque did his MBA degree majoring on Human Resource Management.

# Poor yields, prices cause concern among onion farmers

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, *Pabna*

Onion farmers in Pabna, the biggest producing district in Bangladesh, are not happy with the current market price for their crop while yields have also been unsatisfactory due to poor weather conditions.

With harvests now in full swing, the production of local varieties of onion has fallen by 30 to 40 per cent while yields of hybrid varieties are lower as well, according to growers.

However, sources at the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) say it cannot be said for certain if yields are lower this year before the final harvesting report is submitted.

"Last year, I harvested 80 to 100 maunds [one maund equals roughly 37 kilogrammes] of hybrid variety onion from each bigha," said Md Kamruzzaman, a farmer of Durgapur village in Sujanagar upazila of Pabna.

"This year though, I am getting just 50 to 60 maunds of onion from each bigha all because of the short-lived winter," he added.

Kamruzzaman cultivated around 80 bighas of onion, mostly of the hybrid variety, spending up to Tk 40,000 per bigha.

Other than reduced production, farmers are fretting over the poor market price as well.

"After harvesting, I sold 100 maunds at Tk 1,100 to Tk 1,150 per maund last week. So, I have stopped selling," Kamruzzaman said, adding each maund went for about Tk 1,400 at the same time last year.

The situation is more critical for farmers such as Abdur Razzak, who cultivated onion on leased land with the help of loans.

Razzak spent Tk 50,000 for cultivating each bigha but is now finding no way to repay the money borrowed due to poor production and market price of the crop.

Montu Khan, an onion farmer of

Ulat village in Sujanagar upazila, said he cultivated seven bighas of the local variety and three bighas of the hybrid variety.

"I got some 50 maunds of the local variety from each bigha last year but this year, I am getting only 20 to 25 maunds," he added.

Sources at the Pabna DAE say around 44,000 hectares of land in the district were brought under onion cultivation this year with an estimated production target of 7 lakh tonnes.

"But production has fallen due to bad weather, such as the short winter and poor rainfall, during the cultivation period," said Md. Rafiul Islam, agriculture officer of Sujanagar upazila.

"Onion harvesting begins in mid-March and we are getting some 17 tonnes of onion from each hectare whereas it was 18 tonnes last year," he added.

Md Idris Ali, a development officer of the Pabna DAE, said harvesting has progressed less than 10 per cent in the last few days.

"We will get the real picture on production levels after harvesting is complete," he added.

Traders at major onion wholesale markets in the region say that each maund of the crop is now being sold for up to Tk 1,200 while it was Tk 1,400 last year.

In addition, the excessive transport cost reduces their profits, according to Md Robiul Islam, a local wholesale trader.

"If the onion price does not increase, not only farmers but also traders will see huge losses," he added.

Md Saiful Islam, deputy director of the Pabna DAE, said the district plays a vital role in fulfilling onion demand across the country but not in controlling prices.

"Almost 30 per cent of the onion requirement is produced in Pabna but we have no price controlling capacity," Islam said.

"Also, the government has stopped importing onion, so we expect the onion price will increase soon," he added.

## Yarn sale falls despite Eid and Pahela Baishakh

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The middle-income group of people, who are the major consumers, reduce the purchase of clothing items as they have to spend more money for buying food items, Alam added.

The lower sale of yarn also affected the production of saris, lungis and other zakat items in the major areas like Madhabdi, Shekherchar, Belkuchi, Narsingdi, Pabna and Sirajganj.

The weavers are also complaining that they might not be able to make a profit after paying at the increased rate of gas and power, said Alam, who also supplies fabrics for three pieces for women.

For instance, a miller

who used to pay Tk 2.5 crore in gas bills in a month now has to pay Tk 4.5 crore in gas bills a month, he said.

Similarly, Mosharraf Hossain, chairman and managing director of Mosharraf Spinning Mills at Shekherchar, Baburhaat in Narsingdi, said he did not see such low sales of yarn over the last 35 years of doing business.

Usually, the sales of the yarn and fabrics starts from Shab-e-Barat but this year the sale is yet to be gain momentum although Ramadan has begun, Hossain told The Daily Star over the phone.

The abnormal hike in gas and power tariff and sale of cheap Chinese and Indian yarn is mainly

blamed for lower sales of yarn produced by the local millers, said Hossain.

BM Shueb, managing director of Nannu Textile, a Narayanganj-based yarn and fabrics manufacturer, said every month he can sell 10 lakh yards of fabrics for three pieces but the sale dropped to 5 lakh yards even in the peak time of sale ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Shoeb, who also runs a showroom at the city's Islampur market, said the Indian and Pakistani fabrics caused prices in the local fabrics market to fall.

The overall economic situation worsened and the gas and power tariff hikes are mainly responsible for the fall in sales of fabrics, he added.

Sales have dropped by more than 50 per cent for Debyani Textile, a dress materials manufacturing mill at Madhabdi in Narsingdi, said Binoy Debnath, managing director of the mill.

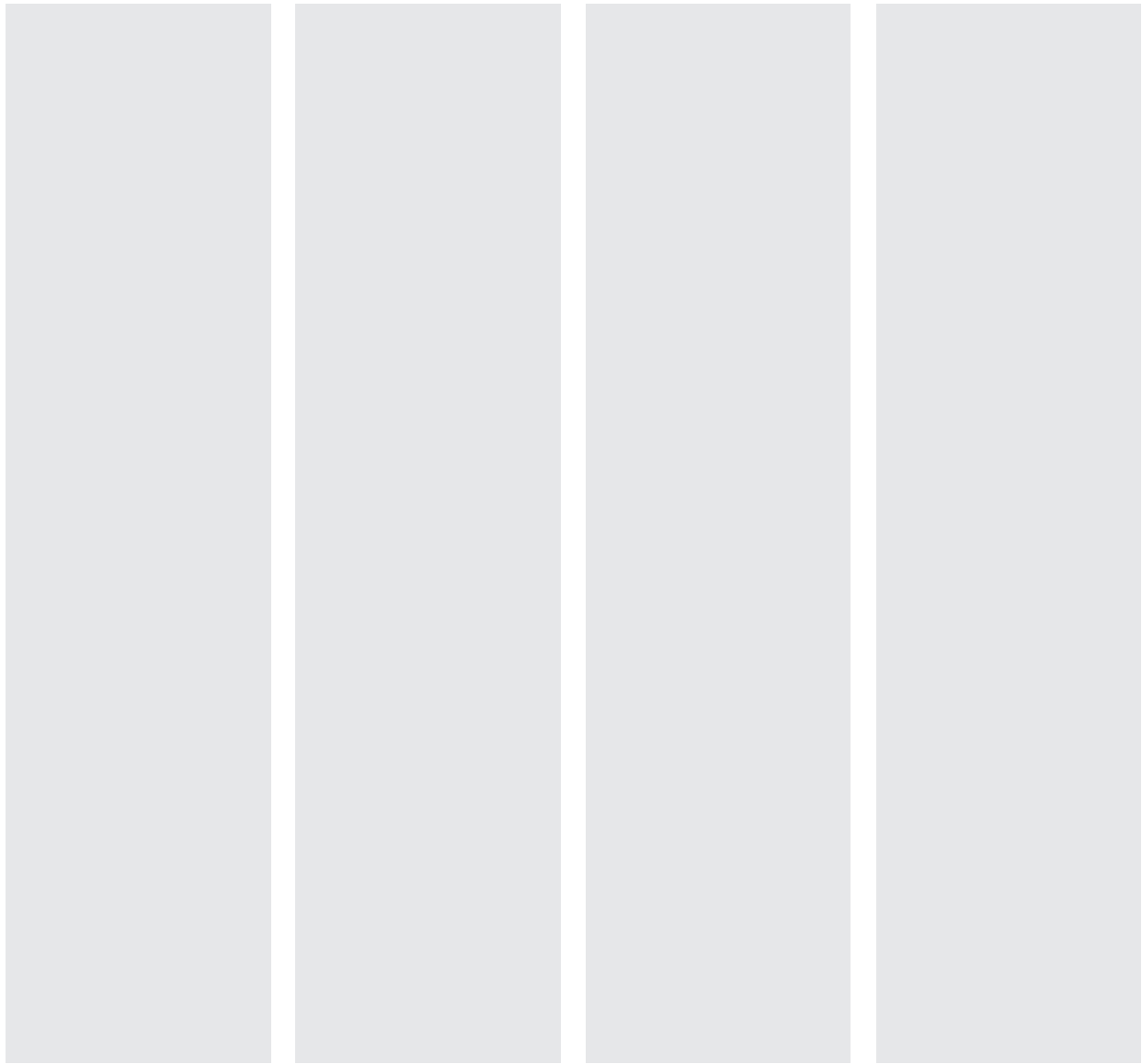
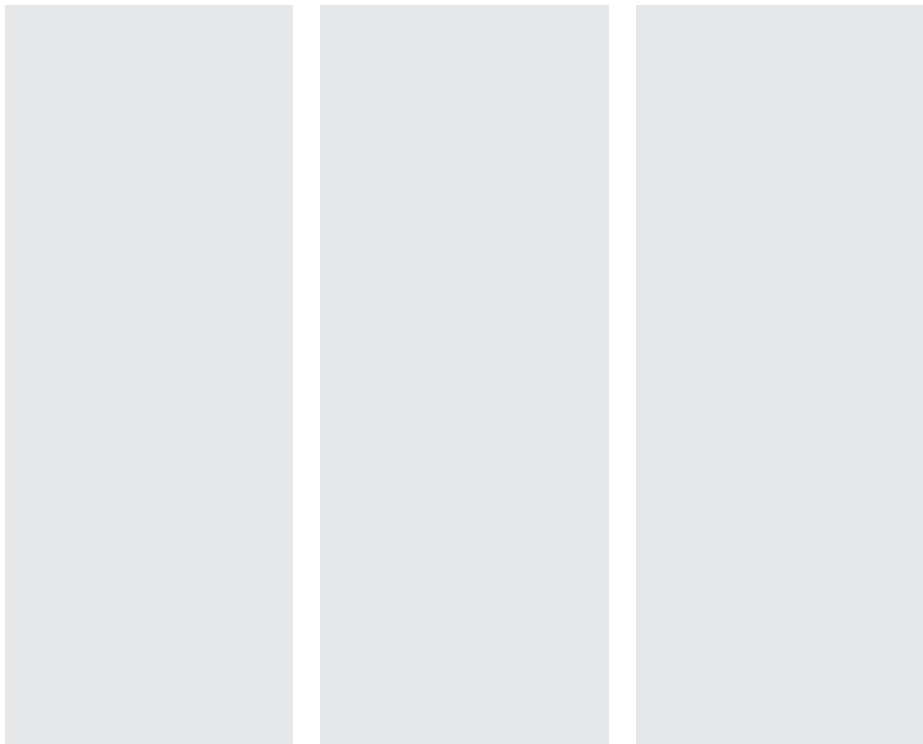
Some Tk 30,000 crore worth of yarn and fabrics are sold in the local market during Eid-ul-Fitr and Pahela Baishakh every year but this time the sale is too low because of the high cost of living as the consumers need to spend money on food items, said Monsoor Ahmed, additional director to the BTMA.

BTMA President Mohammad Ali Khokon also said until now the sale in the local market has been low but that the sales

would gain momentum soon was expected.

Up until February this year, the sale of yarn has been good but all of a sudden the sales dropped significantly at the beginning of the March, he added.

The total market size of the local garment is \$8.37 billion and the investment in this segment is \$6 billion, he said.



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01. Snapshot of EOI	
১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ
২.	প্রকৃতিরিং এন্টিটি
৩.	EOI বিবরণ
৪.	দরপত্র জমাদানের শেষ সময়
৫.	প্রতিষ্ঠা মিটিং
৬.	EOI দাখিলের স্থান
৭.	EOI খোলার স্থান
৮.	নির্ধারণের ধাপ (সামগ্রিক)
৯.	যোগাতার মানদণ্ড (১ম ধাপ)
১০.	EOI আবেদনের বিষয়বস্তু
১১.	EOI আহবানকারীর নাম, পদবী, ঠিকানা ও যোগাযোগের বিস্তারিত তথ্য।
১২.	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনরূপ কারণ প্রদর্শন ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল EOI গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে। EOI আহবানের তারিখ সরকার ঘোষিত কোন ছুটি থাকলে পরবর্তী কার্যক্রমে উল্লিখ করা হবে।
<div>মহাব্যবস্থাপক (প্রশাসন)</div> <div>বাংলাদেশ শিপিং কর্পোরেশন</div> <div>বিএসসি ভবন, সন্টগোলা, চট্টগ্রাম।</div> <div>ফোন নং- ০২৩৩৩৩২৪৮৩২</div>	
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