

## Delta Life inks deal with bKash on health insurance

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Delta Life Insurance Company Ltd recently signed an agreement with mobile financial services provider bKash to provide health insurance for all of the latter's employees.

Anwarul Haque, chief executive officer (current charge) of the life insurer, and Kamal Quadir, chief executive officer bKash, inked a deal at the latter's head office in Dhaka, the insurer said in a press release.

Under this agreement, all employees of bKash will get health insurance facilities from the life insurer.

Senior officials of both organisations were present at the event.



Kamal Quadir, chief executive officer of bKash, and Anwarul Haque, chief executive officer (current charge) of Delta Life Insurance Company, exchange signed documents of an agreement on health insurance at the latter's head office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: DELTA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

## MTB launches home loan fair

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mutual Trust Bank (MTB) launched a two-day "MTB Home Loan Carnival 2023" at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) yesterday with the theme of "Unlock Your Dream Home".

The event features seven real estate companies -- ABC Real Estate Ltd, Building Technologies & Ideas Ltd (bti), Assure Group, JCX Developments Ltd, Doreen Developments Ltd, Edison Real Estate Ltd and Ratul Properties Ltd.

Ali Reza Mazid, member of investment promotion at Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority, inaugurated the event as chief guest, said a press release.

Md Ahsan Kabir, executive director of the DEPZ, FR Khan, managing director of bti, and Azam Khan, head of communications of the MTB.

## Sugar output in Maharashtra set to fall

REUTERS, Mumbai

Sugar output in Maharashtra, India's top producing state, is likely to fall 14% in the 2023/24 crop year to its lowest in four years due to lower cane yields following the driest August in more than a century, industry and government officials told Reuters on Wednesday.

The reduced output could add to food inflation and discourage New Delhi from allowing sugar exports, supporting global prices, which are already near their highest in more than a decade.

Higher domestic prices will, however, improve margins for producers such as Balrampur Chini, Dwarikesh Sugar, Shree Renuka Sugars and Dalmia Bharat Sugar, helping them make payments on time to farmers.

The western state of Maharashtra, which accounts for more than a third of India's sugar output, could produce 9 million metric tons in the 2023/24 season (which begins on October 1), down from 10.5 million tons in 2022/23, said BB Thombare, president of the West Indian Sugar Mills Association.

"The sugar cane crop didn't receive ample rainfall during the crucial growth phase this year. In almost all districts, the crop's growth is stunted," he said.

Maharashtra, which often surprises the global sugar market with wide swings in production, received 59% lower rainfall than normal during August.

Maharashtra's sugar commissioner Chandrakant Pulkundwar said he had been informed by representatives from sugar mills during a review meeting that cane yields would be lower this year due to a prolonged dry spell and higher temperatures.

The crop badly needs good rainfall in September to limit damage caused by the dry spell, Pulkundwar said.

India is likely to receive an average amount of rainfall in September, the state-run weather department has forecast, after the driest August in more than a century.



Waliul Islam, chairman of SMC Enterprise and SMC Pharmaceuticals, poses for photographs with award-winning employees of the sales team of the company in an annual "Sales Conference" for 2022-23 at the Hotel Sea Palace in Cox's Bazar recently.

PHOTO: SMC GROUP

## Shimanto Bank, Medix sign MoU

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Shimanto Bank recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Medix, a concern of United Healthcare Services Ltd.

Under this MoU, all debit and credit cardholders of the bank will enjoy special facilities when they avail services from Medix.

Mohammad Azizul Hoque, head of operations and chief risk officer of the bank, and Md Fazle Rabbi Khan, general manager for communication and business development of United Hospital, signed the MoU at the former's head office, said a press release.

Rafiqul Islam, managing director and CEO of the bank, and Mohammad Faizur Rahman, managing director and CEO of the hospital, along with senior officials from both organisations were present.



Rafiqul Islam, managing director of Shimanto Bank, and Mohammad Faizur Rahman, managing director of United Hospital, exchange signed documents of a memorandum of understanding at the former's head office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: SHIMANTO BANK



Farman R Chowdhury, managing director of Al-Arafah Islami Bank, and Moni Sankar Kundu, director of SME and special programme department at the Bangladesh Bank, exchange signed documents of an agreement at the BB headquarters in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: AL-ARAFAH ISLAMI BANK



Kazi Mashiur Rahman Jayhad, additional managing director of Global Islami Bank, cuts a ribbon to inaugurate an ATM booth of the bank at Dhaka Cantonment Railway Station in Dhaka yesterday. Sami Karim, deputy managing director of the bank, Shah Alam Kiron Shishir, divisional commercial officer for Dhaka division, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, head of general services division, SM Mizanur Rahman, head of investment, Ekram Elahi, manager of Banani branch, and ANM Ahsan Habib, head of cards, and Mohammad Aminul Haque, deputy commercial officer-1 of Bangladesh Railway, were present.

PHOTO: GLOBAL ISLAMI BANK

## AIBL pens deal with Bangladesh Bank

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Al-Arafah Islami Bank Ltd (AIBL) yesterday signed a participating financial institution (PFI) agreement with Bangladesh Bank to avail pre-financing under a project styled 'Program to Support Safety Retrofits and Environmental Upgrades in the Bangladeshi RMG sector Project (SREUP)'.

Farman R Chowdhury, managing director and CEO of AIBL, and Moni Sankar Kundu, director of SME and special programme department at the central bank,

signed the deal at Bangladesh Bank (BB) headquarters in Dhaka, said a press release.

Abu Farah Md Naser, deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, attended the programme as chief guest.

Among others, Md Kabir Ahmed, executive director of the BB, Naushad Mostafa, additional director, and Abdullah Al Mamun, deputy managing director of AIBL, Md Obaidul Islam, senior executive vice-president, and Monir Ahmed, senior vice-president, were present.

## SME Foundation

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developing accurate data and knowledge, enhancing institutional coordination and ensuring accountability.

The information was disclosed at a discussion on the "Women-Entrepreneurship Development Strategy Paper in Bangladesh" at Parjatan Bhaban in the capital's Agargaon yesterday.

According to the Bangladesh government's Economic Census 2013, only 7.2 percent of the over 7.8 million small and medium enterprises are owned by women entrepreneurs, said a keynote paper.

However, the participation of women in labour is more than 36 percent, said the paper presented by Radhika Behuria, expert consultant of ESCAP, and Dr Ananya Raihan, founding executive director of social enterprise D.Net.

If this is increased to 45 percent, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth will be 2 percent higher. That is why the strategy paper has been prepared for the development of

women entrepreneurs, they said.

Md Mafizur Rahman, managing director of SME Foundation, presided over the programme.

Zakir Khanam, additional secretary to the industries ministry, and Monowara Hakim Ali, president of the

**If participation of women in labour force is increased to 45 percent, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth will be 2 percent higher**

Chattogram Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, were present as chief and special guests respectively, said a press release.

Cai Cai, chief of gender, equality and social inclusion sector of the Social Development Division at ESCAP, and Md Nazem Hasan Sattar, general manager of the foundation, were present.

## TCB starts selling four essentials

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each litre of soybean or rice bran oil at Tk 170.

The government has taken the initiative to provide these subsidies from taxpayers' money in order to cushion the impact of soaring food and non-food prices on poor and low-income families.

The TCB has been selling essential commodities among one crore low-income families since March after moving away from its decades-old practice of selling key food items through mobile trucks.

## Consumers protest cancellation

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consumers and experts, who believe that it restricts consumer choices and imposes higher costs on grassroots, low-income, and young users.

They said consumers should be given the freedom to choose from a variety of options as different users have different needs instead of curtailing the number of packages.

Currently, operators offer 95 different package options.

Cancelling the 3 day internet packages goes against the public interest, said Rajekuzzaman Ratan, assistant general secretary of the Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal.

He emphasised the importance of maintaining the accessibility to affordable internet packages, particularly for low-income individuals.

Mohiuddin Ahmed, president of the association, called upon the Prime Minister's ICT adviser to reconsider the BTRC's decision.