

Global aluminium output hits record high

REUTERS, London

Global production of primary aluminium hit an all-time high in August, with the world's smelters running at an annualised rate of 71.2 million metric tons.

It was the second consecutive month that run-rates were above the 70-million metric ton mark. Prior to July the level had been exceeded only once, in August 2022.

The International Aluminium Institute (IAI) made some significant revisions to its primary production numbers in its latest monthly update, lifting previous assessments of output in both China and the rest of the world.

It's now clear that China, the world's largest producer, is experiencing a production surge thanks to improved power supply in previously drought-hit parts of the country's hydro-electric system.

What's not clear is whether Chinese demand can absorb the new wave of production.

Non-Chinese aluminium production has been running higher than previously assumed.

The IAI has revised upwards its estimates from the start of last year, adding around 577,000 metric tons of annualised output to its "unreported" category.

Most of the increase is down to previously uncounted production in Malaysia and Iran, neither of which reports output numbers directly to the Institute.

China's production through the first half of the year has also been revised significantly higher.



Bithi Rani makes a living by weaving baskets out of coloured strips of bamboo in Kanki village at Barishal's Bakerganj upazila. She can earn up to Tk 25,000 a month selling each basket for Tk 50. This traditional craft passed down through generations remains relevant today for the many functional benefits of bamboo, such as being lightweight and flexible yet sturdy and strong. Additionally, bamboo's natural antibacterial properties make it an excellent choice for food storage. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Food, agri expo begins tomorrow

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A three-day "BAPA FoodPro International Expo 2023" will begin at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka from tomorrow showcasing agricultural and food products and services of over 200 companies from 20 or so countries, including India, Thailand, China, the US and the UK.

Organised by Bangladesh Agro Processors Association (BAPA) and co-hosted by the Rainbow Exhibition and Event Management Services Limited, the event will include technical sessions of experts from home and abroad, according to a press release.

An 11th Agro Bangladesh Expo 2023 and Food Ingredient Expo 2023 will also be concurrently held at the same venue.

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi has urged Mexican entrepreneurs and business community to invest in Bangladesh's economic zones.

He made the call during a bilateral meeting with Mexican Secretary of Economy Raquel Buenrostro in Mexico on Tuesday, according to a commerce ministry press release.

This was the first such top-level meeting between the two countries in nearly five decades, it said.

Munshi, who is currently leading a 12-member high-level business delegation in a visit to the North American country, also proposed the formation of a bilateral trade group to enhance cooperation.

In the meeting, Munshi and Buenrostro pledged to take economic relations to new heights.

In order to build a Smart Bangladesh by 2041 and make the country one of the fastest-growing economies in the Asia-Pacific region, the government has set a target to establish 100 economic zones, said Munshi.

"Many countries have already invested in the economic zones," he added.

Buenrostro stressed concluding agreements on double taxation and customs.

She also urged Bangladeshi businesspeople to explore trade opportunities in Mexico and expressed her country's interest in investing in the pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh.

Munshi seeks Mexican investment

BB fixes interest rate for loans from green fund

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The central bank yesterday fixed the interest rate of its US dollar and euro financing from the Green Transformation Fund (GTF) owing to the discontinuation of Libor and the upward trend of the interest rate globally.

The Bangladesh Bank operates the fund in the two currencies to extend loans to authorised dealers (ADs) for on-lending or re-financing to borrowers to help them implement green and environment-friendly initiatives.

The rate-fixing comes after the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor), a benchmark interest rate at which major global banks used to lend to one another in the international interbank market for short-term loans, ceased to exist.

Following the rate scandal, the Libor was phased out gradually from 2022 before abolishing it completely in July 2023.

Like most of the borrowers in other countries, Bangladesh's businesses also took foreign loans based on the rate. Given the global context of the Libor discontinuation and the rising interest rate globally, the interest of the financing from the fund has been fixed at 5 percent per annum, said the BB in a notice yesterday.

Unilever appoints new HR director

STAR BUSINESS REPORT



Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL) has appointed a new human resources director.

The official, Syeda Durdana Kabir, joined the management committee of the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company on September 17, according to a press release.

With more than 25 years of experience in the industry, Durdana served in diverse capacities at Nestle.

She also worked as the regional head of talent and organisational development for Nestle Malaysia and Singapore, and later for the Central and West Africa region.

She commenced her career at British Airways on studying English at the University of Dhaka and attaining an EMBA from North South University.

E-commerce to face

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merchants, according to the guideline.

However, sales recorded during festivals such as Eid, when people across the country usually go for a shopping spree, would not be taken into account while taking such an action.

Acquirers will also assess the risk of merchants, involving their operational capacity, ability to pay debts, products and services, guarantee, warranty, legality, and compliance.

There has to be a contract between payments facilitators and merchants to prevent the latter from engaging in illegal transactions or money laundering and harming customer's interests.

The guideline recommended an agreement between acquirers and merchants

on pricing model, data security, guarantee of goods and services, speedy payments, the remedy of customer complaints, and refunds.

An escrow system has been made mandatory. Now, customers' payments will be deposited in a trust-cum settlement accounts with banks and sellers will only receive the payments after clients get the delivery of products.

Customers will face no charges for the escrow service.

AKM Fahim Mashroor, a former president of the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services, welcomes the guideline.

"However, this is not going to streamline the business of online shops."

He said currently, a lot of online merchants are receiving payments using

MFS and cards for illegal activities such as gambling, betting, crypto, and foreign currency trading.

"But we have not seen any specific instruction for acquirers to take measures against such transactions."

The founder of AjkerDeal and Bdjobs also says the escrow guideline will not augment digital payments, rather it will increase cash on delivery.

He said merchants may face up to two weeks delay before receiving payments online as per the new guideline.

"This is one of the main reasons couriers that are mostly un-licensed are still not integrated with acquiring banks or MFS providers. The guideline should have given instructions to acquirers to integrate with licenced courier companies within a specific deadline."

Arrival of foreign tourists

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abroad in the 2018-19 fiscal year, including 3.73 lakh for holiday and recreation, according to a report on "Tourism Satellite Accounts 2020" by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Of them, 60 percent went to India while 8.12 percent visited Saudi Arabia. 4.57 percent travelled to Malaysia and a substantial number visited Thailand, Dubai, Africa, Nepal and Turkey.

Bangladeshi tourists spent Tk 336.87 billion in foreign countries, according to the survey.

Sources said foreign tourists mostly visit sites in Cox's Bazar, the Sundarbans and Sylhet.

Masud Hossain, managing director of The Bengal Tours Limited, said the tourism industry was growing organically. He also blamed a lack of planned promotion.

"We don't lack products (tourist destinations and hotels) and many domestic tourists are available," he said.

"Now, Sri Lanka has arranged two months of road shows in Japan. They are vehemently trying to recover their tourism industry," added Masud.

Before the pandemic, Masud used to handle around 7,000-8,000 foreign tourists yearly. This year, he expects around 1,500 only.

"We seriously lack in terms of promoting our tourist destinations to foreigners in the global market," said Shibliul Azam Koreshi, president of the Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB).

He said they had to depend on the domestic market of 1.5 crore people. "Although promotions are expensive, the government should move to promote destinations to the global market through media platforms like BBC and CNN."

"We also need to do country-specific promotion, especially in populous nations like

India and China, which can be a game changer for Bangladesh as a tourist destination," Koreshi added.

Another issue is the implementation of electronic visas for tourists. Nationals of 61 countries presently have access to on-arrival visas, which should be expanded further.

"The facility to obtain a visa without hassle is a must to attract more and more tourists," said Koreshi.

However, Koreshi hoped that the numbers would continue to rebound.

Santus Kumar Deb, professor and chairman of tourism and hospitality management department at the University of Dhaka, suggested promotional development and the implementation of advanced technologies to ensure services such as transport for tourists.

There is no alternative to improving domestic facilities and ensuring promotion in the global market, he said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Abu Tahir Muhammad Zaber, chief executive officer of the Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB), blamed a lack of funds.

"We need a huge amount of money to advertise on the global media like BBC and CNN to attract foreign tourists," he said.

Zaber said they had instead chosen alternative paths to explore global markets, especially European and Chinese markets.

"We have contracts with some Bangladeshi expatriates who are involved in tourism in those areas. They will promote Bangladesh tourist spots and help bring foreign tourists," added Zaber.

The BTB has arranged a four-day "Bangladesh Festival", aiming to promote tourism in Bangladesh on the occasion of World Tourism Day today. The festival will begin today at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka.

No US info yet on ACU payments

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approached the Reserve Bank of India after the US Office of Foreign Assets Control asked banks there to refrain from processing payments linked to the ACU mechanism.

"We have not yet been communicated officially regarding restrictions over payment settlement, neither by the US nor ACU secretariat. We will take steps once we get any such message," said BB Spokesperson Md Mezbaul Haque.

A top banker seeking to remain unnamed said any restriction over ACU payment settlement might

hurt Bangladesh as it was a net importer.

"We import a large amount of goods from India. Exporters there may be discouraged from

A top banker said any restriction over ACU payment settlement might hurt Bangladesh as it was a net importer

doing trade with their local counterparts if there is any payment bar," said the banker.

Selim RF Hussain,

chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, a platform of CEOs of banks, said they were investigating the issue.

"Once we get clarity, we will share with you," said Hussain, also managing director and CEO of Brac Bank. Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd, said his bank has not faced any problem in settling payments through the ACU in recent months.

"We had a couple of issues regarding payment processing in the past but later those were resolved," he said.

শাহরাস্তি পৌরসভা কার্যালয়

শাহরাস্তি, চাঁদপুর

ফোনঃ ০৮৪২৭-৫৬০২১ (অফিস)

E-mail: shaharastipourashava@gmail.com

শ্রমিক নং-শাঃপৌঃ/প্রকৌঃ/পূঃ/সরপ্রঃবিজঃ/২০২৩/৪৭৯

তারিখঃ ২৬.০৯.২০২৩খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নংঃ ০২/২০২৩-২০২৪

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ক্রঃ নং	কাজের বিবরণ	কাজের পরিমাণ
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ক) দরপত্রের নথি প্রাপ্তির তারিখঃ ০২/১০/২০২৩

খ) দরপত্রের নথি প্রাপ্তির তারিখঃ ০২/১০/২০২৩

গ) দরপত্রের নথি প্রাপ্তির তারিখঃ ০২/১০/২০২৩

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জ) দরপত্রের নথি প্রাপ্তির তারিখঃ ০২/১০/২০২৩

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

College Education Development Project (CEDP)

Govt. Debendra College, Manikganj

www.debendracollege.gov.bd

Memo No. CEDP/GDC/2023-24/614

Date: 26/09/2023

E-Tender Notice 01/2023-2024

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Supply	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	879369	Procurement of Fan, Light and Related Services for Govt. Debendra College, Manikganj	12-Oct-2023 13:00	12-Oct-2023 14:30
2.	879548	Procurement of Science Equipment for Govt. Debendra College, Manikganj	12-Oct-2023 13:00	12-Oct-2023 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP 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 11-Oct-2023 16:00

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

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