

Expos on healthcare, tourism, food begin in Dhaka

150 companies of 15 countries are taking part in the events

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A number of exhibitions on medical, healthcare, tourism and food industries organised by the CEMS Global USA began at the International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka yesterday.

The shows are: the 15th Meditex Bangladesh 2024, the 8th Bangladesh Clinical Lab Expo, the 10th Pharma Bangladesh Expo and the 7th International Health Tourism and Service Expo.

Additionally, the 7th Food and Agro Bangladesh International Expo, comprising the 7th International Poultry and Livestock Bangladesh Expo and 4th Food Pack Expo, is being held at the same venue with the participation of members of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation.

The events are showcasing medical equipment, surgical and dental instruments, healthcare, hospital equipment and supplies from 150 companies of over 15 countries, including Bangladesh, India, China, Singapore, Germany, Turkey, Thailand and South Korea.

The gates of the three-day exhibitions will remain open for registered business visitors every day from 10:30am to 8:00pm, according to the New York-based exhibition and convention organiser.

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder inaugurated the exhibitions as chief guest,



The representative of a pavilion showcasing medical equipment is seen speaking with a visitor about their products. The picture was taken yesterday, when a number of expos centring pharmaceutical products, services and equipment kicked off at the International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

CEMS-Global USA said in a press release.

The individuals considering healthcare options abroad can directly consult with international hospitals and consultants to explore advanced healthcare solutions through the expo.

Some seminars will also be organised during the exhibitions.

Meherun N Islam, president and group managing director of CEMS Global USA for Asia Pacific, presided over the opening ceremony.

bKash's profit surged in 2023

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Mobile financial service provider bKash logged a massive 504 percent year-on-year rise in profit in 2023.

It was to the tune of Tk 103.9 crore. In 2022, the amount was Tk 17.2 crore.

This substantial jump in profit is an impressive feat considering the fact that this subsidiary of BRAC Bank had suffered losses for three years in a row till 2021.

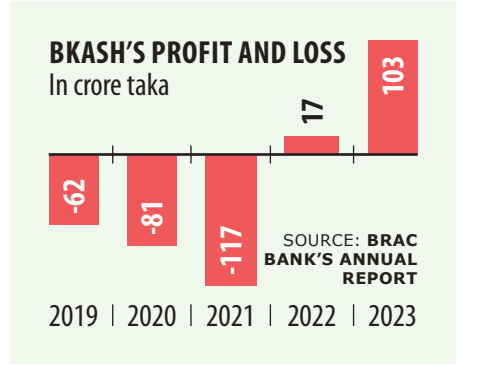
"During the early stage, customer-centric fintech companies like bKash with a sustainable business model need patient capital and a growth mindset," Chief Financial Officer Moinuddin Mohammed Rahgir told The Daily Star in a statement. "It was a prerequisite to invest for expansion of technological capabilities, infrastructure, digital literacy and awareness," he said.

"bKash, the country's largest MFS provider, remains a textbook company by pursuing growth, including expansion of its service platform, customer acquisition, and maintaining its agent network," he added.

"Now a steady return on those investments is bringing the revenue growth," said Rahgir.

"The surge in profit was attributed to its continued strategic investments over the years," said BRAC Bank in its audited annual financial statement.

The company generated Tk 4,190 crore in revenues in 2023, registering a 22



percent year-on-year increase from the previous year's Tk 3,430 crore.

Similarly, the number of people availing its services reached 7.4 crore, showcasing a growth of 13.3 percent from 6.53 crore in the previous year.

Among the customers, 53.1 percent were active, meaning they made at least one transaction in the last 90 days.

In 2023, bKash added 23,000 agents to further expand its reach, taking its total to 3.64 lakh.

BRAC Bank, which currently holds a 51 percent equity stake in the company, formed bKash in 2010. It started its operations in 2011.

The MFS company had a string of investments from foreign entities. Notable among them are the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Alipay Singapore E-Commerce Private Ltd, and SoftBank.

Dollar price rises up to Tk 125

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They said they bought the greenback at Tk 116.5 from exporters and sold it at Tk 117.5 to help businesses settle import bills.

The BB said the highest interbank purchase rate was Tk 116.46 while the selling rate was Tk 117.5 yesterday. The weighted average rate was Tk 117.36.

"It is too early to comment on the market. However, it was stable today. It was almost like a free market situation," said

the chief of treasury of a leading private bank.

Although the market behaved erratically in the early hours of yesterday, the rate later stabilised.

Imports have fallen and this has cut the appetite for US dollars, said the second banker.

Central bank data shows that imports fell 15.36 percent year-on-year to reach \$40.88 billion in the July-February period of fiscal year 2023-24.

"Once buyers were ready to pay any rate. Now

it seems that demand is not very robust. It is rather slow," said the third official of another private bank.

However, supply was tight in the kerb market as many opted out of making sales.

Mostofa Ahmed, owner of Suganda Money Changer, said the US dollar has become dearer due to heightened demand.

The official exchange rate went up by Tk 7 overnight and people expect it to rise further in

the future, he said.

Helal Uddin, another money changer at Motiheel, said he has stopped trading the American currency in the kerb market at the increased rate.

"If we trade dollars at higher rates, law enforcement agencies will impose fines," he said.

Another trader, seeking to remain unnamed, said most of the transactions in the kerb market took place at Tk 121-Tk 122 per US dollar.

Maiden PMI

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The construction and service sectors were in a slower expansion phase owing to higher input costs, said the report.

Speaking at the launch, M Masrur Reaz, chairman of the Policy Exchange, said: "It is a snapshot of the business situation of a country. It will be published every month."

He said the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics collects huge data. However, it is challenging

to obtain data from the national statistical agency in a timely manner.

"Sometimes, it does not reflect the dynamism of the private sector.

Therefore, the PMI index will be helpful for the private sector, the government and foreign partners to make data-backed decisions on time."

Waseqa Ayesha Khan, state minister for finance, said Bangladesh needs efficient resource management and that

requires correct data.

She believed the PMI would provide valuable insights into the economy, helping make proper, data-driven decisions.

Matt Cannell, deputy British high commissioner and development director to Bangladesh, said the PMI would assist policymakers and business leaders in making informed and timely investment decisions.

In any turbulent time, people need

clear indications about businesses and the PMI will play an important role in this effect, he added.

MCCI President Kamran T Rahman said the index would be a vital tool for the government and the private sector when it comes to decision-making.

Stephen Poh, executive director of the SIPMM, Nihad Kabir, and Md Saiful Islam, both former presidents of the MCCI, also spoke.

Rural food inflation hit 15%

FROM PAGE B1
Sen made these remarks at a book launching event, titled "Stabilizing the Macroeconomy of Bangladesh", at the BIDS office in Agargaon.

The book was written by Sadiq Ahmed, an economist and vice-chairman of the Policy Research Institute. Mashhur Rahman, economic affairs adviser to the prime minister, was present as chief guest.

"Even with the best lending decision, some loans may get distressed owing to unanticipated deterioration of market conditions. There is an element of this, but most of the non-

performing loans (NPLs) and rescheduled loans in Bangladesh are caused by poor governance," Ahmed said.

He added that without addressing the NPL problem, it would be hard to think of any sustainable solutions for the stock market.

Mustafa K Mujeri, executive director of the Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM), said the banking sector is not really functioning efficiently.

He added that almost all state-owned banks were unhealthy, like many private banks.

"So, our entire banking sector is becoming sicker

day by day. We must work together through proper coordination between monetary and fiscal policies," Mujeri said.

Manzur Hossain, research director of BIDS, said Bangladesh finally started some sort of reforms with smart moves to adopt the crawling peg and hike the policy rate.

"Now, the market will determine a rate that clients can accommodate. It was a welcome move," he added.

He also said issues surrounding the interest rate and current account were related to the exchange rate.

"So, if coordinated

approaches are made, we will get a good situation without import control," Hossain added.

MA Mannan, chairman of the planning ministry's standing committee, blasted loan defaulters.

"You always speak in a soft tone. That's good. But those who are defaulting on loans and withdrawing money from banks in broad daylight, why not call them robbers directly? Robbers must be called robbers," he said.

Mannan also opposed the proposal to form a banking commission, saying it would have little effect.

Oil price rises

REUTERS, London
Oil prices rose on Thursday as falling US crude inventories amid rising refinery intake and a rise in Chinese imports last month supported higher demand expectations for the world's two largest crude consuming nations.

Brent crude futures for July rose 64 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$84.22 a barrel by 0812 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate crude for June was up 66 cents, or 0.8 percent to \$79.65 per barrel.

Crude inventories in the US, the world's biggest oil user, fell last week by 1.4 million barrels to 459.5 million, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Forex reserves slip

FROM PAGE B1
for June. But after its 15-day review mission in Dhaka that ended on Wednesday, it has reduced the NIR threshold for the central bank to \$14.76 billion.

It came as exports and remittances inflows are not showing much improvement.

The country shipped products worth \$3.91 billion last month, down 0.99 percent year-on-year. However, remittance inflow rose 21.31 percent to \$2.04 billion thanks to Eid-ul-Fitr

as the country's migrant workers typically send more money home ahead of the major religious festival for Muslims.

Because of higher commodity prices driven by the supply chain disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine War, and the latest Middle East Crisis, the forex reserves of Bangladesh, an import-dependent nation, have been declining since August 2021 from the record level.

According to the IMF

manual, gross foreign reserves include gold, cash US dollars, bonds and treasury bills, reserve position in the IMF, and special drawing rights holdings.

The NIR is defined as reserves assets minus reserve liabilities to residents and non residents, including commitments to sell foreign exchange arising from derivatives and all credit outstanding with the IMF.

Thus, the NIR is usually lower than the gross reserves.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
Chartering & Tramping Department
BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road
Chattogram, Bangladesh

Memo No. 18.16.0000.373.93.001.24 Date: 08.05.2024

Invitation of Applications for Renewal/New Enlistment of Chartering Brokers for Inter-Ministerial Chartering Committee For the year 2024-2025.

Applications in prescribed form are invited from persons or firms interested to be enlisted as new broker/renewal of existing enlistment with Inter-ministerial Chartering Committee for the year 2024-2025 for participation in freight tenders.

1. Ministry / Division	Ministry of Shipping
2. Agency / Procuring Entity	Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC)
3. Invitation for	Renewal/New enlistment as broker for Inter-ministerial Chartering Committee for the year 2024-2025 for participation in freight tenders.
4. Invitation Ref No.	File Ref: 18.16.0000.373.93.001.24 Comc: 04052024, Date: 08.05.2024
5. Procurement Method	Enlistment.
6. Name and address of the Office Selling Application form.	1. Cash Section, Accounts Department, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram. 2. Regional Office, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, BSC Tower (22 nd floor), Plot No. 2&3, Razuk Avenue (Dainik Bangla Circle), Dhaka -1000.
7. Address of the Office Receiving Application.	Chartering & Tramping Department, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram-4100
8. Last date and time for selling Application Form	Date: 20.05.2024 & Time: 1600 hours
9. Last date and time for Submission of Application Form	Date: 26.05.2024 & Time: 1600 hours
10. Eligibility of Applicant:	i) Experience in shipping business representing foreign principals, Membership of Chamber of Commerce and Industries or Association of National Ship Brokers and Agents which is the member of Federation of National Brokers and Agents (FONASBA) and must have registered office with telephone, fax, email facilities. ii) Existing enlisted brokers in previous year (2023-24).
11. Brief description of goods & associated services	To act as broker for chartering vessels for transportation of goods account different government authorities and chartering out of BSC vessels.
12. Price of Application form	Tk. 3,000.00 (Three Thousand) only or Equivalent US Dollar
13. Name of Official Inviting Application.	General Manager.
14. Designation of Official Inviting Application.	General Manager.
15. Address of Official Inviting Application.	Chartering & Tramping Department, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, BSC Bhaban, Saltgola Road, Chattogram.
16. Contact details of Official Inviting Application.	Tel : 01711360429, Fax : + 88-031-710506 E-mail : gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd
17. The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all Applications.	

General Manager
Chartering & Tramping Department
Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, Chattogram
Cell : + 88 01711360429
Fax: 88-031-710506
Email: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

GD- 759

খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড
বাংলাদেশ নৌ-বাহিনী, খুলনা

বাবি-১৪/তালিকাভুক্তি/২০২৪-২০২৬ তারিখঃ ০৮ মে ২০২৪

সরবরাহকারী/সাবকন্ট্রোলার তালিকাভুক্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১	আবেদনপত্র আহবানকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড, বিএন, খুলনা।
০২	আবেদনপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	১২ মে ২০২৪ হতে ৩০ মে ২০২৪ (বিকাল ০৪ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত)
০৩	আবেদনপত্র জমার তারিখ	০২ জুন ২০২৪ (সকাল ১১:১৫ মিনিট পর্যন্ত)
০৪	আবেদনপত্র খোলার তারিখ	০২ জুন ২০২৪ (সকাল ১১:৩০ ঘটিকা) (আবেদনকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের মনোনীত ব্যক্তি উপস্থিত থাকতে পারবেন)
০৫	আবেদনপত্র গ্রাফি স্থান	ক) খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিঃ এর হিসাব বিভাগ (কাশ শাখা) হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে। খ) নৌ-উপভাগার, বিলকেন্দ্র নামা পাড়া, বিলকেন্দ্র, ঢাকা হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
০৬	আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিঃ এর প্রধান ফটকে রফিক টেকার বসে বসে খামে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।
০৭	আবেদনপত্রের মূল্য	টাকা ৫০০/- (টাকা পাঁচশত) মাত্র (অক্ষেরতযোগ্য)।
০৮	যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	ফোনঃ ০৪১-৮১৩৯৭৫/৭২০০০৩, ০১৭২১-০০৮৬৪৫ ফ্যাক্সঃ ৮৮০-৪১-৭২০৪০৪ ইমেইলঃ oiccoml.ksy@gmail.com, mdshafiqullah.ksy@gmail.com ওয়েবসাইটঃ www.khulnashipyard.com
০৯	বিশেষ নির্দেশাবলি	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন/সকল আবেদন গ্রহণ/খতিল করার অধিকার সার্বক্ষণ করেন।

জিডি-৭৬১ ডিজিএম (সিএসপি)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, DPHE
Kushlia Division, Kushlia
ee.kushlia@dphe.gov.bd/xendphekushlia@gmail.com

e-Tender Notice
Invitation for e-Tender Notice No. 46.03.5000.061.07.154.23-1417; Dated: 30-Apr-2024

01	Ministry Division	Local Government Division
02	Implementing agency	Department of Public Health Engineering, Kushlia Division, Kushlia
03	Source of fund	Need Based Infrastructure Development of Government Primary Schools (NBIDGPS-1)
04	e-Tender IDs	974621
05	Description of works	Construction of WASH Block at Kushlia Division, Kushlia under Need Based Infrastructure Development of Government Primary Schools (NBIDGPS-1) in 2023-2024 fiscal year.
06	Name, designation & address of official inviting tender	Ibrahim Md Taimur, Executive Engineer, DPHE, Kushlia Division, Kushlia, Tel No. 02477781524
07	This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	

Ibrahim Md Taimur
Executive Engineer, DPHE
Kushlia Division, Kushlia

GD- 753

Engineering Division
Khulna University, Khulna.
www.ku.ac.bd

Tender No: KU/ENGG/614/2024 Date: 09/05/2024

e-Tender Notice Tender No. 12/2023-24

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

Tender ID No.	Name of the works	Tender Closing and Opening date & time
980358	Side Protection of Demonstration Pond and HDPE Net Fencing at demonstration Pond Area (West Side of AB-2) of Khulna University, Khulna	23-May-2024 12:00 PM

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 Bank's branches up to Banking hours on e-GP system.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Engr. S. M. Moniruzzaman)
Chief Engineer
Khulna University, Khulna
E-mail: chief@engr.ku.ac.bd
Tel: 02-47734157

GD- 758