

Stakeholders urge specialised credit for small farmers



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Small farmers and agro-businesses in Bangladesh are facing significant barriers in terms of accessing loans. This can be solved by creating specialised credit products for them, said speakers at an event yesterday.

These remarks were made at a stakeholder consultation workshop, hosted by USAID's Feed the Future (FtF) Bangladesh Inclusive Access to Finance Activity (IAF), implemented by Palladium International in partnership with SAJJIDA Foundation.

Policymakers, high officials from financial institutions, and other stakeholders came together at the event to validate the preliminary findings of the assessment "Access to Finance Landscape and Inclusive Development in Bangladesh".

Kazi Rafiqul Hassan, Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank, Joseph Lessard, Director, Office of Economic Growth, USAID Bangladesh and Nasir Ahmed, Chief of Party at FtF spoke at the event, among others.

Alexis Polovina, Farzana Yasmeen, and Farhad Hossain from the USAID mission attended the workshop.



A family of seven has packed themselves into this battery-run auto-rickshaw. With three children in tow, this risky behavior could endanger their lives in the event of an accident. The photo was taken on Satmasjid Road yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Prawn production declines due to feed costs, fry shortage

PARTHA CHAKRABORTY, Bagerhat

Bagerhat district is renowned for commercially producing giant freshwater prawns, which is an important export commodity besides being a popular delicacy across the country.

The production volume of giant freshwater prawns has been on the decline in recent time due to shortage of good quality prawn fries and rising cost of feed, making farmers wary.

The local shrimp cultivators' association believes that the country's export volume of prawns could be tripled if these issues are addressed and resolved.

Giant freshwater prawns, locally known as 'golda chingri', have distinctive tiger-striped brown or black shells, can reach lengths of 35-40 centimetres each, and just four or prawns can weigh up to total one kilogramme.

However, these prawns take around a year of care to reach their full size, thereby requiring a lengthy cultivation process. Medium and

large-sized prawns are usually exported, while smaller-sized prawns are sold domestically at Tk 700-800 per kg. Larger prawns currently fetch a market price of Tk 1,800-1,900 per kg.

Many farmers engaged in prawn farming in Kachua upazila of Bagerhat have expressed concerns over the adverse impact of shortage of high-quality fries and soaring cost of feed on the production of this much sought after export item.



"We are struggling to source good quality fries, while the cost of feed has skyrocketed. This is disrupting the production of prawns and hindering export potential," said Gopal Das, a local prawn farmer.

Fakir Mohitul Islam Sumon, president of Bagerhat Shrimp Cultivators' Association, stressed for government support to address the issues.

"If farmers have access to high-quality prawn fry and reasonably priced feed, the production could be increased by three times. Additionally, government-led training programmes for farmers could help improve yields and exports," he said.

The Department of Fisheries, however, suggested the farmers to modernise their farming practices to boost production. "By using subsidised electricity, improving feed quality, and ensuring virus-free fry production, farmers can enhance prawn size and yields considerably. Increasing pond depth and adopting modern farming techniques will also help in this regard. We are encouraging farmers to shift from traditional to modern farming methods to improve productivity and export capacity," said ASM Russel, district fisheries officer in Bagerhat.



NU unveils new ICT building

STAR REPORT

The National University (NU) is set to enhance its Information, Communications, and Technology (ICT) services, benefiting both affiliated colleges and students, said a press release.

The announcement came from Vice Chancellor Prof ASM Amanullah at the inauguration of a new ICT building on the NU campus.

Dr Amanullah emphasised the importance of modernising the university to meet global demands and improve access to ICT knowledge.

He also highlighted the need for training faculty and officials abroad to further develop their professional skills.

The VC called for cooperation in making NU a key player in national development.

The ceremony began with a moment of silence to honour the martyrs of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

Special guests included Pro-VC Prof Md Nurul Islam and Treasurer Prof ATM Jaforul Azam. The event was chaired by Shahnewaz, the ICT department's director-in-charge, with deans, staff, and faculty members also in attendance.

Continue struggle

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The workshop, part of a nationwide programme, was organised by BNP's training affairs committee in Mukartpur, Munshiganj, yesterday evening. It was attended by designated representatives of the party from Manikganj, Narsingdi and Munshiganj.

Tarique stated that the conspiracies of allies of the ousted dictator have not ceased.

"Many BNP leaders and activists have been killed, imprisoned, or subjected to enforced disappearances in their fight to establish democracy," he said.

He added that due to the oppression and torture inflicted by the dictatorial regime, party members were often forced to flee, sometimes seeking refuge in paddy fields.

"Now... the struggle to rebuild the country has begun. The fight to restore the political rights of the

people and to strengthen their economic foundation is underway. Only you can lead this struggle because you are the strength of BNP," he told party members.

The acting chairman highlighted BNP's contributions to establishing multi-party and parliamentary democracy.

He further said, "The mischief of wicked individuals continues, whether outside or within our party, or even beyond our borders. Many are eyeing the country's financial and natural resources with greed."

Tarique Rahman asserted that the country's safety lies in the hands of those who prioritise national interests above all else. He called on party activists to earn the trust and confidence of the people to secure victory in the upcoming general election.

Affordable beef

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package will help people a lot," said Baki Billah, a customer.

Earlier on November 24, the market was jointly launched by the upazila administration and Amra Kalaparabashi, a voluntary organisation.

There is also a donation box placed in the market, where people can leave some goods for those who are financially struggling to get essential items.

Nazrul Islam, a member

Amra Kalaparabashi, said, "Our initiative aims to provide some relief to both farmers and buyers as they can buy and sell goods in this market without involvement of any syndicates."

Echoing him, Md Rabiul Islam, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalapara, said, "Syndicates have continuously increased the prices of daily necessities through market manipulation. That is why such a farmers' market is so important."

Internet was shut

FROM PAGE 3

communicated through this group to shut down the internet immediately. They were asked to confirm after completion of the order," said Tajul.

Tajul said the interrogation was done in the full presence of lawyers. "There was a glass partition between Palak and the investigation agency, and his lawyers. This is as per the international standard. There is no scope for torture or coercion."

The prosecution was expected to submit a probe report against several government officials, including Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan, yesterday, but the bench granted them an additional two months.

The bench, led by tribunal chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder and members Justice Md Shofiul Alam Mahmood and Judge Md Mohitul Haq Enam Chowdhury, passed the order.

A dream trip ends

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a lifeless body," said Hossain, his voice cracking with grief.

He was first taken to a nearby hospital, and from there he was shifted to Mugda Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Kamrul, the eldest of four siblings, hailed from Noakhali and was living with his family in the Rayerbagh area. He used to run a cloth shop on a footpath in the Maniknagar area.

"He was the family's hope. My son dreamed of creating a better future for all of us. He had been very excited about his upcoming trip as he hardly found the time to go anywhere," Hossain added.

On Wednesday evening,

Kamrul packed his bag and left home. His mother observed him having a heated exchange with someone over the phone.

She never imagined it would be the last time she would see him alive, said Hossain.

According to his family, Kamrul was carrying a smartphone and Tk 10,000 with him. The murderer only took away his phone and Tk 3,000.

The family would later find Tk 7,000 inside one of his pockets, smeared in blood.

Police suspect it to be a mugging incident but are not ruling out other motives.

"We are trying to arrest those responsible for the murder," said Sub-inspector Atikul Islam of Jatrabari Police Station.

Improve within a month, or face consequences

FROM PAGE 3

years old and trucks over 25 years old must be removed by May next year. Transport association leaders have already agreed to this decision, and advertisements were published in national newspapers yesterday to announce it.

The government will provide assistance to vehicle owners, if needed, to secure bank loans for purchasing new buses, he added.

School authorities will be encouraged to use school buses for transporting students in a bid to reduce traffic jams, with a directive from the education ministry expected soon.

The adviser also revealed that company-based bus operations will be launched on nine routes in the capital on a pilot basis starting February 25 next year.

Meeting sources reported that several participants accused the BRTA of poor service, particularly the long delays in issuing driving licences and the inadequate vehicle fitness tests.

"There are countless allegations against BRTA... I cannot shut BRTA down, I will take action against each and every employee of BRTA, including its chairman, if they fail to improve service," a participant quoted Fouzul

Kabir as saying.

After the meeting, he told reporters that BRTA had been given one month to improve. If it fails to do so, action will be taken.

BRTA's arrangements for issuing fitness clearance and driving licences were deemed inadequate, and the authority was advised to involve private garages, driving schools, and police in these processes.

In response to questions about whether the government would seek private services, he said that BRTA was failing to meet its responsibilities, causing public suffering and indulging in corruption. He stressed that everything must be done to change the

situation.

When asked about the consequences if BRTA fails to improve, he warned, "Heads will roll."

AIR POLLUTION MEASURES UNDERWAY

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan said efforts were underway to provide some relief from air pollution, adding controlling pollution would not be possible within a day, month, or even year.

She highlighted the brick kilns in the Ashulia area as a major source of air pollution in Dhaka and mentioned that they were considering declaring Ashulia a brick kiln-free zone.

Tender Cancellation Notice

Date: December 19, 2024

Tender title: Procurement of Cleaning Services
Invitation Ref. No. & Date: icddr,b/SCM/GoB/OTM/Pkg#PS-04/2024-25, Dated: 10-11-24
Published in: The Daily 'Ittefaq' & 'Daily Star' on November 10, 2024 and Addendum published on 04-12-2024.

The above tender for **Procurement of Cleaning Services** is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances.

Senior Manager
Supply Chain Management
Tel: 02-222277001-10, 16340
Ext. 4405/4400

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

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ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

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বর্গফুটের দক্ষিণমুখী নির্মানাধীন ফ্ল্যাট।
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ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

বসুন্ধরা এল-ব্লক একই ব্লকিং এ ১৫২০
বর্গফুটের ৩ টি রেডি ফ্ল্যাট।
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Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation
 Chinishilpa Bhaban, 3, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh
www.bsfc.gov.bd

স্মারক নম্বরঃ ৩৬.০৪.০০০০.০৫৬.০৪.০২২.১৮-২৭৫

তারিখঃ ৪ পৌষ ১৪৩১
১৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪খ্রিঃ

অফিস স্পেস/ফ্লোর ভাড়া দেয়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ চিনি ও খাদ্য শিল্প করপোরেশন এর অধীন শেখ মোজতবা এন্ড কোং (মোস্তফা ম্যানশন), ৪৬, ইমামগঞ্জ, ঢাকায় ৪র্থ তলা বিশিষ্ট ভবন এর নীচতলা ২৮০০ বর্গফুট কম/বেশী ফ্লোর স্পেস খালি রয়েছে। এই ফ্লোর/স্পেস অফিস হিসেবে ব্যবহারে আগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠিত ব্যাংক/বীমা/আর্থিক ও ব্যবসায়িক প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত প্যাড ভাড়া দেওয়ার জন্য দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের সকল প্রকার শর্তাবলি সম্বলিত প্রতিসেট সিডিউল ৭৫০/- (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা মাত্র (অফেরতযোগ্য) মূল্যের বিনিময়ে হিসাব বিভাগ (ক্যাশ), চিনিশিল্প ভবন-১ (৮ম তলা) হতে আগামী ২২-১২-২০২৪ হতে ০৮-০১-২০২৫খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ক্রয় করা যাবে। দরপত্র চিনিশিল্প ভবন-১ এর ৬ষ্ঠ তলায় রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে আগামী ০৯-০১-২০২৫খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।

(স্বাক্ষর)
মোঃ আনোয়ার কবীর
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