

# Star BUSINESS



## Grameen Telecom gets digital wallet licence

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Samadhan Services Limited, a concern of Grameen Telecom, has at last gained ground in its effort to become a payment service provider (PSP) in Bangladesh.

Authorities of Samadhan Services had first applied to the country's central bank for a PSP licence on November 16, 2021.

However, the Bangladesh Bank delayed its decision in this regard until August 2024 although the company fulfilled the requirements to receive a No Objection Certificate (NOC).

The central bank finally granted the NOC on September 29 last year, clearing the way for Samadhan Services to secure its PSP licence, according to officials associated with the process.

Officials of the Bangladesh Bank claimed that high-ups, former governor Abdur Rouf Talukder in particular, had purposefully delayed the process.

They said the delay was enforced as an extension of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's alleged animosity towards Grameen Telecom and its founder, Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, who is now chief adviser to the country's interim government.

Rouf had resigned as Bangladesh Bank governor soon after the Awami League government was ousted by a mass uprising on August 5 last year.

The application from Grameen Telecom was initially reviewed by the central bank's Payment Systems Department,

READ MORE ON B3

## Power subsidies may rise 83% this fiscal year

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

Subsidies for the power sector are likely to balloon 83 percent this fiscal year as the interim government is planning to clear all arrears owed to private power producers.

An additional Tk 25,000- Tk 30,000 crore may be kept in the revised budget to pay off arrears, which will be added to the allocation for subsidies, according to the finance ministry's initial plans.

As a result, overall subsidies for the power sector are expected to rise to around Tk 66,000 crore at the end of FY25, up from an initial budgetary allocation of Tk 36,000 crore.

The allocation is likely to go up in the revised budget for FY25 and the amount will be finalised by March, finance ministry officials said.

As the government is a long way off from its revenue collection target, the funds may be diverted from the budgetary allocation for the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

The budget for FY25 had allocated Tk 265,000 crore for the ADP, but that figure may fall by around Tk 50,000 crore in the revised budget, a top official of the ministry said.

"If we can allocate the amount to the



power sector, the arrears will be cleared by this fiscal year. As a result, the subsidy burden in the power sector will be reduced next fiscal," the official added.

The official also said that the government has taken initiatives to reduce power production costs in order to ensure that arrears do not pile up and that there is some room for flexibility in the future.

In December, a mission from the International Monetary Fund told the government to clear arrears to the power sector by June of 2025. They also proposed increasing electricity prices to help reduce subsidy expenditures.

However, the government refused to increase prices and formed several committees to investigate how they could reduce costs.

Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan, adviser to the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral

Resources, said on Saturday that they are under tremendous pressure to increase electricity and gas prices.

Although the interim government has been in office for six months, electricity prices have not yet increased, he said, adding: "But I don't know how long it will last."

The pressure of piling arrears is akin to having a gun held to their head, according to Khan.

Currently, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) has arrears amounting to Tk 21,000 crore.

Of the amount, Tk 9,000 crore is owed to the Bangladesh Independent Power Producers' Association, whose members have said they will be unable to produce electricity in the summer – which starts around March – if the government fails to clear arrears immediately.

India's Adani power plant also started pressing hard for arrears amounting to around \$850 million since the interim government took office.

Additionally, local coal-fired power plants are facing hassles in importing coal to operate smoothly due to a lack of funds.

READ MORE ON B3

## Global firms hired to recover \$16b siphoned during Hasina's regime

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank has hired global accountancy firms EY, Deloitte, and KPMG to conduct an "asset quality review" of banks alleged to have lost Tk 2 trillion (\$16.4 billion) to influential businesspeople linked to the former Awami League government, according to the Financial Times (FT).

Governor Ahsan Mansur mentioned that the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit has formed 11 teams to trace and reclaim assets suspected of being acquired through embezzlement. These teams will also assist in prosecuting those responsible.

The review will focus on 10 major businesses and individuals, including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her relatives, and conglomerate S Alam Group, led by Mohammed Saiful Alam.

The investigations will also cover six banks, five of which have shares linked to S Alam, the report says.

Mansur said that KPMG's Sri Lanka office is assisting with the review, while EY and Deloitte have yet to comment.

"We aim to determine asset performance, identify defaulters, and conduct forensic audits," he said.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has already filed cases against several individuals, including Alam's sons, for allegedly embezzling Tk 11.3 billion through loans.

A Dhaka court has ordered the seizure of properties connected to the case.

Alam's lawyers, however, have denied the allegations, calling them "baseless" and threatening international arbitration if disputes remain unresolved, as per the FT report.

The Yunus administration is collaborating with global agencies, including the US Treasury and UK anti-corruption units, to recover funds.

"We are encouraged by the response from the international community," Mansur told FT. "Politicians are aware of it and hopefully they will be under public pressure at home to support this cause."

## Foreign loan surge in December brings some relief

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

A big chunk of foreign funds was provided as budgetary support from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in December released \$1.1 billion, leading to a rise in foreign aid disbursement and providing some relief to the government.

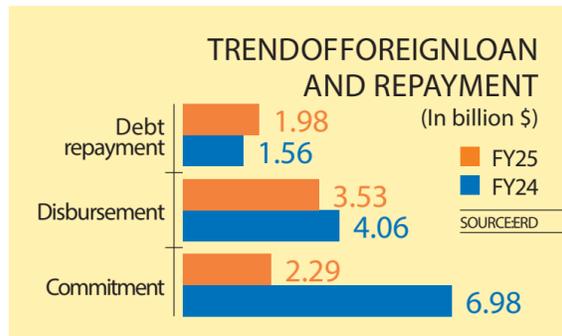
In the last month, the government received around \$2 billion while the average for the previous five months was only around \$309 million.

In the six months from July to December, total foreign loan disbursement amounted to \$3.53 billion whereas it stood at \$1.54 billion at the end of November.

The highest amount of loans during the six-month period came from the ADB, amounting to \$1.05 billion, of which \$600 million came as budget support in December. The World Bank also provided \$800 million, of which \$500 million came as budget support in December.

Besides, Russia disbursed \$532 million, mainly for the Rooppur Power Plant project, while Japan disbursed \$441 million, China \$268 million, and India \$72 million during the six months.

However, despite such a big chunk being disbursed in December, it was not enough to stave off a year-on-year drop of 13 percent in foreign loan disbursement from \$4.06 billion.



However, the rise was somewhat offset by the fact that Bangladesh's foreign debt servicing rose 27 percent year-on-year in the first six months of FY25.

From July to December of FY25, the country paid \$1.98 billion in principal and interest, up from \$1.57 billion in the same period of FY24 due to an expanded foreign loan portfolio and higher global interest rates.

In local currency, the payments increased to Tk 23,675 crore from Tk 17,240 crore, intensifying pressure on public finances.

According to the breakdown, the value of principal payments climbed 33 percent to \$1.23 billion while interest payments rose 16 percent to \$747 million.

Adding to the fiscal pressures, foreign assistance commitments have fallen precipitously.

In the first six months of FY25, total commitments for grants and loans fell sharply, plunging 67 percent to \$2.29 billion compared to \$6.98 billion in the previous year.

Loan commitments fell from \$6.58 billion to \$2 billion while grant commitments reduced to \$289 million from \$410 million.

With the obligations mounting and foreign commitments diminishing, economists called to renegotiate repayment periods and interest rates as well as prioritise foreign-funded projects.

This combination of rising debt obligations

READ MORE ON B3

## Businesses going through tough time

Top executives tell AmCham dialogue

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Businesses are passing through a "hard and rocky" situation amid high inflationary pressure due to a rise in the cost of finance, labour and energy, according to senior officials of various firms, especially foreign corporations.

The situation has worsened for an increase in taxes, they said while urging the National Board of Revenue (NBR) not to focus solely on revenue growth by imposing more taxes on compliant taxpayers.

The NBR needs to consider the impact of its decisions on trade and investment, they added.

Their comments came during a dialogue, titled "Policy Alignment to Enhance the Trade and Investment Climate", organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) at The Westin Dhaka.

Since the 1990s, the challenges faced by businesses in the country have remained almost the same, said Forrest E Cookson, an economist and former president of AmCham.

"The complexities remain the same, the problems remain the same... nothing much has changed," he said.

To attract foreign investors – who are in a wait-and-see approach – economic and policy stability is necessary, he added.

Bangladesh recently ranked 29th out of 50 countries in the World Bank's Business Ready report, trailing behind Nepal and Indonesia, Cookson said.

This highlights a significant challenge in improving the domestic business environment compared to neighbouring countries, he said.

Local businesses are in a truly challenging situation as the costs of business have risen, said ASM Mainuddin Monem, managing director and CEO of Abdul Monem Ltd.

"We are in a hard and rocky situation. Let the private sector survive; they will bring you economic growth and more jobs," he added.

Speaking as chief guest, Salehuddin Ahmed, adviser to the Ministry of Finance, acknowledged that the business environment has become somewhat difficult for businesspeople.

He said most businesspeople who were running large-scale operations have left the country, taking huge amounts of resources with them and leaving some banks empty.

READ MORE ON B3

EBL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION AWARDS 2025

# EBL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION AWARDS 2025

The EBL Climate Change Action Awards 2025, initiated in partnership with the US, German, French, and Danish embassies, aims to recognize and celebrate outstanding contributions towards tackling the most pressing challenges of climate change and promoting sustainability in Bangladesh. The awards will honor individuals, businesses, and organizations excelling in five different categories, thereby fostering innovation and leadership in addressing climate challenges.

Log on to our website [www.ebl.com.bd](http://www.ebl.com.bd) for detailed submission guidelines. Any queries related to submission, please contact us at [submission@ebl-bd.com](mailto:submission@ebl-bd.com) or 0966677325

**Submission closing: January 31, 2025**

Strategic Partners

Media Partner

Hospitality Partner

Scan for details



### 40 local firms to participate in world's largest trade fair in Germany

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

Forty Bangladeshi exhibitors are set to showcase their products at Ambiente 2025, the largest trade fair in the world, which is scheduled to take place from February 7 to 11 this year at Frankfurt am Main in Germany.

Over 3,694 exhibitors from 81 countries are expected to participate in the fair.

Artisan Ceramics, Protik Ceramics, and Paragon are three of the local companies that will showcase their products in Hall 12.0 at the exhibition premises, according to a statement from the organiser of the show.

Other Bangladeshi companies participating in the event include BD Creation, Dhaka Handicraft, RFL Plastic, Golden Jute, and Star Porcelain.

The event provides an opportunity for small and medium exporters to display their products at the world's largest consumer fair, thereby enhancing their export prospects, as stated in the organiser's release.

For over three decades, Bangladesh has maintained an active presence at Ambiente, contributing to the growth of key industries such as jute and handicrafts.

## Banks asked to furnish collateral details of Beximco

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

The government yesterday asked the banks that financed the embattled Beximco Group to submit information regarding the collateral kept by the group against the loans.

The directive was given at a meeting among the secretaries of some ministries and senior officials of nine banks.

At the meeting, a huge gap was found between the market values of the collateral kept by Beximco and the amount of loans it had taken.

Nine banks -- Sonali, Rupali, Janata, Agrani, IFIC, Dutch-Bangla, Global Islami, Exim and UCBL -- lent Tk 40,000 crore to Beximco's concerns.

Of them, state-owned Janata Bank gave the highest amount, providing Tk 23,285 crore.

A good amount of the loans, including the principal and interest, has soured, said AHM Shafiquzzaman, secretary to the labour and employment ministry after the meeting.

Senior officials from the finance, commerce, labour and other ministries as well as the receiver of Beximco were present at the meeting. Ultimately, it was seen that the value of the collaterals that Beximco Group kept with the lenders was

too low to realise the loans.

For instance, the group kept 75 acres of land as collateral, but the current market price of the land is a maximum of Tk 1,200 crore, which is inadequate considering the scenario.

According to Bangladesh Bank data from November, Beximco owes nearly Tk 50,000 crore in bank loans, more than half of which has become non-performing.

So, the government sought further information from the banks to gauge what basis the loans had been given on.

The most important issue is that some banks have not conducted any audits since 2011 but continued to disburse loans to the group, Shafiquzzaman said.

He added that they had instructed banks to furnish information about the loans at a meeting of the 11-member panel of advisers tomorrow.

At Tuesday's meeting, the advisers may take a final decision on the 16 textile and garment units of Beximco, around 40,000 workers of which were affected after the management shuttered the factories in December last year.

A few banks disbursed loans to the group based only on some documents and without assessing loan proposals, he added. Of the nine banks, a few even took

inter-bank loans to provide funds to the group.

Considering the sheer volume of Beximco's debt, the government does not think it is feasible to reopen the textile and garment factories that were shuttered, Labour Adviser Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain said last week.

Currently, three factories are in operation. Since September last year, the government has disbursed Tk 223.43 crore as financial assistance to Beximco Group so that it may pay arrears to its laid-off workers.

The government is now preparing to pay salaries for January although Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday expressed his reluctance to pay the price for Beximco's misdeeds.

"Why will the government spend for a private company like Beximco Ltd for several months?" he questioned at an event organised by the American Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The government is paying the salaries for employees of the group as if they are employed by the state, he said.

Beximco, one of the most talked-about industrial giants in Bangladesh, landed in hot water following the ouster of the Awami League government in early August last year.

## Bangladesh Submarine Cables' profit down 23% in Q2

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

Profits of Bangladesh Submarine Cables PLC (BSCPLC) declined in the second quarter of fiscal year 2024-25 as revenues decreased while operational expenses soared.

The company posted a profit of Tk 41.89 crore for the October-December quarter, a 23 percent year-on-year decline, according to a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website.

Shares of BSCPLC dropped 3.55 percent to Tk 122.1 as of mid day trading yesterday on the DSE.

The company's diluted earnings per share (EPS) stood at Tk 2.24 for Q2, down from Tk 2.91 in the same period a year ago.

The decline was attributed to reduced revenue from international private leased circuit (IPLC) rent and IP transit services, increased operation and maintenance expenses, and a rise in the weighted average number of shares due to the issuance of 2.21 crore new shares to the government in September 2024.

An IPLC offers organisations continuous bandwidth that is both private and secure, providing end-to-end connectivity, and IP transit is where an internet service provider allows traffic to cross its network to reach a destination.

READ FULL STORY ONLINE

## Foreign loan surge

**FROM PAGE B1**

and declining foreign commitments is presenting a huge challenge for Bangladesh's fiscal management amid the lower domestic revenue collection.

"The debt servicing cost was expected as we are approaching the loan repayment since the grace period is ending," said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"This will definitely create pressure on the foreign currency reserves.

"Although it will be challenging, we should try to renegotiate in terms of both interest rates and repayment periods. The government is also trying to address the issue now," he said, mentioning recent negotiations with China.

However, Rahman added that a more sustainable route was to attract

foreign direct investment alongside strengthening the negotiating capacity.

Ashikur Rahman, principal economist at the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, does not believe the burden of debt servicing will pose any risk for the country.

"The debt servicing scenario still does not pose any serious risk as exports and remittances offer a safe cushion that can help the treasury meet its immediate international debt obligations," he said.

As things now stand, payments for the first six months only account for 5.6 percent of foreign exchange earnings from exports and remittances in the corresponding period, which should not be a cause for concern for the interim government, he said.

In the current fiscal

year, foreign exchange earnings from exports and remittances are likely to cross \$75 billion, which means even if debt servicing obligations reach \$4-5 billion, it poses no significant debt default risk for Bangladesh, he said.

Nonetheless, given that the exchange rate is likely to depreciate against the US greenback, the domestic fiscal burden of additional international debt servicing is going to increase.

This necessitates that the Ministry of Finance streamlines domestic resource mobilisation.

However, domestic revenue mobilisation does not offer much hope.

During the July-December period of FY25, revenue collection logged nearly a 0.98 percent negative growth year-on-year.

## Grameen Telecom Businesses

**FROM PAGE B1**

reviewed by the central bank's Payment Systems Department, which found that the company had provided satisfactory documentation to move ahead with the process.

As such, the case was eventually forwarded to the then Bangladesh Bank Governor Rouf in December 2023. But it was not approved at that time, central bank officials said.

The Daily Star tried to reach Rouf over phone to comment on the matter, but his phone number was found switched off.

Md Nazmul Islam, managing director of Grameen Telecom and a director of Samadhan Services, told this newspaper that they are yet to obtain the licence despite securing the NOC.

"The central bank withheld the NOC, but we

do not know why," he said.

"Still, we are relieved to have finally received it," Islam said, adding that Samadhan Services is preparing to enter the local market soon as a digital payment service provider.

**BANGLADESH BANK'S REQUIREMENTS**

The Bangladesh Bank issued a one-year NOC to Samadhan Services, with the company now required to meet several regulatory conditions to secure the final licence. For example, the company has to raise its paid-up capital to Tk 20 crore and maintain it at this level.

The proposed digital wallet company must also implement anti money laundering and counter-terrorism financing policies, ensure customer due diligence, and comply with ICT security standards for scheduled banks in the country.

**FROM PAGE B1**

The problems in the banking sector are significant, and the government is working on those. Ahmed informed that there were a huge number of outstanding bills that bankers needed to pay, and the government has repaid those.

"We owed money to many international financial institutions. They almost stopped their petroleum exports," he said. "Some of the ships were given orders halfway into their journey; unless you pay, the ship will divert to the Maldives or Sri Lanka or any other place."

"So, we repaid them, and the outstanding amount has been reduced to only \$500 million or \$400 million," he added.

Ahmed also said, "We have to create a business-friendly foreign exchange

market, credit flow, regulatory regime, and revenue customs tax."

"I sometimes get news that really amuses me. You say the IMF has postponed its meeting to March, implying that money will not be coming. Bangladeshi people have great imagination," he said.

"But that meeting was postponed because there was no scheduled meeting in February," Ahmed added.

The NBR's key performance indicators should also include investment growth along with revenue growth, said Syed Nasim Manzur, former president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"We are no longer a colonial country. I think the NBR has a responsibility to drive investment, growth and jobs," he added.

READ FULL STORY ONLINE

## Power subsidies

**FROM PAGE B1**

The interim government has formed separate committees to identify loopholes in contracts signed during the ousted Awami League government's tenure, which increased the burden of subsidies, and to renegotiate power purchase prices.

Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, told The Daily Star that the government should focus on reducing power production costs.

"The immediate solution is to phase out inefficient power plants and renegotiate prices, which are excessive," he said.

According to Zahid, some power plants' contracts were unfair to Bangladesh, giving producers the leverage to overcharge.

**Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)**  
TCB Bhaban, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215  
[www.tcb.gov.bd](http://www.tcb.gov.bd)  
**Commercial Section**  
**Invitation For Tender (National) for Purchase of**  
(a) 2,20,00,000 Litre Refined Soyabean Oil, (b) 1,10,00,000 Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil (c) 2,20,00,000 Litre Refined Palm Olein, (d) 10,000 M. Ton Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Commerce.
2	Agency	Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)
3	Procuring Entity Name	Additional Director (Commercial), TCB, Dhaka.
4	Procuring Entry Code	Not applicable.
5	Procuring Entry District	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	a) Refined Soyabean Oil b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) Refined Palm Olein d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.
7	Invitation Ref. No.	a) 26.05.0000.016.08.510.25.4353, b) 26.05.0000.016.08.510.25.4354, c) 26.05.0000.016.08.510.25.4355, d) 26.05.0000.016.08.510.25.4356
8	Date	26-01-2025
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) (National)
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>		
10	Budget and Source of Funds	TCB's Own Fund.
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
11	Tender Package No.	a) TCB/Imp-118/ Soyabean Oil/ 2024-25, b) TCB/Imp-118/ Rice bran oil/ 2024-25, c) TCB/Imp-118/ Palm Olein/ 2024-25 d) TCB/Imp-118/ Red Lentil/ 2024-25
12	Tender Package Name	a) Refined Soyabean Oil, b) Refined Rice Bran Oil, c) Refined Palm Olein, d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.
13	Tender Invitation/ Publication Date	27-01-2025
14	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	09-02-2025 17:00 P.M
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	10-02-2025 12:00 P.M
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	10-02-2025 12:15 P.M
17	Name & Address of the officer(s)	Address
Selling Tender Document of each item can be purchased from the banks & offices as mentioned in right column.		
Receiving Tender Document		
Opening Tender Document		
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>		
18	Brief Eligibility of Tenderer	Bona-fide Suppliers. Details conditions have been mentioned in the Tender documents.
19	Brief Description of goods	a) 2,20,00,000 (Two Crore Twenty Lac) Litre Refined Soyabean Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. b) 1,10,00,000 (One Crore Ten Lac) Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. c) 2,20,00,000 (Two Crore Twenty Lac) Litre Refined Palm Olein Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. d) 10,000 (Ten Thousand) M.Tons Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil packed in 50 kg bag.
20	Price of Tender Document	Price of (a) Refined Soyabean Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand), (b) Refined Rice Bran Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand), (c) Refined Palm Olein tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand) & (d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand).
21	Lot No/ Identification of Lot	Location Tender Security Amount (BDT) Supply Schedule
Tender is to be submitted along with Tender Security amounting to:		
in the form of Pay-Order/ Bank Draft/ Bank Guarantee must be issued from any scheduled Bank of Bangladesh. After issuing NOA, the awardee is to submit 5% (Five Percent) Performance Security in the similar form of Pay-Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee.		
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>		
22	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Golam Khorshed
23	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Additional Director, Commercial (Substitute), TCB Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
24	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Principal Office, Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
25	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Telephone No. 55014273 Telephone No. 55014273 E-mail: <a href="mailto:tcb@tcb.gov.bd">tcb@tcb.gov.bd</a> , <a href="mailto:tcbimn@tcb.gov.bd">tcbimn@tcb.gov.bd</a>
26	Special Instruction	a) All terms and conditions related to the tender and product details are mentioned in the tender document. b) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in whole/in part without assigning any reason.

(Md. Golam Khorshed)  
Deputy Secretary  
Additional Director, Commercial (Substitute)  
Trading Corporation of Bangladesh

গ্রন্থাগারিকের অফিস  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গ্রন্থাগার  
ঢাকা- ১০০০, বাংলাদেশ  
ফোন : ৯৬৬১৯২০-৭৩/৪২৬২  
ফ্যাক্স : ৮৮০-২-৫৫১৬৭৮১০  
ই-মেইল: [librarian@du.ac.bd](mailto:librarian@du.ac.bd)

**Office of the Librarian**  
**University of Dhaka**  
Dhaka- 1000, Bangladesh  
Phone : 9661920-73/4262  
FAX : 880-2-55167810  
Email : [librarian@du.ac.bd](mailto:librarian@du.ac.bd)

**উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ১০টি অনুষদসহ বিভিন্ন বিভাগের চাহিদা মোতাবেক বিদেশী পুস্তক ক্রয়ের জন্য স্থানীয় সরবরাহকারী, এজেন্ট, প্রকাশক ও পরিবেশকদের নিকট থেকে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়।
০২	প্রতিষ্ঠান	ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
০৩	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	গ্রন্থাগারিক, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়। ফোন: ০২৯৬৬১৯২০-৭৩/৪২৬২ ও ৪২৬২, <a href="mailto:librarian@du.ac.bd">librarian@du.ac.bd</a>
০৪	কেন্দ্রের নাম	ঢাকা।
০৫	কালের নাম	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বিভিন্ন বিভাগের জন্য বিদেশী পুস্তক ক্রয়।
০৬	দরপত্র আহ্বানের কারণ	ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গ্রন্থাগারে বিদেশী পুস্তক ক্রয়।
০৭	IFT নং	OTM-1/2024-25, Date: 26/01/2025
০৮	সময়ের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)
০৯	ঢাকার উৎস	ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের রাজস্ব খাত।
১০	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	২৭/০১/২০২৫ খ্রিঃ
১১	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ	২৭/০১/২০২৫ থেকে ১৬/০২/২০২৫ পর্যন্ত (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)।
১২	দরপত্র দাখিল/ সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	উপ-গ্রন্থাগারিক, সঞ্জয় শাখা, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গ্রন্থাগার, ঢাকা-১০০০, বাংলাদেশ।
১৩	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৭/০২/২০২৫ সকাল ১১.০০ পর্যন্ত।
১৪	দরপত্র ঘোষণার তারিখ ও সময়	১৭/০২/২০২৫ সকাল ১১.৩০, দরপত্রদাতা বা তাঁদের মনোনীত প্রতিনিধির (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সম্মুখে দরপত্রের বাস্তবতা যাচাই হবে।
১৫	দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলার স্থান	গ্রন্থাগারিকের অফিস কক্ষ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা- ১০০০।
১৬	দরপত্র দাতার প্রাক-যোগ্যতা	সরকারী, আধা-সরকারী অথবা স্বায়তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে দেশী ও বিদেশী পুস্তক সরবরাহের কমপক্ষে ৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ গভ ও (তিন) বছরে কমপক্ষে ২টি কাজ; Lot-1 এর জন্য ২১,০০,০০০/-, Lot-2 এর জন্য ২৫,০০,০০০/-, Lot-3 এর জন্য ১৩,২৪,০০০/-, Lot-4 এর জন্য ১১,৮৫,০০০/-, Lot-5 এর জন্য ১৯,০০,০০০/- টাকার পুস্তক সরবরাহের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। পুস্তক সরবরাহকারীদের নিম্নলিখিত কাগজপত্র দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে: (ক) সম্পূর্ণ পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্র (STD অনুযায়ী) (খ) হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদপত্র (গ) জ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র (ঘ) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (ঙ) হালনাগাদ ব্যাংক সল্ভেন্সি সনদপত্র ও (চ) বিদেশী পুস্তক সরবরাহের জন্য হালনাগাদ ইমপোর্ট লাইসেন্স/ইমপোর্টারের সাথে সরবরাহকারীর হুক্তিপত্র। দরপত্রে থাকারকারীর স্বাক্ষর অবশ্যই প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান কর্তৃক প্রত্যয়ন করতঃ দরপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
১৭	দরপত্রের মূল্য	৮,৫০০/- (আট হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য)। জনতা ব্যাংক, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় শাখার হিসাব নং ৩৮০০০৩৯২-এ জমা দিয়ে প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাকেজ নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী বরাবর আবেদন ব্যাংক জমার রসিদসহ উপস্থিত হয়ে দরপত্র দাখিল/ সিডিউল সমগ্র করতে হবে।
১৮	প্যাকেজ বিবরণী	সরবরাহের স্থান
স্থানীয় সরবরাহকারী, এজেন্ট প্রকাশক ও পরিবেশকদের কাছ থেকে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ১০টি অনুষদসহ বিভিন্ন বিভাগের জন্য বিদেশী পুস্তক ক্রয়	বিবরণ	a) Lot-1: Arts and Fine Art b) Lot-2: Science, Biological Sciences and Pharmacy c) Lot-3: Law, Earth & Environmental Sciences and Engineering & Technology d) Lot-4: Business Studies e) Lot-5: Social Sciences
	কার্যসেপ প্রদানের তারিখ থেকে	৯০ দিন পর্যন্ত।
	সরবরাহের সময়কাল	
	ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গ্রন্থাগার	
১৯	পুস্তক সরবরাহ প্রক্রিয়া	ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় গ্রন্থাগারে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতির (OTM) মাধ্যমে পুস্তক সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত স্থানীয় সরবরাহকারী, এজেন্ট, প্রকাশক ও পরিবেশক নিয়োগের জন্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশিত হওয়া।

পূর্বে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৬/০১/২০২৫  
অধ্যাপক ড. মো. সাইয়ুদ আলম  
গ্রন্থাগারিক (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

# Farm, rural loans drop significantly

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Farm and rural loan disbursements by banks fell by more than one-fifth in the first four months of fiscal year (FY) 2024-25, owing to a dip in the flow of credit mainly from foreign and private banks.

Banks lent Tk 9,391 crore in the July-October period of this fiscal year, according to data of Bangladesh Bank (BB).

It was Tk 11,960 crore in the same period a year ago.

The BB attributed the downturn to a reduction in loan disbursements by foreign commercial banks.

In figures, their disbursements were down by 76.5 percent year-on-year.

Meanwhile, disbursement by private banks declined 29 percent.

State banks' agricultural and rural credit disbursement also fell.

Only state-owned specialised banks expanded lending to the farm and rural economy.

The banks as a group disbursed 12 percent more loans, said the BB, adding that it had no significant impact as the overall fall was high.

The BB data showed that farm and rural credit disbursement was one-fourth of the lending target of Tk 38,000 crore for the banks in FY25.

This target was 8.57 percent higher than that of the previous year.

The central bank report said nearly half—46 percent of farm loans given in the first four months of this fiscal year—went to facilitate crop production.

The share of the total credit disbursed for the crop sector was 45 percent a year ago.

The livestock and poultry sector increased its share from 24 percent to 25 percent, alongside the fisheries sector



**Farmhands cater to saplings of vegetables and flowering plants at Fulgach village in Lalmonirhat sadar upazila last week. Nearly half or 46 percent of the Tk 9,391 crore of farm loans given out by banks in the July-October period of fiscal year 2024-25 went towards the facilitation of crop production, according to data of Bangladesh Bank (BB) in its October issue on agriculture and rural finance.**

PHOTO: DILIP ROY

from 15 percent to 17 percent.

Conversely, the share for poverty alleviation initiatives decreased from 7 percent to 4 percent.

"These changes indicate a growing focus on crops, livestock & poultry, and fisheries, with a corresponding reduction in the emphasis on the poverty alleviation sector," said the BB, in its October issue of agriculture and rural finance.

The central bank said despite the decline in lending, recovery of agricultural credit grew 12.55 percent year-on-year to Tk 12,322 crore during July-October of

FY25, buoyed by increased recovery by private banks and state-owned specialised banks.

The BB said at the end of October FY25, the outstanding balance of agricultural credit for all scheduled banks was Tk 55,084 crore, reflecting only a 0.40 percent increase from that a year ago.

However, the overdue amount of agricultural credit soared 40 percent to Tk 11,931 crore at the end of October 2024 from that a year ago.

The BB said the disbursement of agricultural and rural finance shows a stronger focus on crops, livestock, and

fisheries.

"But the reduced emphasis on poverty alleviation programmes signals the need for a balanced approach," said the central bank.

It said overall credit recovery showcased an improvement, but the sharp rise in overdue loans, particularly in state banks, highlights challenges in repayment and recovery.

"Microfinance disbursement and recovery saw marginal declines, with overdue balances rising due to external shocks and operational inefficiencies," it said.

# Bangladesh badly needs economic reforms: Salehuddin

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh badly needs economic reforms at this moment, said Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday.

"We are talking about reforms in areas like political reforms, economic reforms, and the electoral process. All are important. But at this moment, we badly need economic reforms," he said.

He made these remarks while speaking at an event marking International Customs Day at the National Board of Revenue (NBR) headquarters in the capital's Agargaon.

Acknowledging the "complexity" of implementing economic reforms, Ahmed said while the task was difficult due to numerous procedural laws and regulations, their proper and transparent application was critical for progress.

"We have some updated systems, but we can't use them properly," he said, pointing to inefficiencies in governance.

The adviser also expressed dissatisfaction with the delayed implementation of the National Single Window, a project initiated in 2017 but only partially launched last month.

He also urged businesses to actively cooperate in enabling revenue collections.

"We don't expect any illogical or illegal demands from you (businesses). You just pay your taxes. I assure you, no one will make unjustified or illegal demands, either officially or through unofficial means under the table," he said.

Ahmed called on the NBR officials to strengthen their efforts to meet revenue collection targets.

"This year is a challenging one, so we want to move forward," he said.

Addressing criticism over rising commodity prices, Ahmed said, "When rice prices increase, it is as if people think they have reached Tk 1,000."

"Prices of some items go up while others decrease. The government is putting in the efforts to address these issues," he said.

Ahmed urged for balanced criticism, adding, "Criticise our shortcomings, but also acknowledge the good work we do."

NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan highlighted the agency's use of customs as a trade facilitation tool.

Khan pointed out the reluctance of businesses to maintain proper transaction records to avoid paying the full amount of taxes.

"While rural people and RMG workers have swiftly adopted mobile financial services, businesses are avoiding automation to evade value added tax (VAT) and tax by not keeping transaction records," he said, criticising businesses for their reluctance to adopt automation.

Addressing import-related challenges, Khan highlighted concerns over widespread misdeclaration at the import stage, describing it as a persistent issue.

"Misdeclaration during imports is a significant problem, and we are determined to eliminate this malpractice," he said.

Khan also acknowledged reports of misconduct among some revenue officials and assured that strict measures would be taken to address such behavioural issues.

"We are committed to ensuring accountability, and any misconduct by officials will be met with firm action," he added.

The event was attended by Md Hafizur Rahman, administrator at the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and Finance Secretary Khairuzzaman Mozumder.



# Ibn Sina posts Tk 21cr Q2 profit

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Ibn Sina Pharmaceutical Industry's profit grew marginally in the second quarter of fiscal year 2024-25.

The company's profit stood at Tk 21.08 crore in Q2. Shares of the company went up 0.24 percent to Tk 292.30 as of mid-day trading yesterday at the DSE.

As a result, its consolidated earnings per share (EPS) rose slightly to Tk 6.75 in the October-December period of 2024 from Tk 6.70 in the same period the previous year, according to a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website.

However, its EPS for July-December 2024 declined to Tk 9.47 from Tk 11.92 in the corresponding period of 2023.

The company's consolidated net operating cash flow per share improved significantly to Tk 17.25 for the July-December period, compared to Tk 11.05 in the same period the previous year.

# Embrace quantum technology and AI for global competitiveness

## Experts urge at lecture

### STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh must harness the potential of quantum technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure cost-effectiveness and remain competitive in an increasingly interconnected world, said Sam Samdani, interim chief executive officer of QuantumCT and external adviser to American consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

Speaking at a lecture titled "Leveraging Quantum Phenomena: Reimagining a New World", organised by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) at the Anis Ud Dowla Conference Hall in the capital yesterday, Samdani called for greater focus on foundational sciences to prepare for the technological revolution.

"The world is connected now. So, work done in Bangladesh can be useful in other countries and developments in other places can also help in Bangladesh," he said.

"Our students and business executives must be equipped to understand foundational sciences like quantum physics and find ways to apply them in real-world contexts."

Samdani emphasised that quantum physics opens the doors to innovation across sectors. Drawing attention to existing breakthroughs like lasers and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), he urged students and researchers to explore the "strange

**This is the best time to be alive. AI helps us learn faster, better, and in more detail. It is no longer necessary to master English to access knowledge. AI makes learning available native languages.**

**Sam Samdani**  
interim chief executive officer of QuantumCT

phenomena" of quantum effects and repurpose them for local applications.

For instance, he mentioned the potential of quantum-based sensors to revolutionise medical imaging with unprecedented resolution, enabling early detection of diseases.

Some of these advancements are already in late-stage development and could hit the market within the next few years, he noted.

According to him, Bangladesh needs a talent pipeline that is well-versed in quantum physics, mathematics, and AI to leverage these technologies effectively.

# Vietnam set to become regional manufacturing tech hub this year

## ANN/VIETNAM NEWS

Việt Nam has the potential to become a manufacturing hub in the region this year, especially in fields involving technology, as global companies have expressed interest in expanding operations in the country.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into Việt Nam reached nearly US\$31.4 billion in the first 11 months of 2024, with disbursed FDI estimated at about \$21.7 billion, an increase of 7.1 per cent compared to the same period in 2023. The year 2024 was the third consecutive year that the country disbursed over \$20 billion in FDI.

Việt Nam is among the top 15 developing countries attracting the most FDI globally.

The northern province of Bắc Ninh led the country with total registered investment capital of nearly \$5.04 billion, accounting for 16 per cent of the total national investment capital, more than three times higher than the same period in 2023. The coastal province of Quảng Ninh ranked second with \$2.29 billion of registered capital, followed by HCM City with \$2.28 billion, then Hải Phòng, Hà Nội and Bình Dương.

Among the 110 countries and territories investing in Việt Nam in the first 11 months, Singapore led with a total investment capital of nearly \$9.14 billion, accounting for over 29 per cent of the total investment, a 53.7 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2023.

## REUTERS, Hong Kong

In 2023, smartphones-to-silicon conglomerate Huawei quietly released its flagship Mate 60 Pro handset. The launch, while muted, was worth celebrating in the People's Republic: the device featured a made-in-China chip that had previously seemed out of reach amid crippling US sanctions.

Late last month, Hangzhou-based startup DeepSeek added the latest technological surprise by claiming to have trained a large language model on a par with the offerings of OpenAI and Meta Platforms at a fraction of the cost.

Those accomplishments underscore the ways in which the People's Republic is finding workarounds as the West tries to curb its progress on artificial intelligence. At stake is a potential economic boost that could be worth \$6 trillion a year, using McKinsey estimates.

President Xi Jinping has also prioritised making the People's Liberation Army a world class military force, including by developing AI capabilities in areas like unmanned weapons and data processing. It's still early days, but the evidence so far suggests China could just about keep pace with the West.

Consecutive US administrations, along

with the country's allies, have imposed investment and trade restrictions on the grounds that chip and AI advances in the People's Republic pose a security risk.

The latest blow came earlier this month, when the US government restricted the

flow of advanced graphics processing units (GPUs) for AI data centres, in a move that looked partly intended to stop China getting its hands on prized Nvidia kit through third countries.

Beijing has responded to the years-

long onslaught by funnelling billions of dollars – through subsidies, research grants, tax breaks, cheap bank loans and more – to domestic champions. Shenzhen-based Huawei is leading the charge with advanced silicon, including a 2019 processor that matched Nvidia's best at the time, and the now-infamous 2023 Mate 60 smartphone chip. The privately held group is a formidable innovator, spending almost one-quarter of its \$100 billion revenue in 2023 on research and development, compared with 11 percent to 19 percent for Alphabet, Meta, Amazon, and Microsoft.

It's far from alone, however. As Nvidia's top-of-the-line GPUs grow scarcer in China, other local outfits like \$40 billion Cambricon Technologies are vying to fill the gap. Citigroup analysts estimate that Jensen Huang's company will see its market share in the People's Republic fall as low as 50 percent in 2025, compared with 80 percent in 2024.

Shanghai listed Cambricon is on track to more than double its top line this year, to 4.3 billion yuan (\$587 million), reckon analysts at Bernstein. The hope is that, with sufficient money and state support, Chinese chip designers can break Nvidia's bottleneck.



**People check Huawei's new Mate 70 mobile phone inside a shop at the Wangfujing shopping area in Beijing, China.**

PHOTO: AFP/FILE