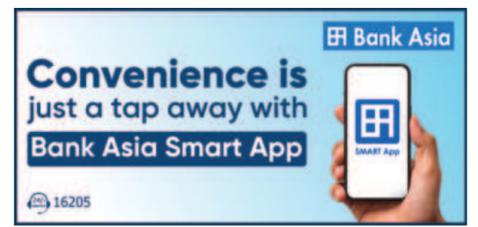


# Star BUSINESS



## Implement at least one taskforce recommendation Chief adviser urges colleagues

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Education and Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud said the recommendations of the taskforce committee have been handed over to the chief adviser, and all advisers were asked to choose at least one recommendation that can be implemented during their tenure.

"No other better way is there to implement the recommendations of the taskforce," he said.

The adviser made these comments yesterday at a press conference organised at the National Economic Council in Dhaka's Agargaon area to present a report on the recommendations made by the taskforce under the Planning Ministry.

The taskforce was formed on September 10 last year to develop strategies for boosting the economy and mobilising resources for equitable and sustainable development.

The 12-member committee submitted its report to the interim government last week.

Referring to a similar taskforce in the 1990s, Mahmud said it had recommended many good measures, but none were implemented.

"It would not be bad if at least one recommendation for every ministry could be implemented," he said.

READ MORE ON B3

## Apparel leads 5.7% export growth in January

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The country's merchandise exports increased by 5.7 percent year-on-year in January, driven by higher shipments of Bangladesh's key export item, readymade garments.

The country shipped \$4.43 billion worth of goods in January, up from \$4.19 billion in the same month a year ago, according to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) data released yesterday.

Garment exports rose 5.57 percent year-on-year to \$3.66 billion during the month. However, exports of other traditional items like leather and leather goods, and jute declined.

January's receipts brought total export earnings nearly 12 percent higher, to \$28.96 billion in the first seven months of fiscal year (FY) 2024-25. In the same period of FY24, exports stood at \$25.93 billion.

Apart from apparel, some products also performed well during the July-January period.

For example, frozen fish shipments increased by 13.19 percent year-on-year to \$283.54 million.

During the July-January period, agro exports grew by 10.59 percent to \$673.84 million, according to EPB data.

In the first seven months of FY25, shipments of pharmaceuticals also increased by 11.29 percent to \$132.44 million.

Plastic goods exports grew by 24.32 percent to \$181.79 million. Leather and leather goods exports grew by 34.77 percent to \$669.03



### Export earnings

In billion \$; SOURCE: EPB



million in the July-January period of the current fiscal year.

In the July-January period, bicycle exports increased by 63.95 percent to \$63.04 million. Non-leather footwear exports grew by 34.21 percent to \$318.09 million.

Home textile exports grew by 6.22 percent to \$493.86 million, and specialised textile shipments increased by 20.19 percent to \$229.70 million, according to EPB data.

Man-made filament exports edged up by 24.91 percent to \$231.18 million, and cotton and cotton product exports grew by 13.74 percent to \$369.39 million.

Handicraft exports grew by 15.18 percent to \$23.82 million in July-January of the current fiscal year, EPB data also show.

Faruque Hassan, former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said apparel exports continued to grow, defying "a lot of domestic and international challenges."

He said that Donald Trump's second term in the White House may benefit apparel exports to the American market from Bangladesh.

READ MORE ON B3

STOCKS	
DSEX ▲	CASPI ▲
0.38%	0.22%
5,145.84	14,376.66

COMMODITIES	
Gold ▼	Oil ▲
\$2,795.71	\$73.96
(per ounce)	(per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS			
MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▼ 0.41%	▼ 2.66%	▼ 0.76%	▼ 0.06%
77,186.74	38,520.09	3,826.47	3,250.60



## Stock investors stage protest, demand reforms

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Hundreds of investors took to the streets of Motijheel in Dhaka yesterday, demanding 11 specific reforms to urgently revive the stock market.

The investors, under the banner of the Bangladesh Capital Market Investors Association (BCMIA), staged their protest in front of the old building of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

The 11-point demand includes the immediate removal of the chairman of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) and the chairman of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB).

They argued that appointing competent leadership is crucial for reviving the struggling stock market.

Other key demands include withdrawing the capital gains tax in light of the ongoing market downturn.

They also called for an end to "arbitrary" regulatory interventions, including "untimely" investigations and "unnecessary" transfers of listed companies to the Z category, which they claim only exacerbate investor losses.

The protesters demanded reforms in the criteria for shifting companies to the Z category, arguing that such decisions disproportionately impact investors.

They also insisted that all listed companies should be required to distribute at least 50 percent of their earnings as dividends.

Furthermore, they called on banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, mutual funds, and the ICB to invest and fully comply with their stock market investment obligations.

Another key demand was the immediate implementation of a regulation requiring listed companies to hold at least 30 percent of their shares.

READ MORE ON B3

## Ceramics face double blow: gas crisis and tax burden

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The country's ceramic industry is facing a severe crisis due to an ongoing gas shortage and the recent imposition of supplementary duty (SD) on the sale of ceramic tiles and sanitary ware, according to industry leaders.

"The government should ensure a stable gas supply," urged Moynul Islam, acting president of the Bangladesh Ceramic Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BCMEA), yesterday.

"...and withdraw the supplementary duty on ceramic tiles and sanitary ware to support the industry's continued growth during this crisis," he told a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU).

The BCMEA leader stated that the ongoing gas shortage and high production costs are major problems for the industry.

He called for urgent government intervention to recognise ceramics as a "priority industry," which they believe is essential for maintaining local production, retaining employment, and ensuring global competitiveness.

The ceramics sector, which generates Tk 500 crore in annual export earnings and provides employment to over 500,000 people, is struggling due to inconsistent gas supplies and escalating costs, he said.

In spite of ensuring a 150 percent growth in production and investment over the past decade, many manufacturers are now facing operational uncertainties, said Islam.

Islam said the ceramic industry has become a significant alternative to imports, saving approximately \$2 billion annually for the local economy.

He added that more than 80 ceramic factories in Bangladesh are currently meeting 85 percent of domestic demand, while also generating substantial export revenue.

The BCMEA reported that the sector has attracted a total investment of Tk 18,000 crore, with ceramic manufacturers paying Tk 1,200 crore in gas bills annually.

However, ongoing gas shortages have

### BY THE NUMBERS

Total domestic and foreign investment: Tk 18,000cr

Annual sales in the local market: over Tk 8,000cr

Contribution to revenue per year: Tk 3,500cr

Direct and indirect employment: over 500,000



Annual earnings from exports: Tk 500cr

Local supply meets 85% of domestic demand

Annual gas bill payments: Tk 1,200cr

Value addition in products: 60%

severely impacted business operations, leaving many factories struggling to maintain production for the past year, it said.

The factories are in areas such as Dhaka (Mirpur, Savar, Islambagh, Dhamrai, and Kalampur), Narayanganj (Rugganj and Meghnaghat), Gazipur (Tongi, Kashimpur, Bhabanipur, Sripur, and Mawna), Narsingdi (Pachdona), and Mymensingh (Bhaluka and Trishal).

Instead of the required 15 pounds per square inch (PSI), gas pressure often drops to 2 PSI to 3 PSI or even reaches zero, causing daily production losses of over Tk 20 crore, said Islam.

Many ceramic companies have been forced to halt investment plans, while newly established factories remain non-operational due to the crisis, he said.

"This not only restricts business expansion but also limits job opportunities for thousands of workers," Islam stated.

The BCMEA also raised concerns over the

continuous increase in gas prices, which has significantly driven up production costs.

Between 2015 and 2023, industrial gas prices surged by 345 percent, including by 150 percent in 2023 alone, it said.

This has led to an 18 percent to 20 percent increase in production costs, making it increasingly difficult for local manufacturers to compete with imported products, it said.

Islam cited that recent reports indicate the government is considering another 152 percent gas price hike, which would further inflate production costs by 30 percent to 35 percent.

"This would not only impact the ceramic industry but also raise transportation and operational expenses, ultimately affecting end consumers," he stated.

The BCMEA called on the government to reconsider the proposed price hike to safeguard the sector's competitiveness in local and global markets.

READ MORE ON B3

## New Gulshan office to cost MTB Tk 450cr

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Mutual Trust Bank (MTB) has announced its plan to acquire 15 floors of a newly constructed 21-storey commercial building in Gulshan-1 to establish its corporate head office.

The bank's board approved the purchase at a meeting on February 2, according to a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website.

Shares of the bank closed 1.60 percent higher at Tk 12.7 on the DSE yesterday.

The floors, spanning from the ground to the 14th, will be bought for Tk 450 crore, excluding VAT and registration costs. The acquisition is subject to regulatory approval.

The private bank posted Tk 90.11 crore in profits for the July-September period of 2024, registering a 9 percent increase in earnings year on year.

With the earnings in the July-September period, MTB's total profit rose 7 percent year on year to Tk 203.74 crore in the three quarters since January 2024.

MTB said its Earnings Per Share (EPS) increased to Tk 2.07 in January-September 2024 from Tk 1.94 in the same period the previous year.

The bank also reported an increase in EPS to Tk 0.96 in the July-September 2024 period, up from Tk 0.93 a year ago.

The private bank said its cash flow soared during the period.

MTB's net operating cash flow per share doubled to Tk 44.27 in the nine months to the end of September 2024, compared to Tk 22.42 for January-September 2023.

MyPrime **SIGN-UP NOW**

**GET 300 TK CASHBACK**

\*Conditions Apply

# Anchor relaunches in Bangladesh with Anchor Pushti Dudh

## Transcom Ltd partners with Anchor for a new era of nutritional offerings

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Anchor, a trusted and No 1 dairy brand in New Zealand, has re-entered the Bangladesh market with the launch of its latest product, Anchor Pushti Dudh, through a partnership with Transcom Limited, a prominent business conglomerate in the country.

This collaboration aims to make high-quality, nutritious dairy products accessible to consumers, bringing everyday health benefits to more households in Bangladesh.

Anchor Pushti Dudh is a milk powder that contains 22 essential vitamins and minerals, including protein, calcium, and vitamins A and D, designed to support growth, provide energy, and boost immunity. Focused on affordability and versatility, it caters to the specific needs of the people.

Md Zahid Hussain, director of operations and group CEO's office of Transcom Distribution Co Limited (TDCL), and Fazlan Faizal, general manager for Sri Lanka and local emerging markets of Fonterra Brands Lanka (FBL), inaugurated the product in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

"We're excited to join hands with

Transcom Ltd to bring Anchor Pushti Dudh to the people of Bangladesh, a market with vast potential and a strong affinity for high-quality, trusted dairy products," said Faizal.

"As a dairy nutrition company, Fonterra is focused on delivering high-quality dairy products for people at all life stages, backed by our world-class grass-to-glass supply chain," he added.

"Our commitment to combining premium New Zealand dairy quality with affordability and nutritional value aligns perfectly with the needs of the local consumer," he continued.

Hussain said, "Expanding our portfolio from food and beverage to dairy nutrition represents an exciting new chapter for Transcom Distribution Co Limited."

"We are committed to bringing high-quality, trusted products to the Bangladesh market, and our partnership with Anchor allows us to introduce premium dairy nutrition options to local consumers," he added. "By importing world-class products like Anchor Pushti Dudh, we aim to meet the growing demand for nutritious, versatile, and affordable dairy options in Bangladesh," he continued.



Adilur Rahman Khan, adviser to the Ministry of Industries and the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, and Alihussain Akberali, chairman of Bangladesh Steel Re-rolling Mills (BSRM), inaugurate a new steel plant of BSRM at Mirsharai in Chattogram recently.

PHOTO: BSRM

# GPH Ispat organises 'GPH Maharaj Darbar-2024'

STAR BUSINESS DESK

GPH Ispat Limited, one of the leading manufacturers of steel rebar in Bangladesh, recently organised "GPH Maharaj Darbar-2024."

A total of 185 channel partners of the company across the country participated in the two-day event, according to a press release.

The company recognised top-performing partners in various categories based on their performance in 2024, including marketing of world-class Quantum Steel, market expansion of GPH Quantum B600c-R and B600D-R, and maintaining consistent sales success throughout the year.

Of the partners, the top 10 were awarded the "Maharaj" honour, while the next best 10 received the "Mahaveer" honour. Additionally, some 18 channel partners were honoured with the "Birpratap" title at the divisional level for the first time.

This year, Mahabubur Rahman (Mahabub Brothers at Teknaf), Md Sirazur Rahman (Al Amin Traders in Chattogram), Md Zakir Hossain (Rahman Properties and Trading Corporation at Dhaka Cantonment), Md Zakarul Hoque

(Haque Traders at Ashulia, Savar), Md Ashraf Ali (KA Steel House at Bhatara), Raquib Ahmed Chowdhury (AB Steel House at Rajakhal), Shamvu Das (Sourav Enterprise in Keraniganj), Md Kamal Hossain (Al-Habib Steel Corporation at Turag), Md Azizul Haque Faisal (Faisal and Brothers at Isakhan Navy Gate in Chattogram), and Md Mizanur Rahman Milon (Dhaka Trade Link in Savar) were awarded the top "Maharaj" honors.

Md Rashedul Islam (Fahim Enterprise at Borgola, Bogura), Md Mujtaba Hasemi (Al-Manar Steel at Kadernaj, Rajshahi), Dharmendra Ghosh Dollar (Imperial Sanitary House, Rangpur), Md Shafiq Ullah (FS Enterprise, Mymensingh), Md Aminur Rahman Imroj (United Traders in Mohammadpur), Abdur Sattar Bhuyan (Satata Enterprise, Narsingdi), Abul Hossain Molla and Abdur Rouf Molla (Salma Traders, Dohar), Md Mosharof Hossain (Mosharof Hossain, Chandpur), and Mohammad Rassel Uddin (Saklain Enterprise, Chattogram) were honored with the "Mahaveer" honors.

All deserving offspring of the channel partners were awarded GPA-5 honors, and their mothers were recognised with the "Kriti Ma" (Meritorious Mother) honour.

# OpenAI announces new 'deep research' tool for ChatGPT

AFP, Tokyo

US tech giant OpenAI on Monday unveiled a ChatGPT tool called "deep research" that can produce detailed reports, as China's DeepSeek chatbot heats up competition in the artificial intelligence field.

The company made the announcement in Tokyo, where OpenAI chief Sam Altman also trumpeted a new joint venture with tech investor SoftBank Group to offer advanced artificial intelligence services to businesses.

AI newcomer DeepSeek has sent Silicon Valley into a frenzy, with some calling its high performance and supposed low cost a wake-up call for US developers.

OpenAI, whose ChatGPT led generative AI's emergence into public consciousness in 2022, said its new tool "accomplishes in tens of minutes what would take a human many hours".

"You give it a prompt, and ChatGPT will find, analyse, and synthesise hundreds of online sources to create a comprehensive report at the level of a research analyst," the company said in a statement.

Altman said on social media platform X that deep research, which paid "Pro" ChatGPT users can access 100 times a month, was "slow" and required a lot of computing power, but he was also bullish.

"My very approximate vibe is that it can do a single-digit percentage of all economically valuable tasks in the world, which is a wild milestone," Altman wrote in another X post.

PRICES OF KEY ESSENTIALS IN DHAKA CITY			
	PRICE (FEB 3, 2025)	% CHANGES FROM A MONTH AGO	% CHANGE FROM A YEAR AGO
Fine rice (kg)	Tk 70-Tk 85	0.65 ↑	13.14 ↑
Coarse rice (kg)	Tk 52-Tk 56	2.86 ↑	3.85 ↑
Loose flour (kg)	Tk 40-Tk 45	0	-13.27 ↓
Lentil (kg)	Tk 105-Tk 110	0	0
Soybean (litre)	Tk 175-Tk 176	6.69 ↑	8.67 ↑
Potato (kg)	Tk 20-Tk 30	-54.55 ↓	-39.76 ↓
Onion (kg)	Tk 45-Tk 55	-25.93 ↓	-41.18 ↓
Egg (4 pcs)	Tk 44-Tk 48	-3.16 ↓	-3.16 ↓

SOURCE: TCB



Md Zahid Hussain, director of operations and group CEO's office of Transcom Distribution Co Limited, and Fazlan Faizal, general manager for Sri Lanka and local emerging markets at Fonterra Brands Lanka, pose for photographs after the launch of Anchor Pushti Dudh through a partnership with Transcom Limited in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: TRANSCOM LIMITED

# BRAC Bank, Parjatan Corp team up to simplify payments for tourists

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank signed a partnership agreement with Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) to introduce seamless payment solutions for local and international tourists.

Khairuddin Ahmed, head of merchant acquiring, retail banking of BRAC Bank, and Md Nazrul Islam, general manager (commercial) of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, signed the deal at the latter's office in the capital's Agargaon recently, said a press release.

Under this collaboration, the corporation will accept payments through BRAC Bank's Point of Sale (POS) terminals and Bangla QR codes, allowing tourists to transact using Visa, MasterCard, JCB, Diner's Club, and Discover Card.

This initiative enhances convenience by enabling quick and secure transactions at hotels, motels, resorts, restaurants, and international airports.

It ensures a hassle-free experience for international visitors and makes financial transactions smoother and more efficient.



Khairuddin Ahmed, head of merchant acquiring and retail banking of BRAC Bank, and Md Nazrul Islam, general manager (commercial) of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, shake hands and exchange signed documents of an agreement at the Parjatan Bhaban in the capital's Agargaon recently.

PHOTO: BRAC BANK

# NRB Bank donates 2,500 waste bins to CCC

STAR BUSINESS DESK

NRB Bank PLC recently donated 2,500 waste bins to Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative, marking a significant step towards environmental sustainability.

Tarek Reaz Khan, managing director of the bank, handed over the donation of waste bins to Shahadat Hossain, mayor of CCC, at a ceremony on the CCC office premises in Chattogram, according to a press release.

The donation of waste bins aligns with NRB Bank PLC's broader commitment to sustainability, environmental conservation, and community development.



PHOTO: NRB BANK

Shahadat Hossain, mayor of Chattogram City Corporation, receives the donation from Tarek Reaz Khan, managing director of NRB Bank, on the CCC office premises in Chattogram recently.

# Oil prices climb

REUTERS, Singapore

Oil prices jumped on Monday after US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China, raising fears of crude supply disruption from the two biggest suppliers to the US, but the prospect of lower fuel demand capped gains.

US West Texas Intermediate crude futures were at \$73.89 a barrel, up \$1.36,

or 1.88 percent, by 0656 GMT, after hitting its highest since Jan. 24 at \$75.18 a barrel earlier in the session.

Brent crude futures rose 73 cents, or 0.96 percent, to \$76.40 a barrel, after touching a high of \$77.34.

Trump on Saturday ordered sweeping tariffs on goods from Mexico, Canada and China, kicking off a trade war that could dent global growth and reignite inflation.

**Directorate General Defence Purchase**  
Ministry of Defence  
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215  
Web: www.dgdp.gov.bd  
E-mail: ddp3navy@dgdp.gov.bd

**Re-Tender Notice**

1. Sealed tender in Foreign currency is invited from bonafide Manufacturer/Dealer/Suppliers/ Importers (enlisted with DGDP) for supply of the following item for Bangladesh Navy:

S. No.	Name of item	Date of selling From To	Date of opening	Cost of tender schedule	Tender number	Currency
1	Renewal of Propulsion System of BNS Anushandhan, Qty: 01 No.	03-02-25 16-02-25	17-02-25 at 12:05	5,000.00	249.07.157.24 Dt. 10 Nov 24	Foreign
2	Renewal of Propulsion System of BNS Turag and BNS Karotta, Qty: 02 Nos.			5,000.00	249.07.158.24 Dt. 10 Nov 24	

2. Tender schedule with detailed specification/condition will be available in this Directorate General on payment as per IT selling rate (non-refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours on the abovementioned date of selling. The tender can be dropped in the tender box latest by 1200 hours and the same will be opened at 1205 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of the tenderers (if present).

আই এস পি আর/বিবিধ/৫৪  
০৩/০২/২৫

Lt Commander BN  
For Director General

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Special Branch, Bangladesh Police, Malibagh, Dhaka.

Memo No. 44.01.0000.094.07.008.06.25/49 Date: 03/02/2025

**e-Tender Notice**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal for the following Items. Interested Tenderers are requested to visit (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) website for details.

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Procurement Item Name	Tender Document Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time
1.	1048661	Mine Metal Detector.	19 February-2025, 17:00	20 February-2025, 15:30
2.	1067889	Forth Detector Panel & Communication Module of Portable Threat Detector & Scanning System	19 February-2025, 17:00	20 February-2025, 16:00
3.	1067882	X-Ray Generator & Operating Software of Portable Threat Detector & Scanning System	19 February-2025, 17:00	20 February-2025, 16:30

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies are allowed. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP portal and e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Mohammad Yousuf Ali BPM  
Special Superintendent of Police  
Promoted to the post of Additional DIG  
Special Branch, Bangladesh Police, Dhaka  
☎ 02 44070329  
e-mail : [ssfinancesb@gmail.com](mailto:ssfinancesb@gmail.com)

GD-344

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

**১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন**  
**চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস**

১। এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস এর সার্বিক তত্ত্বাবধানে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজ সম্পন্ন করা হবে। অগ্রহী ঠিকাদার/স্বাক্ষরী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিকট হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক	কাজের বিবরণ	মত্ব
১।	সুই প্রসিঞ্চল নিশ্চিতকরণে চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাসের Annual Collective Trg এর বিবিধ ব্যায়, প্রসিঞ্চল ও অনুশীলনের জন্য ক্ষতিপূরণ শস্যহাসী এবং ডিএমএ ও প্রসিঞ্চল সজ্জার অন্য ব্যায় নির্বাহ	
২।	সুই প্রসিঞ্চল নিশ্চিতকরণে প্রসিঞ্চল মার্চ, এয়ারস্ট কোর্সে গ্রাউন্ড প্রসিঞ্চল এলাকা প্রস্তুতকরণ ও সংস্কার/সেয়ারমেন্ট, রেঞ্জ নিরাপত্তার সরঞ্জামাদি ক্রয়, টার্গেট প্রস্তুতকরণ ও সেয়ারমেন্ট, প্রসিঞ্চল সজ্জার সামগ্রী ক্রয় ও সেয়ারমেন্ট, প্রসিঞ্চলমার্চ প্রস্তুতকরণ ও সংস্কার, প্রসিঞ্চল ও ফায়ারিং প্রতিযোগিতা সর্বশ্রেণী ব্যায়জার বহন, অগ্রহী ক্যাম্প এলাকা ভাড়া, প্রসিঞ্চল সজ্জার স্টেশনারী ক্রয়, বেলোদ্রার বিভিন্ন দলের সেন্টার ও বিবিধ প্রসিঞ্চল ব্যায় নির্বাহ ব্যায়ন ক্রয়, সেয়ারমেন্ট ও সরবরাহ	

২। দরপত্র গ্রহণের ইচ্ছক ঠিকাদার/স্বাক্ষরী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ অগামী ২৪ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে অবিন্যাসক, ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস হতে উল্লিখিত কাজের সুখক সুখক অফিসিয়াল অবিল চলাকালীন সময়ে সত্বে কর্তে পারবেন।

৩। দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী ঠিকাদার/স্বাক্ষরী কর্তৃক প্রদা সামগ্রীর মূল্য নির্ধারণ পূর্বক অগামী ২৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখ ১০০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাসের প্রধান কার্যালয়ে রক্তিক টেজার ব্যাজে জমা দিতে হবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, উক্ত তারিখেই ১২০০ ঘটিকায় উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে কাজের পরিচালনা পর্বে কর্তৃক দরপত্র খোলা হবে।

৪। উল্লিখিত কাজের বিল প্রস্তুতি বিধি মোতাবেক পরিশোধ করা হবে।

৫। ঠিকাদার/স্বাক্ষরী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ কর্তৃক প্রস্তুতি হারে সর্বোচ্চ (VAT/IT) প্রদান করতে হবে।

৬। উল্লেখ্য যে, প্রদা সামগ্রী কর্তে পরিচালনা পর্বে কর্তে করণ দর্শনো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা ব্যক্তি কর্তে স্বাক্ষর সর্বেক্ষণ করে।

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/৬৭  
০৩/০২/২৫

অবিন্যাসক  
১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন  
চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস  
মোবার ০১৭৯৯-২৪২১০৬

GD-350

# Six insurers fined Tk 37 lakh for breaching rules

SUKANTA HALDER

The Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (Idra) has declared fines amounting to Tk 37 lakh on six insurance companies for breaching rules.

Through these penalties, the watchdog of Bangladesh's insurance industry aims to encourage better regulatory compliance and transparency among local insurers.

The companies being fined are Guardian Life Insurance, National Life Insurance, Alpha Islami Life Insurance, Provati Insurance, Rupali Insurance, and Continental Insurance.

Provati Insurance is facing the highest fine of Tk 10 lakh, while Alpha Islami Life will pay the second-largest amount of Tk 7 lakh. Meanwhile, the other four will pay Tk 5 lakh each.

The Idra has imposed these fines as the companies committed several regulatory violations, such as failing to appoint a chief executive officer, provide withholding agent details, ensure accurate policy information, and breaching tariff rates.

Guardian Life was fined for violating the Insurance Act 2010 by not appointing a chief executive officer since January 2021.

The company has also been instructed to fill the position within the next 60 days.

Regarding National Life, the Idra is fining the company for failing to submit details on 43,161 of its roughly 1.37 lakh withholding agents to the Insurance Information Management System (IIMS).

Alpha Islami Life had settled 46 death claims in 2022, paying out about Tk 56 lakh to this end, according to the company's record books.

However, the insurer's annual financial report for that year quoted the value paid for death claims at Tk 27 lakh. So, considering the Tk 28 lakh discrepancy, the Idra has fined the insurer for submitting false or inaccurate financial data.

Besides, a detailed review revealed that Alpha Islami Life paid a total of Tk 3.29 crore as surrender claims against 106 policies issued in 2021 and 67 policies in 2022.

But the surrender value for these terminated schemes was paid in breach of the Insurance Act, which says life insurance policies must remain in force for at least two years to qualify for this benefit.

The regulator informed that Provati Insurance has been fined for violating the insurance tariff rates and failing

to provide information to the IIMS as required.

And like Guardian Life, Rupali Insurance was fined for failing to appoint a chief executive officer since January 2023. Also, the company has been instructed to fill the vacancy within the next 60 days.

Similarly, Continental Insurance was fined for not appointing a chief executive officer since July 2024.

**HOW THE INSURERS SEE IT**  
In a statement, Guardian Life said they have not received any letter from the Idra regarding the fine for breaching rules.

"But if the fact remains the same, we will submit a review application or petition to the Idra," it added.

The company further said that the process of appointing a chief executive officer as prescribed by the regulator is taking longer than normal due to a lack of qualified candidates.

Nura Alam Siddikie Ovee, the chief executive officer of Alpha Islami Life, said the company is at times compelled to allow a policyholder to terminate their schemes outside legal provisions.

"When influential people express their desire to surrender a policy, we are

sometimes compelled to do so even if it goes against the company's best interests and goodwill," he added.

But despite basically admitting that the company has indeed broken the associated rules, Ovee said they will appeal the Idra's decision to impose a penalty.

Regarding the discrepancy in the value of death claims reported in their annual report against company books, he said the fault lies in mathematical errors.

"The issue has been reported to the regulator," Ovee added.

Ataur Rahman, company secretary of Continental Insurance, said they recently asked the Idra to give time until March to appoint a permanent chief executive officer.

He also informed that they have already selected an individual for the role, and will send the required documents to the Idra for its approval.

Officials of National Life, Provati Insurance and Rupali Insurance could not be reached to comment on the matter by the time this report was filed.

Attempts were also made to contact M Aslam Alam, chairman of the Idra, but he too could not be reached.

# CA wants to overhaul Biman Says planning adviser

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The chief adviser has expressed interest in overhauling the national airline Bangladesh Biman during their tenure, as it is a frail institution that can be rebuilt within a short period, said Education and Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud.

The government plans to make Biman commercially profitable, which is currently incurring losses while other international airlines are making profits, Wahiduddin said yesterday while speaking as the chief guest at a press conference organised to publish the recommendations of the taskforce committee on overhauling the economy.

The taskforce committee has proposed making Biman profitable by transferring half of its assets to a separate company, run under foreign management.

The committee also recommended reconstructing Biman. To ensure that Biman becomes a competitive player in the airline industry, the government must set clear targets.

The taskforce proposed a new airline, tentatively named Bangladesh Airways, utilising half of Biman's existing assets but managed by an independent, world-class management company.

"It's a very good proposal," said the adviser.

When asked who could manage the foreign management, KAS Murshid, chairman of the task force committee, suggested Singapore Airlines or Qatar Airways.

# EU vows firm response if Trump unleashes tariffs

AFP, Brussels

The European Union insisted Sunday it would retaliate "firmly" if US President Donald Trump hit it with tariffs, as Brussels decried his sweeping measures against Canada, Mexico and China.

Brussels until now has said it hopes to avoid a trade conflict with Trump through negotiation.

But on Friday the US leader doubled down by saying he "absolutely" planned to target the EU in future, after first slapping levies on his North American neighbours and China.

"The European Union regrets the US decision to impose tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China," said a spokesman for the European Commission.

"Tariffs create unnecessary economic disruption and drive inflation. They are hurtful to all sides." The spokesman said "the EU would respond firmly to any trading partner that unfairly or arbitrarily imposes tariffs on EU goods".

"At this time, we are not aware of any additional tariffs being imposed on EU products," he added.

He said the 27-nation EU remained committed to low tariffs to "drive growth and economic stability within a strong, rules-based trading system".

And he reiterated the EU's commitment to its trade and investment relationship with the United States -- "the biggest in the world".

"There is a lot at stake," said the spokesman. "We should both be looking at strengthening this relationship."

Trump has not hidden his enmity for

the EU, accusing it of treating the United States "very, very unfairly" on trade.

Tensions have also risen over his repeated insistence that he wants to take Greenland from EU member Denmark.

Back in 2018, during his first term, Trump imposed tariffs on European steel and aluminium exports -- leading the EU to respond with its own higher duties.

As a result, Europe has been gaming out scenarios for months to ensure it is ready this time around, should he decide to unleash a new trade conflict with the bloc. EU diplomats and officials insist they stand united and have the tools to respond to any Trump measures -- but experts also point to likely cracks if he ups the pressure.

Economic powerhouse Germany -- facing a fraught election this month and sluggish economy -- has been squeamish over tariffs.

Trump is also likely to try to play the interests of the individual EU states off against each other.

Some European leaders have already been jostling to get closer to him, with Italy's Giorgia Meloni leading the pack.

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani wrote Sunday that a "tariff war does not help anybody", saying Italy has ideas to protect its companies and that Rome will be a mediator with Washington. EU officials remain hopeful they can talk Trump out of pulling the tariff trigger.

European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen back in November floated a potential plan to keep Trump on side: buying more liquefied natural gas from the United States.

# Implement at least one taskforce recommendation

FROM PAGE B1

The interim government will categorise the recommendations into those that can be implemented in the short term and those requiring long-term execution, he said.

It will implement the short-term recommendations and initiate some long-term measures, which will be transferred to the next political government for execution, Mahmud, also a renowned economist, added.

The government has already started taking steps aligned with some of the taskforce recommendations, he said.

For instance, it is working to improve technical and vocational education, which has been largely neglected, he added.

"Around 60 percent of our secondary students should go into technical education, while the remaining 40 percent should pursue general education. But the current situation is just the opposite, and even worse," he said.

Social auditing can help ensure that people receive public sector services, the adviser noted.

The efficiency of one-stop services for attracting investment needs substantial improvement, as their execution involves multiple entities, leading to bureaucratic delays and complexities for investors, said KAS Murshid, chairman of the taskforce committee.

The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority should be solely responsible for executing one-stop services, he said.

A separate one-stop service can be introduced to cater for micro, small,

and medium enterprises, he added.

A socially recognised degree should be introduced to remove the stigma surrounding vocational and technical education, said Murshid, who is also a former director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

To meet public expectations of the interim government, service providers must change their mindset to improve service delivery, said Syed Nasim Manzur, a member of the taskforce.

He called for adjusting exchange rates by analysing the existing currency basket.

A new arbitration act is necessary, particularly for resolving issues related to foreign direct investment, he added.

Commercial banks should be strengthened through robust regulations, internal audits, and strict compliance, said Fahmda Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

The autonomy of the central bank must be ensured, as it has weakened over the years, she said.

The Financial Institutions Division, which was created for a different purpose, should be abolished to strengthen Bangladesh Bank's autonomy, she said.

She also recommended enhancing the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit to combat money laundering.

Other members of the taskforce -- Rumana Haque, a professor of economics department at Dhaka University; Monzur Hossain, research director of the BIDS, and AKM Fahim Mashroor, CEO of bdjobs.com -- also talked at the event.

# Ceramics face

FROM PAGE B1

Another pressing demand from the BCMEA was for the withdrawal of the supplementary duty (SD) on the sale of ceramic tiles and sanitary ware.

Currently, a 15 percent SD is imposed on the sale of ceramic tiles, while sanitary ware faces a 10 percent duty.

Mir Nasir Hossain, former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and adviser to the BCMEA, emphasised the importance of uninterrupted gas supply for ceramic production.

"Gas is a crucial component in ceramic manufacturing, requiring a continuous 24-hour supply at a specific pressure level. Any drop in pressure can cause immediate damage to products, leading to substantial financial losses," he said.

Hossain warned that ongoing production disruptions could push manufacturers into financial distress, making

them prone to becoming bank defaulters due to high interest rates.

Some companies are already on the path of collapse due to the gas shortages, he claimed, adding that despite the inadequate gas supply, factories are still required to pay the same utility bills.

Md Mamunur Rashid, vice president of the BCMEA, criticised the proposed gas price increase for new factories, with the rates being increased from Tk 30 per unit to Tk 75 per unit.

"This decision is completely illogical and would act as a major barrier to the industry's development," he said.

Regarding the SD, Rashid pointed out that the effective corporate tax rate on ceramic manufacturers reaches around 32.5 percent.

"We strongly urge the government to withdraw the proposal for imposing a 20 percent SD on the ceramic sector to ensure its sustainability and growth," he concluded.

# Stock investors stage protest

FROM PAGE B1

The investors also urged the BSEC to ensure the quick launch of at least 10 new mutual funds to increase market liquidity.

Additionally, they proposed that any company failing to pay dividends for two consecutive years should have its board restructured.

Abolishing forced sales was another critical demand, with investors arguing that such practices further destabilise the market.

The protest underscored the deepening crisis in the country's capital market, as investors continue to suffer losses amid declining stock prices.

The investors vowed to continue their demonstrations until their demands are met.

As the stock market struggles to regain stability, all eyes are now on policymakers to see how they respond to the growing discontent among retail investors, they added.

**বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড**  
Bangladesh Power Development Board

Directorate of Purchase  
WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel  
C/A Dhaka  
Phone No. 223383081  
E-mail: dir.purchase@bpdb.gov.bd

**e-Tender Notice**

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

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Reference No.	Description of Goods/ Works	Last Selling Date and time	Closing Date and time	Opening Date and time
01	1071003	EE-GRL-03 FY-24-25	27.11.0000.304.25.107.24 Date:02/02/2025	12 Meter Steel Pole-350 daN	25-Feb-2025 13:00	25-Feb-2025 14:00	25-Feb-2025 14:00
02	1071068	EE-GRL-05 FY-24-25	27.11.0000.304.25.108.25 Date:02/02/2025	12 Meter Steel Pole-450 daN	26-Feb-2025 13:00	26-Feb-2025 14:00	26-Feb-2025 14:00
03	1071130	EE-GRL-15 FY-24-25	27.11.0000.304.25.109.25 Date:02/02/2025	15 Meter Steel Pole-650 daN	27-Feb-2025 13:00	27-Feb-2025 14:00	27-Feb-2025 14:00

These are 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 Branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01768595879).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-৭৪৮ (৩)/০৩/০২/২৫

*(Md. Nanau Miah)*  
ID No. 1-01304  
Director  
Directorate of Purchase  
BPDB, Dhaka

GD-346

# Apparel leads

FROM PAGE B1

After experiencing consecutive double-digit growth in the past four months (September-December), the growth in January slowed to 5.57 percent, with a single-month export value of \$3.66 billion.

The knitwear sector posted relatively higher growth of 6.62 percent, while woven garment export growth recorded 4.52 percent.

While the growth figures are encouraging, they do not fully reflect the challenges faced by the industry, especially the pressure on prices and costs, said Rubel.

He said further analysis is required to identify the specific factors influencing this trend, such as market-specific performance, product and market concentration, and other variables.

Global trade is estimated to have shrunk considerably last year, leading to intense price competition.

Rubel said that amid the looming trade war, there are some opportunities for the RMG sector.

However, several priorities need to be set to support business operations, including a consistent energy supply and stable financial and banking sectors, he added.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়  
নারায়ণপাড়া

তারিখ: ০২/০২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

**উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**  
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৬/২০২৪-২০২৫

পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, ঢাকা স্মারক নং ৪৪.০১.০০০০.০৪৩.২০২৪.০২.০৭.০৩.০০১.৮১৪ ও ৮১৫ এবং ৮১৬, তারিখ: ২১/০১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ মূলে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ সালে প্রাথমিক অনুমোদনমূলক নারায়ণপাড়া জেলা পুলিশের স্ট্রিট ইন্টিগ্রেটেড নিরাপত্তা নারায়ণপাড়া জেলার পুলিশের বিভিন্ন তফসিলের মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ বাস্তবায়ন লক্ষ্যে নি:পাঠক প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা আহ্বান-২০২৪ ও পাঠক প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এবং স্ট্রিট সলজ আইন ও বিধি মোতাবেক উপস্থিত/যোগ্যকর্তৃপক্ষের ত্রিকারার নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী/স্থায়িক নাগরিক এবং সস্ত্রিটি কয়েক বছর অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন অগ্রাধী প্রকৃত ত্রিকারার/বাংলাদেশী নির্মাণ/স্বত্বস্বত্বকারী প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতার নিমিত্তে নিম্নলিখিত প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা প্যাকে সীলমোহরসহ সুবন্ধন খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

ক্রম	কাজ	স্মারক নং	তারিখ	স্মারক নং	তারিখ
১	মন্ত্রণালয়/ বিভাগ	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।			
২	সংস্থা/বিভাগ	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।			
৩	ক্রয়/সেবারের স্বত্বাধিকারীর নাম ও জেলা	পুলিশ সুপার, নারায়ণপাড়া।			
৪	দরপত্রের স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	স্মারক নং-৪০৬/ই, তারিখ: ০২/০২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ।			
৫	দরপত্রের বিধি	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরে নারায়ণপাড়া জেলা পুলিশের জন্য ত্রিকারার নং-০৬/২০২৪-২০২৫।			
৬	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (OTM)			
৭	স্ট্রিট ও অফিসের উদ্দেশ্য	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স কর্তৃক প্রায় বাজেট বরাদ্দে হবে।			
৮	দরপত্র দাখিল করার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ সালে বিভিন্ন তফসিলের মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজের ত্রিকারার তারিখ: ২৩/০২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ ১৭:০০ ঘটিকার পরে অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (ছুটির দিন ব্যতিত)।			
৯	দরপত্র দাখিল এবেসের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	অন্য নির্মাণ/মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজের ২৪/০২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।			
১০	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ সালে বিভিন্ন তফসিলের মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজের খোলার তারিখ: ২৪/০২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ ১৫:০০ ঘটিকা।			
১১	দরপত্র দাখিল প্রাপ্তির নাম	১। ডিআইজি ঢাকা কোর্ট, ঢাকা, ২। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া, ৩। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, দুপিয়া, কুমিল্লা, নারায়ণপাড়া।			
১২	দরপত্র দাখিল গ্রহণকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া।			
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিল খোলার অবেসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া।			
১৪	দরপত্র দাখিল খোলার সময় উপস্থিত	দরপত্রদাতা/যোগ্যকর্তৃপক্ষ/স্বত্বস্বত্বকারী ও প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতার সম্মুখে যৌথ উপস্থিত থাকবে।			
১৫	দরপত্রদাতা/যোগ্যকর্তৃপক্ষ/স্বত্বস্বত্বকারী যোগ্যতা	দরপত্রদাতা কর্তৃক হস্তদানমূলক নারায়ণপাড়া ট্রেন লাইসেন্স, ব্যাক এন্ট্রেন্সেট, আরক, ভাট নিয়ন্ত্রণ সার্টিফিকেট, নাগরিকত্বের সনদ থাকতে হবে ও অন্যান্য শর্তসমূহ দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ রয়েছে।			

১৬) নারায়ণপাড়া জেলা পুলিশের বিভিন্ন তফসিলের মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজের বিবরণ

ক্রম	কাজ	স্মারক নং	তারিখ	স্মারক নং	তারিখ
ক	নারায়ণপাড়া জেলার বন্দর থানার মনমায় পুলিশ ফাঁড়ির সার্বিক মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ।	১,০০০/-	৩০,০০০/-	৩০	(মিশ)
খ	নারায়ণপাড়া জেলার ফকুড়া থানার পশ্চিম দিকের ৮০ ফুট সীমানা প্রান্তর, গেটের মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ।	৭৫০/-	৬০,০০০/-	৩০	(মিশ)
গ	নারায়ণপাড়া জেলার সদর মডেল থানার মনমায় পুলিশ ফাঁড়ির সার্বিক মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ।	১,০০০/-	৫৫,০০০/-		
ঘ	নারায়ণপাড়া জেলার অতিরিক্ত পুলিশ সুপার (বেশাসন ও অর্থ) এর বাবভবনের সার্বিক মোরামত ও পানি নিষ্কাশনের জন্য ত্রিকারার মোরামত ও সংস্কার কাজ।	৫০০/-	৩৫,০০০/-		

১৭) দরপত্র দাখিলের সময়

১৭) দরপত্রের বিজ্ঞপ্তির তথ্যাদি পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়ার সিডিউলে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জানা যাবে।

১৮) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃক নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা

১৯) দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা

২০) বিশেষ নির্দেশাবলী

১) উপরে বর্ণিত দরপত্রের জানামতে টাকা, ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/চেক-অর্থসংগ্রহ দরপত্রের সকল শর্তাবলী পূরণ করে নিম্নস্বত্বস্বত্বকারী অনুমুলে দাখিল করতে হবে।

২) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপত্র বাতিল/বাক্যে বাতিল হবে। দরপত্রের তফসিল ব্যতিত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।

৩) দরপত্রের ত্রিকারার বা দাখিলের শেষ দিন যদি সরকারী ছুটি থাকে তাহলে সে ক্ষেত্রে উক্ত দিন বহুতে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসকে বুঝাবে।

২১) কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বমুখ্য দরপত্র গ্রহণ করতে বাধ্য থাকবে। কোন কারণে দরপত্র ব্যতিত হলে কোন অফিস সনদ দরপত্র ব্যতীত বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২২) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপত্র বাতিল/বাক্যে বাতিল হবে। দরপত্রের তফসিল ব্যতিত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।

২৩) দরপত্রের ত্রিকারার বা দাখিলের শেষ দিন যদি সরকারী ছুটি থাকে তাহলে সে ক্ষেত্রে উক্ত দিন বহুতে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসকে বুঝাবে।

২৪) কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বমুখ্য দরপত্র গ্রহণ করতে বাধ্য থাকবে। কোন কারণে দরপত্র ব্যতিত হলে কোন অফিস সনদ দরপত্র ব্যতীত বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৫) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপত্র বাতিল/বাক্যে বাতিল হবে। দরপত্রের তফসিল ব্যতিত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।

২৬) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপত্র বাতিল/বাক্যে বাতিল হবে। দরপত্রের তফসিল ব্যতিত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।

২৭) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপত্র বাতিল/বাক্যে বাতিল হবে। দরপত্রের তফসিল ব্যতিত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।

২৮) দরপত্রের সঠিক সকল কাগজপত্রের ছাফটিপি ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত/স্বাক্ষরিত দাখিল করতে হবে। স্ট্রিট কাগজপত্রের দরপত্রের নিয়মাবলী পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে কাগজপ

**SoftBank, OpenAI announce JV to offer AI for companies**

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's SoftBank Group will form a joint venture with US tech giant OpenAI to offer advanced artificial intelligence to businesses, the two companies announced on Monday.

"A memorandum of understanding has just been formally signed between Softbank and OpenAI to establish a 50-50 joint venture," SoftBank chief executive Masayoshi Son said as he outlined the services of a new AI product called Cristal.

A joint statement by the firms said Japanese tech investor SoftBank would "spend \$3 billion US annually to deploy OpenAI's solutions across its group companies".

At a meeting of around 500 Japanese businesses, the flamboyant Son — holding a purple crystal ball — said Cristal would use AI to provide customised support to companies by crunching system data, reports, emails and meetings in real time.

The joint venture "will serve as a springboard for introducing AI agents tailored to the unique needs of Japanese enterprises while setting a model for global adoption", the statement said.

**Padma Oil's profit surges 76% in Q2**

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Padma Oil Company's profit grew significantly in the second quarter of the fiscal year 2024-25 as its income rose.

The state-owned company's profit rose by 76 percent year-on-year to Tk 125.03 crore in the second quarter of the fiscal year, according to its financial statements.

Its earnings per share (EPS) rose to Tk 12.73 for October-December 2024 from Tk 7.29 a year ago. For July-December, EPS stood at Tk 25.40, up from Tk 16.53 in the same period of the previous year.

The company attributed the growth to higher non-operating income.

Meanwhile, the company's net operating cash flow per share was Tk 20.36 in the negative for July-December, improving from Tk 73.84 in the negative in the same period a year earlier.

Shares of Padma Oil declined by 0.05 percent to Tk 187.5 in midday trading yesterday at the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

**Tea production falls amid bad weather, quality push**

**TRENDS OF TEA PRODUCTION**

In million kgs; SOURCE: BTB



**WHY PRODUCTION FELL**

Unfavourable weather

Quality improvement by plucking fewer leaves

Weeks-long closure of 12 state tea gardens



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



**INDUSTRY**

Bangladesh has 169 tea gardens covering 280,000 acres

A total of 90 tea gardens are located in Moulvibazar district

Moulvibazar accounts for 55% of the country's tea output

Habiganj is the second-largest producer, contributing 22%

Tea exports in 2024 were the highest in the last seven years



**SUKANTA HALDER**

After a record high output in 2023, the country's tea production declined last year because of unfavourable weather conditions and tea estates opting for quality improvement to secure better rates.

Tea production stood at 9.30 crore kilograms in 2024, down from 10.2 crore kilograms the previous year, according to the Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB).

Pijush Dutta, a member of research and development at the BTB, said the decline was mainly due to erratic rainfall last year, which made weather conditions unsuitable for tea cultivation.

The tea industry in Bangladesh dates back 184 years. Most tea gardens are located in the north-eastern swathe of Bangladesh, while many northern districts have also started growing tea in recent years.

However, the quality of tea produced in the northern region is lower than that of its north-eastern counterparts.

According to Dutta, tea estates, including those in the north, focused on quality improvement last year, which could have contributed to the lower production.

Another factor behind the decline was the prolonged closure of 12 state-owned tea gardens under the National Tea Company for more than 10 weeks in 2024 after the August political changeover, he told The Daily Star.

Dutta said the board was working to ensure that both

quality and quantity improve simultaneously.

Meanwhile, tea garden owners see no potential shortage in the domestic market despite the decline, as the surplus from the record production in 2023 can cover the shortfall.

According to them, the country also does not need to import tea, as local demand has decreased.

Similar to the tea board, the Bangladesh Tea Association, a

platform for garden owners in the greater Sylhet and Chattogram districts, blamed inconsistent rainfall and climate change for the production decline.

Kamran Tanvirur Rahman, chairman of the association, said that tea cultivation requires moderate rainfall, but higher-than-usual rainfall during the monsoon season last year adversely affected the yield.

Bangladesh has 169 tea gardens spanning more than 280,000 acres.

Of these, 90 are in Moulvibazar district in Sylhet, which accounts for 55 percent of the country's total production. The second-largest producer, Habiganj, contributes 22 percent.

The peak tea production season in Bangladesh is from June to November, and the country's annual tea demand is currently 8.5-9 crore kg, according to industry sources.

Exports hit 7-year high

In 2024, Bangladesh's tea exports reached their highest level in seven years, as competitive pricing gave the country an edge over major exporters like India and Sri Lanka.

Exporters said a key driver of the increase was the preference of Bangladeshi diasporas for tea sourced from their homeland.

As of December 2024, Bangladesh exported 24.5 lakh kilograms of tea — the highest annual volume since 2017, when exports stood at 25.6 lakh kg — according to the BTB.

Last year's exports fetched the country Tk 382.52 million. However, tea exports have fluctuated widely in recent years.

BTB data shows that exports stood at 6.5 lakh kg in 2018 before falling to 6 lakh kg in 2019. While exports rebounded to 21.7 lakh kg in 2020, they plummeted to 6.8 lakh kg in 2021.

The volume has been rising since, reaching 7.8 lakh kg in 2022 and 10.4 lakh kg in 2023.

Industry insiders attributed the recent growth to competitive pricing, as Bangladesh offers tea at lower prices while Indian and Sri Lankan brands cater to premium segments.

Bangladesh is currently the world's ninth-largest tea producer, accounting for around 2 percent of global production, according to the BTB.

China is the largest producer, followed by India, while Sri Lanka, Kenya, South Korea, and Japan are also among the top tea-producing nations.

After independence in 1971, Bangladesh had been exporting tea to several countries, including the UK, until 1990.

Despite recent export fluctuations, the BTB has set an ambitious export target of more than 1.5 crore kg for 2025 — far higher than trends in the past two decades.

The highest amount of tea exported in a single year was 1.5 crore kg in 2002, according to the BTB.

**Containerised cargo transport through Ctg port jumped in January**

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

The import and export of container cargo through Chattogram port increased significantly in January, driven by rising imports ahead of Ramadan and a gradual increase in export orders for readymade garments.

According to foreign shipping lines, export-laden container shipments rose by 18.23 percent year-on-year to 75,234 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) in January through the port, which handles around 98 percent of the containerised goods transported to and from Bangladesh.

The January figure was slightly higher than that of December last year, which stood at 74,495 TEUs.

Meanwhile, the number of import-laden containers unloaded at the port in January reached a seven-month high of 124,039 TEUs, marking a 10.66 percent year-on-year increase and a 3.74 percent rise compared to December 2024.

Around 75 percent of the total containerised imports through the port comprised raw materials for the export-oriented readymade garment sector.

The import volume increased in January due to a seasonal surge in garment raw material imports for upcoming orders, along with a rise in Ramadan-related cargo, particularly chickpeas and essential commodities, said Muntasir Rubayat, head of operations at feeder vessel operating firm GBX Logistics.



PHOTO: STAR/FILE

Shipment of export container rose by 18.23 percent year-on-year to 75,234 TEUs in January.

"Our imports were relatively slow in the earlier months of last year since some banks had halted the issuance of letters of credit, leaving importers unable to carry out transactions," said Rubayat, who is also a leader of the Bangladesh Shipping Agents' Association.

Despite challenging conditions at home and abroad, Bangladesh's garment exports grew by 7.23 percent year-on-year to \$38.48 billion in 2024, according to the Export Promotion Bureau.

Apparel shipments from the country began rebounding in September, and the trend continued until January, industry experts said.

The garment sector has been receiving better export orders over the past few months, said Syed M Tanvir, managing director of Pacific Jeans, one of the leading denim exporters of Bangladesh.

Tanvir expressed optimism that the garment sector would continue to recover this year, aided by a potential shift in orders from China due to the US tariff hike.

Bangladesh's proven capacity in the RMG sector would position it as a preferred choice if there is any shift in export orders, he added.

**Dollar surges on Trump's tariffs**

REUTERS, Tokyo/Singapore

The dollar surged on Monday, pushing its Canadian counterpart and Mexican peso to multi-year lows while China's yuan slumped to a record trough in offshore trade after US President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs kicked off a trade war.

The US dollar's gains were broad, with the euro also dropping to a more than two-year low and the Swiss franc — despite typically acting as a safe haven — sliding to the weakest since May.

Canada and Mexico, the top two US trading partners, immediately vowed retaliatory measures, and China said it would challenge Trump's levies at the World Trade Organization.

"The surprise for markets ... is that Canada and Mexico retaliated immediately and that others, i.e. China and the EU, may follow their lead, resulting in a sharp contraction in global trade," said Tony Sycamore, a market analyst at IG.

"The starting date of US tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China of Feb. 4 was also much sooner than many had anticipated."

As Trump had promised last month, the United States hit Canada and Mexico with duties of 25 percent and China with a 10 percent levy, calling the measures necessary to combat illegal immigration and the drug trade.

"Trump's early strike, just two weeks into his four-year term, is likely to hit investor confidence," said Mansoor Mohi-uddin, chief economist at Bank of Singapore.

"The consensus — including ourselves — had expected US tariffs would only threaten the economic outlook in the second half of 2025 after lengthy negotiations first between the US and its main trading partners."

AFP, Washington

The tariffs imposed Saturday by President Donald Trump on products from the US's three leading trading partners are without recent precedent, sparking a trade war with powerful repercussions for all involved.

Here are some key points about how the tariffs will work and what impact they will have.

**How much trade is involved?**

The United States is an essential trading partner for the three targeted countries: Canada, China and Mexico. But the impact will fall disproportionately on the US's immediate neighbors than on China, the world's second-largest economic power.

US imports from Canada, Mexico and China represented a combined total of over \$1.2 trillion for the first 11 months of 2024 — just over 40 percent of all US imports, according to the Commerce Department.

For Mexico and Canada, the United States is by far the largest customer — accounting for 77 percent of Mexican goods exports and 84 percent of Canada's, according to the two countries' statistical agencies.

China's reliance on the US market is

**US tariffs: A blow to the world economy**

proportionately far smaller, representing just 15 percent of 2024 exports, according to Chinese customs data.

The United States had sizable commercial deficits with all three countries in the first 11 months of 2024: more than \$270 billion with China, \$157 billion with Mexico and \$55 billion with

Canada.

**How will the targeted countries be affected?**

Given its greater exposure to US trade, Mexico is expected to be the hardest hit. According to Oxford Economics, the tariffs imposed Saturday could raise the inflation rate there to 6 percent annually,

up from 4.2 percent in December, while the nation's currency, the peso, could see a 7 percent weakening — with attendant risks of recession.

For Canada — and excluding the effects of newly announced counter-tariffs — the US tariffs could cause a 2.7 percent drop in the GDP this year and 4.3 percent drop next year, compared to the expected levels absent tariffs, according to chief EY economist Gregory Daco, adding to inflationary pressures.

For the US economy, the clearest impact should concern prices. The gamut of affected products is enormous — ranging from automobiles and avocados from Mexico, to fowl and petroleum from Canada and iPhones from China, just for starters.

Facing the additional taxes of 10 to 25 percent on these products, businesses are bound to pass at least part of their added costs on to consumers.

The Tax Foundation, a think tank generally favorable to lower taxes, estimated Friday that the new tariffs could trim US GDP by 0.4 percent over the long term and add \$830 in annual costs to each American household this year.

EY predicts a 0.7 rise in inflation in the first quarter before the effects begin to ease.



An aerial view shows a container ship docked at the Kwai Chung container terminal in Hong Kong. China's reliance on the US market is proportionately far smaller, representing just 15 percent of 2024 exports.

PHOTO: AFP

READ FULL STORY ONLINE