

# Proactive action plan needed to cure labour market woes: expert

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A proactive action plan, incorporating demand driven training, apprenticeships for youth, and strategies to foster entrepreneurship, must be adopted to address the severity of unemployment, wage disparity, and gender inequality, said a top expert on labour markets and employment.

Labour intensive sectors must be expanded through macroeconomic strategies, integrating modern agricultural technology to introduce high-value products, and structured training programmes to foster youth entrepreneurship and employment, said Rushidan Islam Rahman, a former research director at

**Job creation should prioritise high productivity and earnings. Otherwise, the pace of rising inequality cannot be curbed, she said**



Rushidan Islam Rahman

Auditorium yesterday.

To ensure labour rights across both regulated and unregulated sectors, oversight must be strengthened and government agencies must be equipped with the necessary capacity.

Now is the time to assess the demand for skilled labour in migrant employment and align training programmes accordingly, said Rushidan.

She said these strategies have been discussed before, but turning them into reality requires swift, sincere, and

corruption free action.

"What we need now is a renewed national awakening – an awareness that productive employment and proper preparation are essential for nation-building," she said.

She added that this movement must engage all stakeholders, including the workforce, unemployed youth, the government, NGOs, private entrepreneurs, educators, and business leaders.

Despite a declining unemployment rate, the number of jobless young men (15-29) in Bangladesh, neither in education nor training, doubled from 8 percent in 2017 to 16 percent in 2022, posing a crisis, she stressed.

With 28 unemployed young men and 25 women per village, inadequate employment could lead to despair and instability.

Rushidan said sectoral employment distribution shows a decline in men's participation in agriculture, as expected, but a rise among women. This surge has led to an 8 percent drop in per-worker agricultural productivity from 2016-17 to 2022.

Meanwhile, women's participation in industry has declined, despite rising productivity, signalling a sharp deterioration in job quality for women.

AHM Shafiquzzaman, secretary to labour and employment, Mahfuzul Haque, a member of the interim government's Labour Reform Commission, SM Zulfiqar Ali, research director at BIDS, Aziza Rahman, deputy director of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, executive director of BILS and head of the Labour Reform Commission, also spoke.

Ahmed Javed Chowdhury, an assistant professor at City University, moderated the event.

## Housing fair begins in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A four day housing exhibition, REHAB Chattogram Fair 2025, began yesterday with the aim of showcasing flats, plots, and other real estate and housing products.

Chattogram City Corporation Mayor Shahadat Hossain inaugurated the fair as chief guest at a ceremony held at Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View.

This is the 16th edition of the fair, organised by the Chattogram regional office of the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB).

At the opening ceremony, the mayor urged real estate firms to comply with the national building code and the regulations of the Chattogram Development Authority (CDA) when constructing buildings to minimise vulnerability to earthquakes.

He cited that many apartment buildings were constructed too close to one another, violating the CDA regulations.

This lack of spacing prevents rainwater from naturally seeping into the ground, causing a decline in groundwater levels, he said.

The mayor also called on realtors to allocate sufficient open spaces in apartment projects where children would be able to play.

REHAB President Md Wahiduzzaman, Senior Vice President Liakat Ali Bhuiyan, and Vice President and Chairman of the Chattogram Regional Committee Delwar Hossain also spoke at the event.

A total of 16 real estate firms from Dhaka and Chattogram, five building material manufacturers, and five financial institutions are participating in the fair by showcasing their products and services through 42 stalls.

the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

She said job creation should prioritise high productivity and earnings. Otherwise, the pace of rising inequality cannot be curbed, she added.

Rushidan was speaking on the topic of unemployment and inequality in Bangladesh's labour market and the prospects of a transformation during the "Economics and Social Thought Lecture Series - 4".

The event was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) and Banglar Pathshala Foundation at Dhaka University's RC Majumdar

## Monetary policy

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a contraction during the July-September quarter, driven by disruptions in production and trade.

A slowdown in consumption has further dampened growth, as rising inflation and economic uncertainty have strained household incomes.

Lower investments have also compounded these issues, with high interest rates and uncertainty discouraging private sector activity.

CAL Bangladesh's outlook also projects the exchange rate to stabilise between Tk 125 and Tk 130 against the dollar.

Interest rates are expected to remain high, with the one year treasury bill rate ranging from 9.8 percent to 10.5 percent by June 2025, which could present challenges for

## Declining investments dampen

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from addressing real economic challenges effectively.

Similarly, former BUILD chairman Asif Ibrahim underscored the need for accurate and non-inflated economic data to facilitate effective policy decisions.

With the BBS revising the GDP growth projection for FY24 to 4.22 percent, Ibrahim urged the interim government to focus on restoring macroeconomic stability.

### MACRO OUTLOOK NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

M Masrur Reaz, chairman and CEO of Policy Exchange Bangladesh, stressed the need to ensure macroeconomic stability, enhance business confidence and foster an investor friendly environment.

"The private sector investment to GDP ratio has been hovering between 22 to 23 percent for the last few years, which is lower than the target," he said.

Reaz acknowledged that while government investment has seen some growth, the private sector continues to face critical issues that hinder progress.

He emphasised that addressing regulatory inefficiencies and improving investor confidence are crucial to reversing the declining investment trend.

## Development spending

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This is less than encouraging state of ADP implementation means that GDP growth in FY25 is expected to remain stagnant if things do not improve significantly over the next four months, but that looks very unlikely.

Furthermore, low government spending contributes to low revenue collection, as cited by officials of the National Board of Revenue who frequently blame slow growth in the construction sector, he added.

By the end of the first half of the current fiscal year, the tax authority was around 25 percent behind its required revenue collection target.

Last month, Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud said the pace of ADP implementation slowed this year because the government needed to scrutinise and amend many projects in the first few months, which was quite time consuming.

"Now, we have accelerated the scrutiny," he told journalists following a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council in January.

Mahmud, also a noted economist, expressed hope

that ADP implementation would pick up in coming months as less verification would be required for several new projects that are aligned with priorities of the current administration.

Amid the absence of parliament members and the fragile state of local governments, temporary administrators appointed by the government are managing local governance, and their demand for new projects has been minimal.

"I have urged local officials to submit project proposals, and the Planning Commission is also analysing the needs of the people while approving new projects," Mahmud added.

Among public offices with the highest allocations, the Health Services Division utilised the lowest portion of its funds, with just 5.15 percent having been spent during the last seven months.

The Ministry of Science and Technology spent the most, utilising 36.55 percent of its allocation, followed by Power Division with 33.64 percent, Local Government Division with 29.63 percent, and Ministry of Agriculture with 25 percent.

## Honda and Nissan say merger talks called off

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese auto giants Honda and Nissan confirmed on Thursday they had scrapped merger talks announced in December, ending a tie-up that would have created the world's third-largest

automaker.

The firms said in a joint statement that they "agreed to terminate the MOU (memorandum of understanding) signed on December 23 last year for consideration of a business integration between the two companies".

### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer  
Madaripur Public Works Division, Madaripur

Phone: 0661-61825  
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Memo No. 25.36.5400.111.07.066.24-644

Date: 12.02.2025

### e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are being invited through Open Tendering Method (OTM) in e-GP system by Executive Engineer, Madaripur Public Works Division, Madaripur for the Procurement of:

SL. No.	ID Reference No.	Name of procurement package	Publishing date	Closing date
01.	1074320	Retrofitting works of 320 Police Line, Madaripur	12-Feb-2025 11:00am	27-Feb-2025 12:00am

These are online tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

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GD- 424

### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Plant Quarantine Wing  
Department of Agricultural Extension  
Khamarbari, Dhaka-1215.

[www.dae.gov.bd](http://www.dae.gov.bd)

Date: 13-02-2025

### E-GP Tender Notice

Tender ID	Brief Description of Goods and Related Service	Tender Publication	Last Selling	Tender Security Submission	Closing & Opening
					Date and Time
1074884	Aluminium Phosphide 56% active ingredient.	13-Feb-2025 12:00	26-Feb-2025 12:00	27-Feb-2025 11:00	27-Feb-2025 12:00

The above mentioned tender is an online tender, where e tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline copies will be accepted. To Submit e-Tender register in the e-GP portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)). The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of the mentioned package from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank by up to particular date specified on the tender notice. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP portal and e-GP help desk.

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ওয়েস্ট জোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ওয়েস্টজোনডিপিলি)

WEST ZONE POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED

Office of the Project Director

Modernization of Power Distribution-Smart Grids Phase I project

website: [www.wzpdcl.gov.bd](http://www.wzpdcl.gov.bd), e-mail: [wzpdcl.mpdsg@gmail.com](mailto:wzpdcl.mpdsg@gmail.com), [pd.mpdsg@wzpdcl.gov.bd](mailto:pd.mpdsg@wzpdcl.gov.bd)

Memo no: 27.22.4785.700.50.003.25.38

Dated: 12/02/2025

### Prequalification (PO) - Amendment No. 1 (GD-4)

This is for general information to all concern that the following amendment has been made to the Invitation of Prequalification for "Procurement of Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Twelve (12) 33kV AIS Bays and One (1) Switching Station with Substation Automation System on turnkey basis (GD-4)" under the Project 'Modernization of Power Distribution-Smart Grids Phase I' with reference no. 27.22.4785.700.50.001.24.210; Dated: 24/12/2024, BMZ No. 2016 67 971, KfW Procurement No.: 33kV Bay Extension/Construction – 512180, Package No. GD-4.

SL. No.	Reference	Existing	Amended As (Amendment No. 1)
01	Tender Notice (Sl. 17)	Prequalification Last Selling Date and Time Date: 16/02/2025; Time: During Office Hour (9:00 AM-05:00 PM) Bangladesh Time.	Prequalification Last Selling Date and Time Date: 16/03/2025; Time: During Office Hour (9:00 AM-05:00 PM) Bangladesh Time.
02	Section II, ITA 17.1 & Tender Notice (Sl. 18)	The Original Application shall be submitted not later than <b>Date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b> Time: 11:30 AM Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)	The Original Application shall be submitted not later than <b>Date: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> Time: 11:30 AM Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)
03	Section II, ITA 19.1 & Tender Notice (Sl. 19)	The opening of the Applications shall be on 17 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 12:00 PM Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6).	The opening of the Applications shall be on 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 12:00 PM Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6).

All other terms and conditions of the prequalification document shall remain unchanged.

*Ranjan*

12-02-2025

(Md. Saifuzzaman)