

Restrictions on marine fishing cut to 58 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The annual restriction on fishing in the maritime boundary of the country will last for 58 days from this year instead of the previous 65-day period, according to a statutory regulatory order (SRO) issued by the Fisheries and Livestock Ministry on Sunday.

The SRO stated that, as per Section 3 of the Marine Fisheries Rule 2023, all types of fishing in the maritime boundary will be restricted for 58 days from April 15 to June 11 each year, with the aim to ensure proper breeding and conservation of fish.

Earlier, during a press conference in Dhaka on February 17, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter announced that the annual restriction on marine fishing would be shortened.

ADP spending in Jul-Feb lowest in 12 years

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Implementation of the Annual Development Programme (ADP) has reached its lowest point in at least 12 years, with about Tk 67,550 crore being spent in the first eight months of the current fiscal year (FY), according to available statistics.

This means just 24.27 percent of the total outlay for FY25 has been used so far while the implementation rate in the July-February period of FY14 stood at 38 percent.

Even during the same eight months in FY21, when almost all economic activities were put on hold amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the ADP implementation rate was higher at 33.83 percent.

In the July-February period of FY24, implementing agencies collectively utilised around Tk 85,600 crore, or roughly 31 percent, of their ADP allocations for that year.

Planning ministry officials said ADP implementation declined this fiscal year as development activities were hampered by political unrest soon after it began on July 1.

They also pointed to how the interim

government has taken austerity measures, such as slowing or postponing certain projects initiated by the previous administration, in the face of budgetary shortfalls.

Furthermore, a number of contractors for various projects left before completing their work following the recent political changeover, thereby adversely impacting ADP implementation.

In response to this underwhelming performance in ADP implementation, relevant authorities downsize the total outlay for FY25 by some Tk 53,000 crore to Tk 226,125 crore early this month to realign expectations with current realities.

A key finding of the reduced ADP spending was a sharp decline in the utilisation of state funds, accounting for just Tk 34,854 crore, or 21 percent, of the total allocation so far this year.

During the same eight months of FY24, the state coffers contributed Tk 49,800 crore for implementing the ADP, which was nearly 31 percent of the total allocation for that year.

Likewise, the utilisation of foreign funds fell to about Tk 27,470 crore, making up just 27.47 percent of this year's ADP allocation.

In the July-February months of FY24, around Tk 32,105 crore, or 34 percent, of the overall ADP budget for that year came from foreign funds.

It was also found that the performances of the 15 ministries, state divisions and departments scrutinised for their progress in implementing ADP funds varied greatly.

The Ministry of Science and Technology led the pack, utilising 41.98 percent of its allocation.

This was largely due to the ministry's rapid implementation of its Ruppur nuclear power plant project, which is designed to bolster Bangladesh's power generation capacity.

The Power Division and Local Government Division were not far behind, with each reporting implementation rates of approximately 35 percent.

Their performances underscored a degree of resilience in sectors that are critical for developing domestic infrastructure and public service delivery.

However, these figures also signal that even implementing agencies with better performances were unable to utilise up to half of their ADP allocations in the first eight months of FY25.

Bangladesh, UK officials hold talks on trade, investment

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Officials from Bangladesh and the United Kingdom have recently taken part in high-level discussions on trade and investment, focusing on key sectors such as education, aviation, and renewable energy.

UK Investment Minister Baroness Gustafsson of Chesterton CBE and Ashik Chowdhury, executive chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Bida) and Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza), held a series of meetings in London from March 10-13.

During that time, they explored ways to expand foreign direct investment (FDI) and strengthen bilateral business ties, according to a press release.

Chowdhury met senior UK officials, business leaders, and non-resident Bangladeshis, highlighting the strategic importance of deepening economic cooperation.

"This visit reaffirms the strong and longstanding economic partnership between Bangladesh and the UK. Our discussions focused on expanding investment in both services and manufacturing sectors," he said.

He said the UK's continued support for improving Bangladesh's investment climate was evident in engagements with government officials and business leaders.

Bangladesh to import more US cotton

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He revealed that Bangladesh sometimes imports lower-grade cotton at higher prices due to a lack of bonded warehouse facilities.

Hossain also stated that the government would consider classifying cotton as an agricultural product so that growers can benefit from subsidies as encouraged to cultivate more.

"If cotton is recognised as an agricultural product, farmers can be given subsidies to encourage cultivation. They can also avail bank loans."

He said he would urge the government to extend policy support for the cotton cultivators since both the production and import of cotton are important for the textile and garment sectors.

Moreover, Hossain said he wanted to increase

cotton production so that it could meet 20 percent of Bangladesh's annual requirement of roughly 90 lakh bales. At present, domestically grown cotton meets only 2 percent of the domestic demand.

Additionally, the adviser assured he would try to remove the 4 percent advanced income tax on cotton ginning.

Land that is being used for tobacco cultivation should be repurposed for cotton cultivation, the adviser said, adding that he did not oppose tobacco cultivation.

He assured that he would raise a proposal which would allow cotton ginners to seek soft loans like the tannery and rawhide sectors to the advisory council soon.

Hossain further said he was not in favour of deferring Bangladesh's

status graduation from the group of least developed countries (LDCs).

Since the EU and a few other countries will continue LDC trade benefits for Bangladesh up to 2029, he reasoned that it is a good time to prepare for graduation.

Preparation is very important as the EU has already given a list of actions to qualify for obtaining GSP Plus facilities in EU markets.

"Many taxable people are not paying taxes, so Bangladesh's current tax to gross domestic product ratio stands at around 8 percent, which is even lower than Nepal's. It is shameful," he said.

Bangladesh must increase the tax-GDP ratio to ensure social benefits, he added.

Md Fakhre Alam Ibne Tabib, executive director

of the Cotton Development Board, said it is possible to produce 20 to 25 lakh tonnes of cotton in the country if proper policy support is given.

Golam Sarwar, general secretary of the Bangladesh Cotton Ginners Association, said cotton is a subsidised product worldwide, but not in Bangladesh.

Abul Khayer, a Bangladeshi cotton grower in Sudan, said he produces cotton on 32,000 acres of land. He urged Bangladeshis to go to Sudan and cultivate cotton.

Moazzem Hossain, member of the National Board of Revenue, said ginners can be incentivised as they are supplying to the local industrial sector.

ERF President Doulot Akter Mala and General Secretary Abul Kashem also spoke.

Chaos at BSEC meant to thwart

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On March 9, the first trading day of the week, the stalemate showed signs of improvement.

The BSEC believes not all the employees joined the chaos on their own, rather they somewhat followed the agitators blindly. Therefore, the commission does not want to get tough against all the officials and employees without specific charges.

The Daily Star approached BSEC staffers who had held a press briefing during the face-off to press home their demands. However, they declined to comment on

the findings, saying they were unaware of them.

INTERMINISTERIAL PROBE RECOMMENDED

To establish a chain of command at the BSEC, both now and in the future, the incident should be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate recommendations should be made, said the BSEC.

For this purpose, the BSEC urged the formation of a high-level investigation committee led by the Financial Institutions Division, with representatives from the Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Law, and the Finance

Division.

As the BSEC is classified as Critical Information Infrastructure (CII), it said that it would deploy armed security personnel such as Ansar at its building to avert any untoward situation in the future.

Strict legal action is necessary against those involved in acts of terrorism and sabotage, the regulator said, adding that collaboration with the Financial Institutions Division is required for structural reforms within the BSEC.

To avoid full dependence on BSEC officials, improve

work quality, expedite tasks, and maintain confidentiality, 19 government officials may be appointed. These officials should have degrees in economics, finance, commerce, accounting, statistics, mathematics, law, or information technology.

The BSEC also sought an FID investigation into protests against the appointment of M Mashrur Riaz as BSEC chairman, which were organised by BSEC officials.

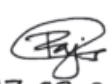
Training programmes for BSEC employees to promote professionalism are necessary, it said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Rajbari
Phone: 02478807728

e-Tender Notice 18/RRD/2024-2025 (OTM, NCT)

The below tenders are online Tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details please contact help desk contact numbers.

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of works	Tender Document last selling Date and Time	Tender Opening Date and Time
1087909	13-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair and fitting fixing spare parts for Break system of Tata Dump Truck and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:00 hours
1087910	14-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair of J.M. Road Roller No.03 with Supply and fitting fixing spare parts for Rear wheel and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:05 hours
1087911	15-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair and fitting fixing spare parts of Payloader and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:10 hours
1087912	16-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair and fitting fixing spare parts for Fuel Pump of Soil Compactor and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:15 hours
1087913	17-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair of J.M. Road Roller No.03 with Supply and fitting fixing spare parts for front and Rear wheel and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:20 hours
1087914	18-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair and fitting fixing spare parts for front and rear wheel bearing of Tata Dump Truck and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:25 hours
1087915	19-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair and fitting fixing spare parts for Suspension System of Tata Dump Truck and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:30 hours
1087916	20-Mech/e-GP/RRD/2024-2025	Repair of J.M. Road Roller No.02 with Supply and fitting fixing spare parts for Gear Box and other mechanical works under Road Division Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 17:00 hours	07-Apr-2025 13:35 hours


17.03.2025
Md. Rajos Khan
ID No-602334
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD
Rajbari Road Division, Rajbari.

GD-686

Businessman

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"We have started tax recovery steps."

The NBR chairman declined to name the person since the tax recovery process is ongoing.

"This is happening because either we are unaware of these issues or we are deliberately turning a blind eye. Allowing such practices to continue is a major problem," Khan said.

He stressed the need for collective action, saying, "If we truly want to solve these issues, we must work together to combat such irregularities. Without proper policy implementation and strict enforcement, nothing will change. This is the reality."

At the event, the NBR chairman also reiterated the failures arising due to policy inconsistency.

"There is a strong demand for our tax policy to be consistent so that taxpayers can clearly understand their tax liability. In this regard, we have largely failed," he said.

"We will make every effort to ensure that tax policies do not change frequently. Our focus will be on offering clear-cut guidance so that tax rates are not changed arbitrarily."

Khan also emphasised the need for integrated digitalisation across all sectors.

"Digitalisation cannot be one-sided—we must ensure all stakeholders are interconnected," he said.

He mentioned that NBR members have been instructed to take initiatives to integrate with the banking system, enabling the automatic inclusion of banking details in online tax returns by next year.

"Taxpayers' bank balances, deducted taxes, and earned profits will be reflected in their returns. Similarly, integrating with the Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL) will automate access to dividend information," said Khan.

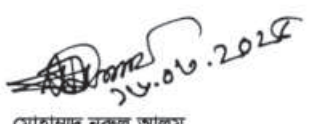


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আঞ্চলিক নির্বাচন কর্মকর্তা
সিলেট অঞ্চল, সিলেট
মোবাইল নম্বরঃ ০১৫৫০০৪২৬৫০
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GD-685

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
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Gopalganj Road Division, Gopalganj
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e-GP Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Gopalganj for the procurement of following works. e-Tender details can be downloaded from e-GP System Portal "<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>" for purchase.

Tender ID and Package No.	Name of work	Last date and time of purchasing/ downloading document	Closing date and Time
1088357 51/e-GP/GRD/2024-2025 (Retrofitting work) (OTM)	Retrofitting Work for Expansion Joint of Bhatiapara Flying Bridge at 37th (p) km of Bhanga-Bhatiapara-Mollahat-Fakirhat-Noapara Road (N-805) under Road Division Gopalganj during the FY-2024-2025.	07-April-2025 16:00	08-April-2025 12:00

Accepted tenders will be opened online immediately after opening time.


17.3.25
Md. Azharul Islam
ID No. 602306
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD
Road Division, Gopalganj

GD-689