

NBR allows 12 more imported items to be delivered from private ICDs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has permitted private inland container depots (ICDs) to handle and deliver 12 additional types of goods that are imported through the Chattogram port.

In a circular issued on April 8, the NBR said that it made the move for the sake of smooth operational activities at the port.

Previously, private ICDs were permitted to handle and deliver only 38 types of imported goods.

There are 21 privately owned ICDs located in and around the port city, 19 of which have been facilitating quick clearance of both export- and import-laden containers and handling empty containers.

Around 93 percent of export-laden containers are handled by these ICDs before shipment through the Chattogram port.

However, ICDs had been handling only around 18 to 23 percent of total imports, which, after being unloaded at the port, are directly transported to ICDs for delivery to consignees.

The goods include all kinds of staple fibre, calcium carbonate, wheat bran, quick lime, polystyrene, and others.

Bangladesh has potential

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These stories, he argued, embody the transformative power of digital inclusion.

Azman stressed that true return on investment comes when businesses empower communities through connectivity, innovation, and responsible practices.

He also said the government's commitment was to make policies more business-friendly, which would invite global investors to join Bangladesh's journey of transformation.

Emphasising the youth potential, demographic strength, and regulatory reforms, he urged investors to look beyond challenges and believe in the possibilities.

Kamal Quadir, founder and CEO of bKash, reflected on the company's 15-year journey, emphasising its impact on 80 million customers.

He also spoke about Bangladesh's vibrant spirit and social mobilisation, noting that despite many challenges, people here remain hopeful and driven. This energy fuels bKash's

mission daily, he said.

He said bKash leveraged mobile connectivity to deliver inclusive financial services.

Traditional banking models, he argued, were not designed for the unbanked to adopt banking services easily, but mobile infrastructure allowed for personalised, low-cost financial solutions.

He also highlighted the central bank's pivotal role in enabling bKash through forward-thinking regulation, ensuring the protection of customers' money and the viability of the fund.

With 350,000 agents nationwide, bKash has built a grassroots network where 77 percent of revenue is shared with local agents and distributors, incentivising their commitment, he said.

Quadir acknowledged the challenges of managing vast cash flows and said bKash was confident in its mission to bring secure, accessible financial services to every corner of Bangladesh—turning a simple idea into a transformative force.

Govt courts healthcare FDI

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NCDs, diagnostics, and dental services as key areas of growth.

Despite structural barriers, Holtmann's personal encounters with local healthcare were positive. "I have had to visit hospitals a couple of times and found the care impressive. It shows what's possible when the right investments are made."

Hak Sun Kim, a professor of South Korea's Yonsei University Health System, underlined the importance of understanding local demographics and working closely with government institutions.

He pointed to examples in China and South Korea, where effective coordination with public agencies enabled the rapid completion of healthcare projects, while others faltered due to a lack of alignment.

He also emphasised standardised electronic medical records and better training.

"Sustainable hospital operations depend on efficient systems and well-trained professionals," Kim said.

Futshi Kono, director of Ship International Hospital, part of Japan's Ship Healthcare Holdings, explained why the company sees promise in Bangladesh.

Known in Japan for its hospital development and elderly care services, the group is now focusing on emerging markets.

"As Japan faces an ageing population and declining birth rate, we are turning our attention to dynamic markets like Bangladesh," said Kono. "Our experience in care mix models, diagnostic innovation, and hospital infrastructure can support the growing demand here."

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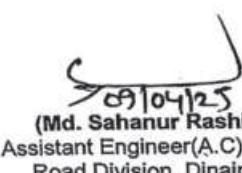
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Tender ID No	Name of Work	Last Selling date & Time	Closing date & Time	Opening date & Time
77/e-GP/OTM/RHD/EE/DRD/2024-2025 Tender ID No: 1096653	Repair of Railing with Painting work of Different culvert and Installation of Guide post & Sign Signal at Ch.401+000 to 424+167 Km of Dhaka(Mirpur)-Utholi-Paturia-Notakholka-Kashinathpur-Bogura-Rangpur-Beldanga-Banglabandha (N-5) Road under Road Division, Dinajpur during the year 2024-2025.	22/04/2025 17.00	23/04/2025 12.00	23/04/2025 12.00
78/e-GP/OTM/RHD/EE/DRD/2024-2025 Tender ID No: 1096761	Construction of Rigid Pavement at 10th(p), Km (Ch.9+098 to 9+215) of Birampur(Bijon)-Hakimpur Road (Z-5854) under Road Division, Dinajpur during the year 2024-2025.	22/04/2025 17.00	23/04/2025 12.15	23/04/2025 12.15

Reference No. 35.01.2764.413.07.003.24-772

Date: 09/04/2025


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GD-855

Ctg chamber calls for widening tax net

Submits 114 proposals for the upcoming national budget

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) recommended widening the tax net without increasing the burden on regular taxpayers. It was one of the 114 proposals the leading chamber submitted for the upcoming national budget during a pre-budget discussion with business leaders in Chittagong today.

Chittagong Chamber Administrator Muhammad Anwar Pasha presented the set of written recommendations to National Board of Revenue (NBR) Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan at the meeting held at the World Trade Centre in the city's Agrabad area.

In the proposals, the chamber

also called for strict monitoring to prevent misuse of bond facilities, prompt refund of advance income tax over collected at the import stage, and initiatives to increase the number of taxpayers by lowering income tax rates.

Alongside the Chittagong Chamber, representatives from the chambers of Rangamati and Cox's Bazar also attended the session. Through the Chittagong Chamber, business representatives submitted a total of 114 proposals, including 19 on income tax, 40 on value-added tax, and 55 on customs.

The upcoming budget should give special attention to women entrepreneurs, particularly in terms of VAT and tax policies, said Abida Sultana, president of the Chittagong Women's

Chamber.

Chittagong Metropolitan Chamber President Khalilur Rahman highlighted the high VAT and taxes on machinery, urging the authorities to reconsider these rates to facilitate smoother import and export activities.

In response, the NBR chairman said, "There are many areas that do not fall directly under our jurisdiction. However, we've understood there are issues in the bond system, which is why we aim to fully automate it. But many stakeholders are resisting on grounds of inconvenience."

He added that efforts are underway to digitise processes such as issuing certificates, licenses, and permits, while also working to simplify VAT audits and return submissions.

Polls of shipping agents' platform postponed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The biennial election of the Bangladesh Shipping Agents Association (BSAA), which was scheduled to be held on April 13, has been postponed by its election board following appeals from several candidates and a group of businesspeople.

The board also sought government approval for extending the tenure of the current BSAA Board of Directors by six months from April 29 to hold the election within this period.

The request was made through a letter sent to the director general of the Trade Organisation Wing, who is also an additional secretary to the commerce ministry, on Tuesday.

The process to elect the 24-member Board of Directors for the term from April 29, 2025, to April 28, 2027, was initiated in January.

A total of 226 voters were supposed to elect the new committee through voting on April 13.

A group of people under the banner "Boisommer Shikar Byebasi Forum" (Discriminated Businessmen Forum) staged a demonstration on April 6 and announced that they would prevent the election from being held.

They also alleged that the current board was trying to illegally interfere in the election process while many shipping agents were left out of the voter list.

Stock turnover hits six-week high

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) ended the week on a strong note, with turnover reaching Tk 540 crore yesterday — the highest in one and a half months.

This marked a 2.46 percent increase from the previous day's trading, reflecting a slight uptick in investor activity.

The pharmaceutical sector led the market in activity, topping the turnover chart by contributing 17.07 percent.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation emerged as the most-traded share, with a turnover of Tk 38.3 crore, accounting for 4.0 percent of the day's total turnover.

The last comparable high in turnover was Tk 607 crore on 25 February.

Yesterday, for the first time in the week, all the indices of the DSE posted gains as optimistic investors cautiously channelled funds into selective stocks, aiming for short-term gains. This followed news that the US administration under Donald Trump had announced a 90-day halt on reciprocal tariffs.

Washington abruptly backed down on Wednesday from its aggressive global trade stance, implementing a 90-day tariff suspension for selected nations, while simultaneously raising tariffs to 125 percent against China — escalating an already intense trade conflict between the world's two largest economies.

Trump's administration had previously imposed a 37 percent reciprocal tariff on Bangladeshi goods entering the US market, which was scheduled to take effect from April 9. However, with the new halt, Bangladesh is temporarily exempted.

As Japan faces an ageing population and declining birth rate, we are turning our attention to dynamic markets like Bangladesh," said Kono. "Our experience in care mix models, diagnostic innovation, and hospital infrastructure can support the growing demand here."

Bangladesh at risk of slipping

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He said if Bangladesh could reduce customs-related delays by one week to 10 days, half of the hurdles that cause delays would be resolved. It would also help to overcome geographical challenges.

Commenting on recent trade developments, Sung said, "The three-month suspension of the Trump-era tariff policy provides some relief. The Bangladesh government's proactive steps in this regard are commendable."

At the event, Javier Carlos Santonja Olcina, regional head of Bangladesh at Inditex, said Bangladesh probably has the best factories in the world in terms of LEED certification.

"But unfortunately, the port

capacity and the airport capacity are not enough," he said. "So, we need to be very flexible. That means combining shipment modes — sea, air, and land."

Rear Admiral SM Moniruzzaman, chairman of Chittagong Port Authority, said they are exploring technologies that will make port activities smoother.

Md Tareq Hasan, first secretary of the NBR, said the recently launched National Single Window is helping exporters significantly.

Speaking at the event, Lutfi Siddiqi, special envoy on International Affairs to the Chief Adviser, emphasised the need for local preparation to mitigate global risks in light of the new US tariff regime and cuts in aid.

"We can't rely on preferential

treatment, whether it's GSP or other LDC-related advantages. We must become much more self-sufficient," he said, stressing the importance of reforms, including in the labour sector.

Gayle Martin, interim country director of the World Bank, and Anwar Hossain, administrator of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, also spoke on the occasion.

Rubana Huq, vice-chancellor of the Asian University for Women, and Shams Mahmud, managing director of Shasha Denims, moderated the discussion.

On April 10, Kihak Sung was awarded honorary citizenship of Bangladesh for his outstanding contributions to the industry and the country's economy.

Reduce bad loans to boost economy

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yet defining period in economic history: the "Interwar Period" between the first and second world wars.

He pointed out that those years were marked by suspended gold convertibility, monetary fragmentation, and the notorious "beggar-thy-neighbour" policies.

"We know that beggar-thy-neighbour policies were economic strategies where a country tried to improve its own economy at the

expense of others, often through tariffs or currency devaluation, so we have to prepare for any such situation," he added.

He also said that leading economies are currently engaged not in cooperation, but in tariffs, trade barriers, and exchange controls.

As a result, a great economic depression like that in the 1930s could be repeated.

"So, we need to prepare for a difficult situation," Habib added.

Mohammad Abdul Mannan, chairman of First Security Islami Bank, in a session titled 'Islamic Banking and Governance,' said that Islamic banking in Bangladesh is growing very fast and good days are ahead for Islamic banking.

Around 1,000 officials of different banks, economists, academicians, and panelists participated in the two-day session of the Annual Banking Conference.

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ঠিকানা: ০৭ এপ্রিল, ২০২৪

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