

## Forex reserves cross \$21b again

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves crossed \$21 billion yesterday after almost 10 months thanks to an increased inflow of foreign currency generated by remittances and export earnings.

According to the International Monetary Fund's calculation method, the forex reserves stood at \$21.11 billion on Sunday, up from \$20.89 billion a day earlier, as per the central bank's latest data.

Previously, forex reserves had hit the \$21 billion mark in July last year.

However, gross forex reserves (according to the central bank's calculation) increased to \$26.38 billion, up from Thursday's \$26.14 billion.

The rising trend in remittances and export earnings has fuelled the forex reserves, Arief Hossain Khan, executive director and spokesperson of the central bank, told The Daily Star.

He added that steps taken by the interim government to tackle money laundering have given a boost to the reserves.

Remittance inflow hit \$3.29 billion in March, the highest in any single month in the history of Bangladesh.

## Go all out to remove trade barriers with US

Trade leaders urge govt to raise imports of US cotton, soybean

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Business leaders from Bangladesh and the United States have called on the government to make every effort to remove both tariff and non-tariff barriers on imports from the US to narrow the trade gap and facilitate Bangladeshi exports to the American market.

At a dialogue in Dhaka yesterday, organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham), the trade leaders also called for modernising key government services to improve efficiency and reduce delays.

For example, they recommended that customs departments at ports operate round-the-clock and that airports in Dhaka, Chattogram and Sylhet be upgraded to streamline services and shorten trade turnaround times.

To help balance trade, the dialogue also encouraged Bangladesh to increase imports of US cotton, soybean oil and soybean seeds.

Participants urged the government to continue negotiations with the US, especially given the uncertainty surrounding a 90-day pause on a 37 percent reciprocal tariff on Bangladeshi exports to the US.



### What should be done?

Reduce long lead time | Runkey offices such as customs round the clock | Bring down tariff and non-tariff barriers | Import more US cotton and soybean seeds to reduce trade gap

### KEY POINTS

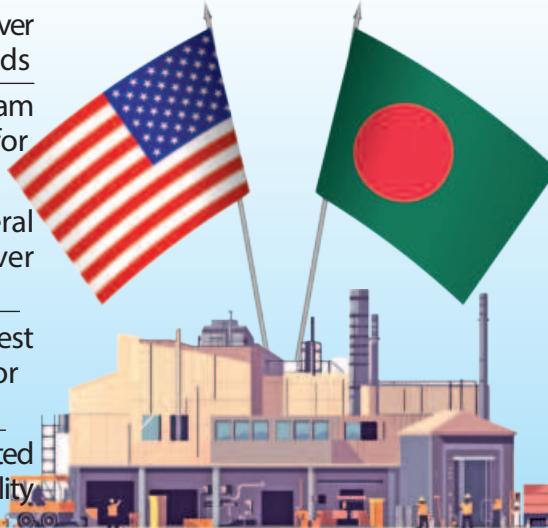
Businesses are worried over higher tariffs on goods

Bangladesh sending team to USTR on April 21 for negotiation

US-Bangladesh bilateral trade now stands at over \$10b

The US is the single largest export destination for Bangladesh

US cotton will get dedicated bonded warehouse facility



The AmCham plans to compile a set of recommendations from the discussion, which will be submitted to the government and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to help mitigate the impact of higher tariffs on bilateral trade.

The event was attended by business leaders from both

nations, diplomats, senior government officials, importers, exporters and trade experts.

With higher tariffs looming, concerns remain over the future of trade between the two countries. Business representatives expressed anxiety over the lack of clarity from the US administration on what the final tariff rates might be.

Syed Nasim Manzur, president of the Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh

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## Wheat imports may exceed 60 lakh tonnes for second year

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank instructed banks to further clear overdue letters of credit (LC) payments, as this type of non-payment tarnishes the image of the country's banking system, increases the cost of foreign trade, and disrupts the trade environment.

After issuing similar directives a couple of times over the past five months, the central bank reiterated the order to all banks in a circular issued yesterday.

Overdue LC payments, which were hovering above \$445 million in November last year, came down to \$242 million as of January 31, according to central bank data.

"If the bill against imports is not paid in a timely manner, it tarnishes the image of the country's banking system, increases the cost of foreign trade, and disrupts a favourable trade environment," the central bank said.

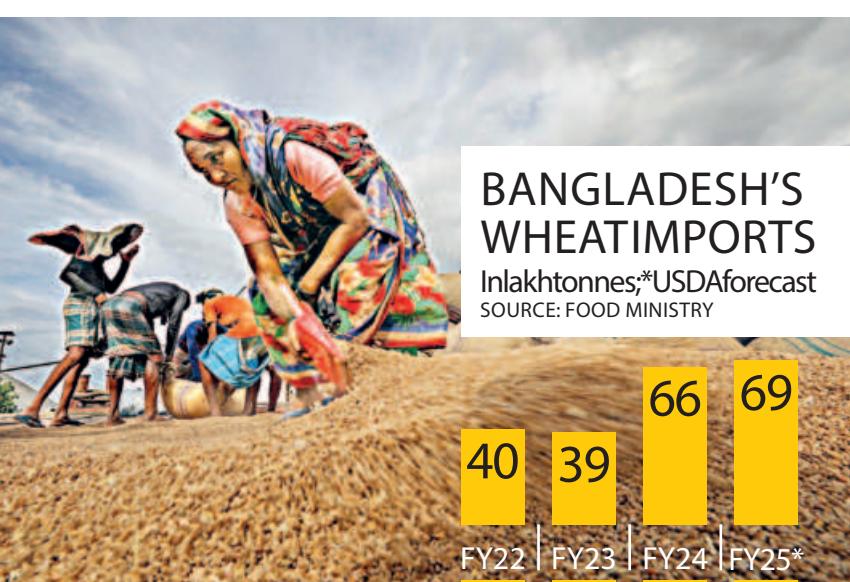
As such, banks have been ordered to take several measures to ensure prompt payment of overdue bills.

One of the measures is to draft a comprehensive action plan for overdue accepted bills (foreign or local) after detailed review and analysis, considering factors such as litigation status and realisation clause.

A detailed analysis, performance evaluations must be conducted on a branch-wise basis, where applicable, and special monitoring measures should be introduced in branches with a high volume of overdue unpaid accepted bills (foreign or local).

If any bill under litigation is not payable, the supplier's bank must be informed accordingly, the central bank said.

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Bangladesh's wheat imports are expected to cross 60 lakh tonnes for a second consecutive year, thanks to lower prices in the international market and higher domestic demand for the cereal grain, which is the second most consumed staple after rice.

Data from the food ministry show that the public and private sectors imported 42.5 lakh tonnes of wheat between July 1 and April 10 in the current fiscal year (FY) ending in June. This volume accounts for 64 percent of the total wheat imports in FY24.

Taslim Shahriar, deputy general manager of Meghna Group of Industries (MGI), said overall imports could reach around 63-64 lakh tonnes by the end of this fiscal year.

After declining for three consecutive years, Bangladesh's wheat imports began to recover in FY24, supported by falling prices in the global market.

In its latest report on grain and feed, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said that since April 2024, Bangladesh has been importing large quantities of wheat – mostly from the

Black Sea region – due to lower prices, improved supply chain logistics, and higher demand in the local market.

The USDA forecasted that total imports might rise to 68 lakh tonnes in the current fiscal year.

Citing import data from the first eight months of the year, the US agency projected that the South Asian country may purchase an additional 28 lakh tonnes of wheat in the remaining four months, considering continued demand.

"The prices of hard wheat in exporting countries and soft wheat from Argentina and Brazil fell in March 2025. This price drop is likely to encourage Bangladeshi importers to buy more wheat as they are very sensitive to price changes," the report said.

The agency noted that Bangladesh, which relies heavily on the international market due to low domestic production, imported 29 lakh tonnes of wheat during the last four months of the previous year.

However, Abul Bashar Chowdhury, chairman of Chattogram-based

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## No scope to cut corporate tax

NBR chairman says

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday said there was no scope to reduce corporate or individual tax rates in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, a stance that businesses opposed.

At a pre-budget discussion organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), Daily Samakal and Channel 24 at the InterContinental Dhaka, NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan said the national debt burden has increased over the past 50 years and those debts need to be repaid.

To do so, Bangladesh needs to collect more revenue from domestic sources, he stated.

"So, there is no scope to further reduce corporate and individual tax rates. If you look at developed countries, you will see that individual tax rates can go as high as 60 percent," he said.

"The mindset that business will happen only if tax exemptions are given should not exist."

At the same event, businesses complained of the harassment they face while seeking services from tax offices. As such, they demanded the automation of tax systems.

In response, Khan said steps are being taken to address challenges faced by businesses, adding that firms would be required to file tax returns online from next year. The NBR chairman also hinted at reducing existing tax exemptions to accelerate tax collection.

"We want a non-discriminatory tax regime. Sectors with long-standing exemptions must now pay the same rate as others," he said.

### HOW DID BUSINESSES RESPOND?

Former Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association director Asif Ashraf said the garment sector currently enjoys a 12 percent corporate tax rate.

"If this rate is changed midway, it will undermine investor and business confidence," he warned, adding that policy consistency was a key commitment highlighted during the recently concluded Bangladesh Investment Summit.

"We need policy support to increase production and strengthen the private sector, which is essential for boosting national output," said Abdul Awal Mintoo, former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

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# UK trade envoy visits Unilever Bangladesh's corporate headquarters

STAR BUSINESS DESK

A British delegation led by Baroness Rosie Winterton DBE, the UK government's trade envoy to Bangladesh, recently visited the corporate headquarters of Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL), a UK-based multinational and the country's largest fast-moving consumer goods company.

The visit underscored Unilever's forward-thinking sustainability agenda, encompassing climate resilience, plastic reduction, digital inclusion, and community empowerment.

With innovation at its core, Unilever continues to align its business practices with Bangladesh's national development priorities.

Following the visit, Winterton stated, "Unilever exemplifies what enduring trade partnerships look like. It is inspiring to see how a company with British origins has become such a vital part of Bangladesh's development story. Their legacy here goes far beyond commerce—it is about shared prosperity and responsible business."

The envoy was accompanied by Sarah Cooke, the British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, during the visit in Dhaka, according to a press release.

Cooke remarked, "Bangladesh's journey towards inclusive and green economic growth is commendable. British companies like Unilever, with long-standing ties and local commitments, are key partners in this transformation. Their investment in sustainability is exactly the



Baroness Rosie Winterton DBE, the UK government's trade envoy to Bangladesh, and Sarah Cooke, the British high commissioner to Bangladesh, pose for photographs with senior leadership from Unilever Bangladesh following a courtesy visit at the company's headquarters in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: UNILEVER BANGLADESH

kind of corporate leadership the world needs."

The delegation was welcomed by senior leadership from Unilever Bangladesh, including Zinnia Huq, chief financial officer and finance director; Syeda Durdana Kabir, human resources director; Shamima Akhter, director of corporate affairs, partnerships and communications; and Rashedul Quayum,

legal director and company secretary.

Akhter said, "We are proud of our heritage, proud of our purpose, and proud to serve the people of Bangladesh. We thank our partners in the UK and the Government of Bangladesh for walking this journey with us. Our commitment is not only to business, but to the well-being and progress of this nation."

Unilever's journey in Bangladesh began

in 1962 with a soap manufacturing facility in Kalurghat, Chattogram. Since then, it has grown into a trusted household name, with 25 iconic brands—more than 96 percent of which are now manufactured locally.

Since 1973, Bangladesh has held a 39.25 percent stake in UBL—a testament to the company's deep-rooted partnership in nation-building.

## bKash eases payment for Robi, Airtel customers

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Customers can now seamlessly pay for talk-time, internet, and other services on the "My Robi" and "My Airtel" apps without the need for a PIN, by linking their bKash accounts.

The mobile financial service (MFS) provider bKash has also been integrated as a "preferred payment partner" on both the "My Robi" and "My Airtel" platforms, according to a press release.

Furthermore, customers can now purchase their preferred Robi "Easy Plan" and Airtel "My Pack" directly from the bKash app.

## BRAC Bank signs employee banking deal with Zara Zaman Technology

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank has signed an employee banking agreement with Zara Zaman Technology Ltd, a software development company and the largest supplier of GRG-branded ATMs and Android POS terminals in Bangladesh.

Mahiul Islam, deputy managing director and head of retail banking at the bank, and Mridha Md Arifuzzaman, chairman of the technology company, signed the agreement at the bank's head office in Dhaka yesterday, according to a press release.

Through this partnership, employees of the technology company will benefit from a seamless and rewarding banking experience, which includes salary accounts, multi-currency debit cards, credit cards, loan facilities, deposit pension schemes, fixed deposits, and an array of privileges under BRAC Bank's employee banking proposition.



Mridha Md Arifuzzaman, chairman of Zara Zaman Technology Ltd, and Mahiul Islam, deputy managing director and head of retail banking at BRAC Bank, pose for group photographs following the signing of the agreement at the latter's head office in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: BRAC BANK

Anup Kumar Adhikary, head of finance and accounts at the technology company, and Shohel Ahmed, head of service management, along with team members from Zara Zaman Technology, were present at the signing ceremony.

This collaboration reaffirms BRAC Bank's commitment to empowering corporate institutions through innovative financial solutions and value-driven services, tailored to enhance the everyday banking experience of their workforce.

AKM Shahadul Islam, head of employee banking of the bank; Jashim Uddin Chowdhury, head of national sales, retail banking; and AKM Fuzul Haque, head of retail sales unit-6, along with their respective teams, were also present.

## Global trade dynamics amid US-China tariff war

FROM PAGE B4

the future direction of tariffs and potential retaliations. Continued tariff escalation may be irrelevant to trade since the bilateral tariff levels have already reached prohibitive heights. Nevertheless, trade conflicts are unlikely to be limited to tariffs alone.

In the meantime, markets will prioritise utilising existing excess capacity. Businesses from the US and China may secure less favourable deals in third-country markets compared to their previous bilateral arrangements, but some trade is better than

none. It's worth noting that entry into these non-US and non-China markets remains unaffected by new tariffs.

For instance, soft manufactures produced in China for the US market could be redirected to south and east Asia, while US-produced cars and agricultural goods initially intended for Chinese consumers might follow a similar path. Trade barriers impeding US exports to other regions could loosen through negotiations, fostering growth in exports from the US to other parts of the world.

These would reduce excess capacity in both nations. However, production growth cannot surpass existing excess capacity, as Chinese manufacturers are unlikely to invest in serving US markets, and vice versa. Nonetheless, increased exports from the ROW to both the US and China will contribute to global economic output.

### BLESSING IN DISGUISE?

The ongoing trade war between the US and China may inadvertently offer a modest boost to growth in the ROW, even as it dampens real GDP growth in both the US and China. Over the long term, not accounting for the latest exemptions, their

economies were projected to shrink by 0.6 percent each, while the ROW could see a slight 0.07 percent increase in growth (The Budget Lab, ibid).

This potential boost becomes more likely the longer the tariff conflict persists. Bangladesh, in particular, stands to benefit significantly, as US consumers face price hikes of 64 percent for apparel and 44 percent for textiles (The Budget Lab, ibid), prompting a shift toward more affordable alternatives. Bangladesh, being a leading low-cost supplier, is well-positioned to capitalise on this shift.

However, there are important caveats. The outcomes of ROW negotiations with the US over the next 90 days will be closely monitored by the Chinese government and global businesses.

The current high tariff levels are challenging to maintain, given the significant dispersion between the three blocs. The pause in tariff escalation reflects a retreat by White House influencers who oppose using the TRT as a negotiating tool rather than a means of revenue generation or manufacturing rehabilitation in the US. This retreat, however, is

far from guaranteed, as political unpredictability remains a factor.

The trade war is ultimately too costly for both economic giants to sustain indefinitely. The essential question now is not whether they will yield, but who will concede first and how soon. Recent exemptions hint that resolution may come sooner rather than later. To President Trump, what some see as "blinking" is simply demonstrating "flexibility." Nevertheless, the drama continues, so stay tuned.

The author is former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
National Housing Authority  
Office of the Executive Engineers  
Sylhet Division  
471, Sadipur, Shibgonj, Sylhet.  
Web site: [www.nha.gov.bd](http://www.nha.gov.bd)

Memo No-25.38.9162.636.99.004.24-175

**Corrigendum Notice**

All concerned are hereby informed that an amendment has been made as below for the Package of e-Tender Notice No-01/2024-2025. Dated: 12/03/2025 under this office due to unavoidable circumstances.

Package No	Name of Works	Tender ID No	Method of Tender	As per Published Date & Time	Amended Date & Time
				Closing / Opening Date & Time	Closing / Opening Date & Time
01	Land Development, Construction of Road, Drain, Culvert, Palisading, Retaining wall, Site Office, Main Gate & Others works for site & Services Project at Sadar Upazilla, Habiganj District. Under Sylhet Division, National Housing Authority, Sylhet.	1086642	OTM	16-04-2025 14:00 PM	21-04-2025 14:00 PM

All other terms & conditions as laid down in the tender notice will remain unchanged. This amendment will be treated as a part and parcel of the tender notice.

*13.04.2025*

(Muhammad Delwar Hossain)  
Project Director  
Development of Site & Services residential Plots  
Project at Sadar Upazilla, Habiganj District.  
&  
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GD-866

**Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.**  
(A Company of Petrobangla)  
(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)

Ref. No. 28.16.9100.097.07.002.25/154

Date: 13-04-2025

### e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender have published through National e-GP Portal: <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>

SL. No.	Tender ID, Package No. & date of publishing	Name of the goods	Tender last selling and closing date & time
01.	Tender ID : 1096894 Tender Package No: 28.16.9100.097.07.002.25/11 Date of publication : 13-April-2025	Refilling of empty Fire Extinguisher Cylinders and supply necessary spare parts.	Tender Document Last selling date & time: 27-April-2025; 17:00 Tender closing date & time: 28-April-2025; 15:00 Tender opening date & time: 28-April-2025; 15:00

The interested tenderer may visit the website <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> to get the detailed tender notice and to purchase the tender document.

This is an OTM 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 Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

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

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# Rezaul Karim made Sonali Bank DMD

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Sonali Bank PLC has recently promoted Md Rezaul Karim to the post of deputy managing director (DMD).

Prior to his promotion, Karim was serving the bank as a general manager, according to a press release. He began his banking career at Sonali Bank as a senior officer in 1994.

Over the years, he has held various positions at Sonali Bank with efficiency and distinction, including branch manager, roles in multiple divisions at the head office, and leadership positions at the principal office, local office, and the general managers' office.

He was honoured with the "Smart Banker & Clean Banker" award in recognition of his contributions to the banking sector.

With 30 years of experience, Karim has authored five publications in both local and international journals.

He obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees from Bangladesh Agricultural University, and also holds an MBA degree as well as a professional CCNA qualification.

## Premier Bank gets new DMD

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Premier Bank PLC has recently appointed Amalendu Roy to the post of deputy managing director (DMD).

Prior to taking up his new assignment, Roy was serving at United Commercial Bank PLC as a DMD and head of corporate branch and head of internal control and compliance division, concurrently.

He is a veteran banker with 28 years of professional experience in the banking industry, having held various positions, primarily in branch banking as a manager, according to a press release.

Amalendu commenced his career at Uttara Bank PLC as a probationary officer in 1996.

Subsequently, he joined National Bank PLC, followed by United Commercial Bank PLC.

He completed his postgraduate studies at the University of Dhaka.

## Gold prices cut by Tk 1,038 per bhori

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Jewellers yesterday cut gold prices by Tk 1,038 per bhori thanks to a drop in the rates of pure gold prices in the local market.

From today, the price of each bhori (11.664 grammes) of 22-carat gold ornaments will be Tk 162,176, down from Tk 163,214.

The Bangladesh Jewellers Association took the decision to decrease gold prices in a meeting, the association said in a press release.

Gold, for which Bangladesh is highly dependent on foreign sources, has seen a steady rise in prices for over a year, influenced by hikes in the international market and volatility in domestic supply.

In July 2023, the price of gold surpassed Tk 100,000 for the first time in Bangladesh.

Although Bangladesh does not import any significant quantity of gold, its prices are linked with international trends.

The country requires between 20 to 40 tonnes of gold annually, with about 80 percent of the demand being met through smuggling.



Shoppers browse new clothing at a fashion store at Afmi Plaza of port city Chattogram on Saturday ahead of Pahela Baishakh celebrations. Retailers say shopper footfall is up compared to last year, with sales during the Bangla New Year making up nearly a quarter of the annual apparel business.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Go all out to remove trade barriers with US

FROM PAGE B1

(LMFEB), described the US not only as a vital export destination but also as a key driver of growth, being a consumer-driven market.

He said that the National Board of Revenue (NBR) is currently reviewing tariffs on 20 low revenue items worth around \$100 million while also addressing non-tariff barriers.

Despite the tariff challenges, he remained optimistic, citing a crucial meeting with the USTR scheduled for April 21.

Manzur said that without clear direction during the 90-day pause, coinciding with peak holiday order cycles, Bangladesh risked losing seasonal business, potentially affecting factory operations.

He proposed the formation of a weekly progress tracker, led by senior officials and supported by the private sector, to seize short-

term opportunities and monitor key importables.

"A plan is needed to offset a possible 37 percent tariff, as competitors are already preparing," said the business leader.

Mohammad Belal Hossain Chowdhury, NBR member (VAT implementation & IT), said that a draft legislation for a central bonded warehouse is underway to facilitate cotton imports from the US.

He said the upcoming legislation will expand bonded warehousing to additional sectors, supported by a trained workforce to handle unconventional cargo.

Chowdhury added that the Bangladesh Single Window bond system is now operational, and he called for closer collaboration to explore US markets and invoicing systems.

The Bangladesh Single Window

(BSW) is a single online platform which is designed to streamline trade processes by enabling importers and exporters to submit documentation and data requirements for import, export, and transit of goods.

Garment exporters at the dialogue said that the average lead time for Bangladesh's readymade garments is 95 days, higher than Vietnam's 60 days and China's 32.

They argued that reducing logistics costs by just 1 percent could increase export demand by 7 percent.

While the recent 90 day pause on Trump's tariffs brought temporary relief, exporters said the authorities need to act fast.

At present, Bangladesh imports around 18 lakh bales of cotton from China, compared to only 4 lakh bales from the US. A shift

towards US cotton, they said, could affect RMG export pricing and would require careful cost assessment.

AmCham President Syed Ershad Ahmed described the US as Bangladesh's top export destination and a major investor, bringing capital, technology and expertise to sectors such as insurance, hospitality and information technology.

Reflecting on more than 50 years of bilateral relations, he called for reciprocal tariff adjustments and a formal bilateral agreement to address trade barriers.

Ahmed acknowledged efforts by the interim government to tackle both tariff and non-tariff issues but emphasised that much work lies ahead, especially on the front of economic diplomacy.

John Fay, commercial counselor of the US embassy in Dhaka, was also present at the programme.

## BB again asks banks to clear overdue LC payments

FROM PAGE B1

When submitting the monthly report on overdue accepted bills, the information must be verified through the Online Import Monitoring System before submission.

All submitted bills, discrepancies (if any), and payment information at the authorised dealer branch must be preserved and sent to the relevant department at the head office on a monthly basis.

This directive will be effective immediately, the BB added.

two years, due to its lower price," the USDA added.

It further projected that Bangladesh's wheat imports may rise to 69 lakh tonnes in the next fiscal year, assuming continued demand for wheat and wheat flour in the local market, lower international wheat prices, and smooth global supply chain logistics.

"Apart from human consumption, the use of coarse wheat flour in the feed industry is also increasing, contributing to higher overall demand for wheat," it said.

## Wheat imports may exceed 60 lakh tonnes

FROM PAGE B1

commodity importer

BSM Group, said 15 lakh tonnes of the grain could be imported during the remaining months of the fiscal year.

According to the USDA,

approximately 60 percent

of Bangladesh's wheat

imports came from Russia,

which offered lower prices

than other competing

countries. Other major

suppliers included Ukraine,

Canada, and Argentina.

"Bangladesh imported

Brazilian wheat in February

2025 for the first time in

## No scope to cut corporate tax

FROM PAGE B1

"We need policies that increase domestic demand. Without increased demand, there's no point in producing more because it won't be profitable," he said.

The business leader also criticised the policy inconsistency between the government and private sector.

"To reduce inflation, we have been following a contractionary monetary policy. But this restricts private sector credit. Businesses are struggling, some entrepreneurs are even selling homes to stay afloat," he said.

"In this context, failure to start preparing now could push our export sector out of global competition. To remain competitive in the post-LDC era, we must begin preparing our export-oriented industries and SMEs from now."

Former Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury urged the authorities to adopt a holistic approach to develop trade-facilitating infrastructure in an integrated way.

"We haven't been able to do that. This is a holistic matter. Development, trade facilitation, financial product innovation and taxation, everything must be integrated," he said.

"If we adopt an investment-centric model, we will return to the right path. Without investment, all this discussion about tax and GDP growth is meaningless. Our entire taxation model should revolve around how to attract investment."

Chowdhury added that the authorities should keep in mind where the country has comparative advantages, such as in manufacturing and other sectors.

Mohammad Hatem, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said there was scope to reduce the trade gap between Bangladesh and the US.

Mahbubur Rahman, president of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), suggested.

## West Zone Power Distribution Company Limited (WZPDL)

নির্বাচী প্রোক্ষেপন দস্তাবেজ, তোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ ওজেপার্টিকোমিশন, তোলা

তারিখ: ১৩-০৪-২০২৫

### দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। মন্ত্রণালয়ের নাম	: বিদ্যুৎ কালান্তি ও বাংলার সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়।
২। সংস্থার নাম	: ওয়েস্ট জেনে পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ওজেপার্টিকোমিশন)।
৩। দস্তুরের নাম	: তোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহের ওজেপার্টিকোমিশন, তোলা।
৪। কাজের নাম	: তোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহের ওজেপার্টিকোমিশন মন্ত্রণালয়ের বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র-২, ১০০ বেঙ্গলি ইউনিয়নের ওভারহার্ডিং কাজের মালামাল সরবরাহ ও স্থাপন কাজ।
৫। দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	: খেলাদার পদ্ধতি (OTM)
৬। দরপত্র বিতরণের শেষ তারিখ	: ২৭/০৪/২০২৫ইঠ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)।
৭। দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	: ২৮/০৪/২০২৫ইঠ তারিখে দেখা ১২:০০ ঘটক। খেলাদার সময় এই দিন বিকাল ৩:৩০ ঘটক।
৮। বিশেষ নির্দেশকা	: ক) কঢ়িপক কোন কারণ দর্শনো ব্যক্তিকে দেখিয়ে যে কোন দরপত্র অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাস্তিল অথবা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। খ) অন্যান্য শর্তগুলী ওজেপার্টিকোমিশনের ওয়েবসাইটে প্রাপ্তার্থ যাবে।

ফোন: ০১৭০৭০৯১৯৮৮

Web: [www.wzpdcl.gov.bd](http://www.wzpdcl.gov.bd)

GD-871

তোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ, ওজেপার্টিকোমিশন, তোলা

মোড় টাইসুক

নির্বাচী প্রোক্ষেপন

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)

Road Division, Bogura.

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[eebog@rhd.gov.bd](mailto:eebog@rhd.gov.bd)

Memo No.35.01.1000.405.16.100.25.775

Date: 10/04/2025

### e-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, Bogura for the procurement of:

Tender ID & Package No.	Package Description	Publishing Date, Closing Date
Tender ID No: 1095192, e-GP-85/EE/BRD/OTM/2024-2025	Pavement repair, Carpeting & Seal Coat work at ch. 1st(p), 3rd(p), 6th(p), 11th(p) to 12th(p) of Dhund-Nangli-Balaidighi-Paradah-Patchmille-Gabtoli-Pirgacha-Mokantola (Chowkighat) Road (Z-5072) under Road Division, Bogura during the FY 2024-2025.	07-Apr-2025 18:00:00, 21-Apr-2025 14:00:00
Tender ID No. 1095194, e-GP-87/EE/BRD/OTM/2024-2025	Construction of Rigid Pavement at Ch: 2+800 Km to 2+986 Km of Sultanganj (Lichutola)-Madla-Bagbari (Kadamli)-Gabtoli (Panchmille) Road (Z-5040) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025	07-Apr-2025 18:00:00, 21-Apr-2025 14:25:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded from as stated above on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursue.

e-Tenders will be accepted only up to as above date and time. Accepted tender will be opened online immediately after as stated above date and time.

Abul Monsur Ahmed  
Identity No: 602288  
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD  
Road Division, Bogura.

GD-870

## Stocks fall as investors stay cautious

### STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stocks fell yesterday, snapping a two-day gaining streak, as investor sentiment remained cautious despite a 90-day suspension of fresh US tariffs on most countries.

The market had closed lower last week, weighed down by concerns over the US decision to impose 'reciprocal tariffs', which damped trading activity in the first session after the Eid vacation.

The Dhaka Stock Exchange's benchmark DSEX index dropped 13.93 points, or 0.27 percent, to close at 5,205.23 last week.

Yesterday, the DSEX dropped 35.55 points, or 0.68 percent, to settle at 5,169.68.

The Shariah-based DSES index slipped 0.57 percent to 1,166.21, while the DS30, comprising blue-chip stocks, lost 0.82 percent to close at 1,911.97.

Turnover also declined, falling 23 percent to Tk 414.31 crore from Tk 540.16 crore in the previous session, reflecting weakening investor interest.

Of the 395 issues traded, 79 advanced, 270 declined, and 48 remained unchanged.

Eastern Cables emerged as the top gainer with a 9 percent rise, while Prime Bank posted the highest loss, dropping 11 percent.

## Eastland Insurance's profit fell 6% in 2024

### STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Eastland Insurance saw its profit decline in 2024 due to lower earnings from insurance premiums.

The company posted a net profit of Tk 8.95 crore in 2024, down 6 percent year-on-year, according to a recent price-sensitive information (PSI) disclosure.

Eastland's shares rose 1.66 percent to Tk 18.40 in mid-day trading yesterday at the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

The company reported earnings per share (EPS) of Tk 1.07 for the year ended December 31, 2024, compared to Tk 1.14 in the previous year, as per the PSI.

The insurer attributed the drop in EPS to a decline in net profit after tax.

Eastland's net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS) dropped to Tk 0.76 in 2024 from Tk 0.83 a year earlier, due to lower net premium income.

Meanwhile, its net asset value (NAV) per share also declined owing to a fall in the market value of its investment in securities.

The company's board has recommended a 10 percent cash dividend, the same as last year, for general shareholders, excluding sponsors and directors.

The total amount of dividend payable to general shareholders stands at Tk 4.9 crore.

Founded in 1986, Eastland Insurance is headquartered in Dilkusha, Dhaka. The company was listed on the DSE in 1994 and had a paid-up capital of Tk 83.88 crore as of December 31, 2023.

## Global trade dynamics amid US-China tariff war



ZAHID HUSSAIN

The impact of Trump's "reciprocal" tariffs (TRT) remains uncertain, but it has undeniably divided the world into three distinct blocs: the US, China, and the rest of the world (ROW) — excluding Canada and Mexico, which appear to be caught in no man's land. Among these, the US and China, the two largest global economic powers, are locked in a gruelling tariff war, while the rest of the world has extended offers to negotiate.

The bilateral trade in goods between the US and China faces the risk of being severed due to the imposition of steep tariffs: a combined 125 percent plus 20 percent by the US against China, and a retaliatory 125 percent by China effective April 12, alongside the 15 percent tariff it enacted on March 10, 2025.

These measures could severely hinder mutual sales, though the



PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Farmers look after their crops with care, as growing vegetable seeds requires constant monitoring and attention. Seed production in the northern region began 15 years ago and has now expanded to 80 villages across five districts in Rangpur.

## Rangpur farmers see success in vegetable seed production

Rake in Tk 500 crore annually

### S DILIP ROY

Over the past 15 years, farmers in Rangpur have transformed their agricultural practices by shifting from reliance on imported seeds to supplying homegrown ones across the greater northern region and other parts of the country.

Currently, around 1,200 farmers across 80 villages in five Rangpur districts produce more than ten varieties of vegetable seeds, including brinjal, tomato, cabbage, gourd, bean, bitter gourd and chillies.

They annually produce 50 tonnes of seeds on around 1,000 hectares of land, selling them to private firms for around Tk 500 crore.

Nearly 18 years ago, Lalmonirhat farmer Pishul Roy, 68, began growing vegetable seeds on four to five decimals of land. He is recognised as the first vegetable seed producer in Lalmonirhat.

After cultivating seeds independently for two years, he came into contact with a representative from a seed company. With their support and guidance, he started commercial seed production.

Seeing his success and profitability, around 15-16 villagers became interested in seed cultivation. Roy says many farmers still seek his advice on seed production.

The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) says farmers in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Rangpur and Nilphamari are not only profiting from seed production but also contributing to the country's overall vegetable supply.

"Rangpur's soil is well-suited for vegetable seed production," said Shafiqul Islam, additional director of the DAE in Rangpur.

However, seed production success depends on farming expertise, as Islam

said only skilled farmers with technical knowledge can reliably grow seeds.

Narayan Chandra Roy, a 46-year-old farmer from Fulgachhi village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, is one such grower. For him, seed cultivation requires constant monitoring and meticulous care.

Roy has been producing seeds for 15 years, and now he earns around Tk 10-12 lakh per year by selling directly to seed companies.

Alongside 15 others in his village, he grows seeds for brinjal, tomato, cabbage, gourd, and other varieties.

The farmer said the production hovers around 4-12 kgs per bigha, depending on the crop.

"Sixty to sixty-five percent of my income covers labour costs, but I still net Tk 3-4 lakh yearly," Roy told The Daily Star. "The companies buy directly, so we face no hassle in sales."

In the 2023-24 season, the country's vegetable seed demand was 3,060 tonnes, 85 percent of which was met by government supplies. Private firms sourced the rest from farmers like Atul Chandra Roy of Durakuti village.

"Only aware, skilled farmers succeed in this," he said. "But where conditions are right, and with our technical support, they are thriving."



Roy, 44, has been growing seeds for 14 years. He said companies pay between Tk 3,000 and Tk 24,000 per kilogramme, depending on the variety.

"This work has brought us prosperity," Roy told The Daily Star. "My whole family helps, though it requires patience. After expenses, I earn over Tk 3 lakh per year from my 4-5 bighas of land."

From Rajbari upazila of Kurigram, seed grower Akter Hossain said production requires slightly elevated land and protective cover in winter.

The 55-year-old farmer, who has been into seed cultivation for around a decade, said, "We are seeing real economic gains."

According to DAE official Shafiqul Islam, while southern Bangladesh doesn't produce vegetable seeds, Rangpur now supplies the entire country. "It is a sharp contrast to 15 years ago, when imported seeds used to dominate vegetable farming in the northern region."

"Only aware, skilled farmers succeed in this," he said. "But where conditions are right, and with our technical support, they are thriving."



US President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariff has divided the world into three distinct blocs: the US, China and the rest of the world—excluding Canada and Mexico.

US exports to China encompass a wide range of products, including electronics, machinery, nuclear reactors, agricultural goods, oil, vehicles, plastics, pharmaceutical products, perfumes, toiletries, and cosmetics.

The above estimates are partially invalidated by the exemption from TRT granted to smartphones, semiconductors, chips, laptops,

computer monitors and various electronic parts. But the general direction of change still holds, especially since the exemption does not include the 20 percent tariff on Chinese goods for China's alleged role in the fentanyl trade.

Under the TRT regime, the US and China will seek identical goods or close substitutes from third countries to replace trade that previously occurred directly between them (e.g., smartphones). Both countries will face elevated costs compared to pre-TRT levels. Trade with third countries will arise whenever the tariff-inclusive price from those nations is lower than the tariff-inclusive price of similar goods from China.

The wide gap between the US tariffs — 10 percent TRT plus pre-existing tariffs on most countries (total 25 percent in case of Bangladesh for instance) and 145 percent on Chinese goods except high tech items — makes other countries particularly appealing during the current TRT regime. While a reduction in the 10 percent TRT is possible after the 90-day period, the ongoing tit-for-tat tariffs between the US and China are likely to persist beyond this timeframe.

### REDIRECTION OF US-CHINA TRADE

Markets are quick to capitalise on ripe opportunities, often finding

## Finding a co-founder

### BEN JEFFREYS

You've got an idea that you think will go big with you at the helm. You battle it out for months — building, testing, learning. Then you're ready to pitch to some investors and the feedback is ... overwhelmingly negative. You're just a single person with an early-stage idea. Come back to me when you hit X — they say.

We think of big, successful tech companies as having these solo visionaries — Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Elon Musk, Jensen Huang. But less well known is that each of these visionaries also had co-founders with skills complementary to their vision. In fact, if you check the Magnificent 7 stocks, six of those seven global tech leaders all started with co-founders (Bezos at Amazon being the outlier).

Finding the right co-founder can be one of the most critical decisions a startup founder makes. While some entrepreneurs choose to go it alone, having a co-founder can provide key advantages that significantly improve a startup's chances of success. Investors, too, tend to favour startups with strong co-founding teams, seeing them as more resilient and better equipped to handle the challenges of scaling a business.

I've experienced this firsthand as a co-founder. In the early days, having co-founders meant I had someone to challenge ideas, refine strategies, and push the business forward. And as I was the main operator, they held me accountable to key goals. Startups require expertise across multiple areas — product development, sales, marketing, operations, and finance — and it's rare for one person to excel at all of them. A well-matched co-founding team can fill gaps in knowledge and provide strategic insights that a solo founder might miss.

The startup journey is intense, filled with high pressure moments, unexpected setbacks, and long hours. Having someone to share the burden can make a significant difference in maintaining motivation and resilience. Many startups fail not because of flawed ideas, but because founders burn out under the weight of responsibility. A co-founder serves as a built-in support system, helping navigate difficult decisions and keeping the company moving forward even in challenging times. There were plenty of moments where I thought we were done and it was my co-founders who helped me to continue to believe, and also to realise when I was kidding myself.

However, while having a co-founder brings many advantages, founders must be careful in choosing the right partner. Disagreements on company direction, decision-making, or work ethic can create long-term conflicts that hinder progress. It's crucial to have open discussions early on to ensure both founders are aligned on the company's goals, workflow, and operating principles.

On clarity, a common mistake I've personally seen is co-founders with uneven cap tables. If you truly believe they are a co-founder, keep it simple and split 50/50. Uneven cap tables constantly bring you back to the question: does my workload represent my share? And it's a death spiral conversation. You will both work more than you expect at the start. Remember, you'll both be diluted by investors anyway (most founders end up with less than 10 percent of the company over time), and options pools can be used to rebalance equity if workloads change over time.

So how do you find a co-founder if you don't have one? Go talk to anyone, everyone and then even more so. Be clear on your idea and what you're looking for in a co-founder. This is actually your first pitch, you're just asking for sweat rather than money. Sooner or later, you will find the right person, or even multiple people. It will happen.

And if it doesn't, you need to ask yourself the hard question — is my idea convincing enough for someone else to actually invest in? Confronting this first brutal fact is your first resilience test and it will tell you whether you really are cut out to be an entrepreneur.

The author is the co-founder and CEO of ATEC Global.

ways to navigate enduring trade barriers and exploit newly emerged arbitrage prospects. This can involve malpractices like transhipment — routing goods through third countries — or strategies such as resourcing and relocating operations to leverage tariff disparities. Consequently, fresh trade and investment opportunities will arise in sectors like textiles, footwear, machinery, and other categories within the broader US-China trade spectrum.

US garment and footwear importers can establish partnerships with companies in alternative locations, driving expansion in global production for these industries. US companies catering to Chinese consumers and producers often maintain production capacities outside the US — for instance, car manufacturing facilities in Mexico. Such companies can adopt similar redirection strategies, leading to increased production of goods that China imports from other parts of the world outside the US.

How will US and Chinese plants, previously dedicated to bilateral markets, handle the problem of excess capacity? They might contemplate relocating their operations, but such choices depend on understanding

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