





# 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.

# 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.

# 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 Fuzlul 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.

A 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

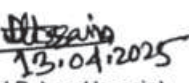
Date: 13-04-2025.

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 Closing / Opening Date & Time	Amended Date & Time Closing / Opening Date & Time
01	Land Developmen, Construction of Road, Drain, Culvert, Palisading, Retaining wall, Site Office, Main Gate & Others works for site & Services Project at Sadar Upazilla, Habigonj 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.



(Muhammad Delwar Hossain)  
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Development of Site & Services Residential Plots  
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GD-866



Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.

(A Company of Petrobangla)

(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)

গ্যাস ব্যবহারে সশরী হোন এবং সময়মত গ্যাস বিল পরিশোধ করুন

গুজ্জাচার চর্চা করি সমৃদ্ধ দেশ গড়ি

বিনা কারণে গ্যাসের চুল্লা জ্বালিয়ে রাখা আর বিপদকে ডাকা একই বিষয়

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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GD-867



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

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

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

From today, the price of each bhoori (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

## ACI director to buy company shares worth Tk 15.60cr

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Shusmita Anis, a director of Advanced Chemical Industries (ACI) Ltd, has expressed her intention to purchase 7.75 lakh of the company's shares.

The transaction will be carried out through the block market at the prevailing market price by April 30, according to a disclosure by ACI to the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

Based on ACI's closing price of Tk 201.30 per share yesterday, the value of the shares to be purchased stands at Tk 15.60 crore.

This move follows her acquisition of 15.15 lakh shares on January 15.

In recent months, ACI directors have been increasing their stakes in the company.

Earlier this year, ACI Chairman M Anis Ud Dowla bought 16 lakh shares while Managing Director Arif Dowla purchased 31 lakh shares of the well-known business house, which operates across diversified sectors.

As of June 2024, ACI Chairman M Anis Ud Dowla held 19.87 percent of the company's shares. Arif Dowla held 4.98 percent and Shusmita Anis held 1.94 percent.

The shareholding of ACI directors has increased since then. At the end of March this year, company directors held 43.16 percent of the shares, up from 36.07 percent as of June 30, 2024.

## Go all out to remove trade barriers with US

FROM PAGE B1 (LFMEAB), 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.

## 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

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.



**চট্টগ্রাম পানি সরবরাহ ও পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন কর্তৃপক্ষ**  
**Chattogram Water Supply & Sewerage Authority**  
WASA Office Building, Dampara, Chattogram, Bangladesh

Memo No. 46.06.0000.331.35.006.2025-21

Date: 09.04.2025

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (NATIONAL)**  
**For Selection of Senior Financial Management Consultant (Package No.: CWSIP/S15)**

1. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) is in the process of receiving a credit/loan from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of "Chattogram Water Supply Improvement Project (CWSIP)", to be implemented by Chattogram WASA and intends to apply a part of the proceeds of this credit for the services of a **Senior Financial Management Consultant**

2. **Scope of Services:** The Scope of Services of the **Senior Financial Management Consultant** includes, but not limited to:

a) Financial Management Manual: Prepare a financial management (FM) manual that would be embodied in the Project Implementation Manual of the project. The FM manual would include authorities and responsibilities of project staff in respect of various segments of FM function recording and processing procedures for payment fund flow arrangements.

b) Budgeting: Assist the Project Director in preparing the project budget on the basis of approved procurement plan and implementation plan in consultation with CWASA planning division and various other units involved in project implementation.

c) Chart of Account: The SFMC will develop a comprehensive Chart of Account for the Project to capture financial data under (i) GoB code of accounts (ii) WASA's heads of computerized accounting system.

d) Computerized Accounting System: The SFMC will interact with the Computerized Accounting System (CAS) for CWASA for adopting the system for the Project and will assess the adequacy of the system's needs.

e) Disbursement plan: The SFMC, with the assistance of project accounting staff and in consultation with other staff involved in project implementation, would prepare the actual and quarterly disbursement forecasts for all components of the project in line with project's procurement and implementation plan.

f) Fund Management: SFMC would assist the PD and the CWASA in obtaining quarterly fund release for GoB allocated fund and requisite government approval for use of IDA fund.

g) Replenishment of Fund: The SFMC will exercise due diligence to ensure the propriety and appropriateness of all financial information in the withdrawal application before preparing the consolidated replenishment request to IDA.

h) Internal Control: Ensure that all financial management activities are in compliance with funding source policies, procedure and requirements.

i) Books and records: The SFMC will ensure maintenance of adequate register, books and records in appropriate order to meet the statutory requirements.

j) Fixed Assets records: Ensure that the computerized fixed assets records are maintained in the PMU identifying location and user of each asset.

k) Preparation of Financial Statement and Reports: The SFMC will ensure that preparation of the annual financial statement and other monthly and quarterly report, as specified under the GoB Project Accounting Manual, and Financial Monitoring Report (FMR) as required by IDA.

l) Interface with External Auditor: The SFMC will prepare the Statement of Audit Needs (SAN) to be agreed with the FAPAD/C& AG.

m) The SFMC, in consultation with PMU/the Bank, will prepare the ToR for the engagement of a private Audit Firm, if needed.

n) Follow up action with Project Audit Review Committee (PARC): The SFMC will provide necessary co-operation to the Project Audit Review Committee (PARC) which will be constituted as per the agreement with the World Bank.

o) Training Accounting Staff: The SFMC will provide hands on training to the accounting staff on various aspects of financial management tasks under a structured training plan.

p) Contribute to drafting reports including monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports on project activities, memo, minutes of meetings etc.

q) Provide support regarding required fund proposed by the development partner through proper financial analysis and mechanism.

r) Ensure maintenance of a secure and reliable electronic financial management and IT system, if needed in addition to the existing CWASA system.

s) Provide advice to the Client on fund management.

t) Prepare periodic Account Reconciliation.

u) Coordinate with the auditors and prepare the Broad Sheet (B/S) audit reply (if any) for the financial related audit objections (if any) raised by the FAPAD or other institution.

v) Ensure the compliance of project implementation with GoB & the World Bank rules, regulation and policies and oversee the utilization of resources in activities.

w) Perform any other assignments as and when desired by the Authority.

3. **Duration:** The duration of the consultancy services is tentatively 60 (sixty) months.

4. **Required Skills and Experiences:**

The Consultant should have the following minimum credentials:

a) Master's degree or equivalent in Accounting/Business Administration, Management, Finance or relevant field of study. Member of a Professional Accountancy Organization (PAO) recognized by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) will be an advantage.

b) Minimum 10 years work experience of which at least 3 years in a managerial position in financial management in government, autonomous or semi-autonomous government agency.

c) Candidates with experience in donor-funded projects will be preferred.

d) Proven experience in working with program/project implementation.

e) Experience in facilitating inter-institutional organization and ability to work with teams.

5. Applicants are required to submit their Expressions of Interest (EoI), comprising of a CV (including employment history with duties and responsibilities) and a forwarding letter briefly describing the reasons that the applicant considers him/her self best suited to perform the assignment.

6. The attention of interested Applicants is drawn to paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's Procurement Regulations, setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

7. Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) and other information will be available upon request from the address provided below either through email or in person. ToR is also available in Chattogram WASA's website ([www.cicw-wasa.org.bd](http://www.cicw-wasa.org.bd)).

8. The consultant will be selected following the procedures for Selection of Individual Consultants as described in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IFP Borrowers, Fifth Edition, September, 2023.

9. Expression of Interest needs to be submitted (either through e-mail or in person or by mail) to the following address by 16:00 hours (BST) (GMT+6) on or before 30 April 2025. Please clearly mention "Expression of Interest (EoI) for Selection of Senior Financial Management Consultant, Package No: CWSIP/S15" in the subject line and on the top of the envelope.

10. EoIs received after the last date of submission will not be considered for short listing. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EoIs without assigning any reason, whatsoever.



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SPR-61  
13/4/25

GD-872

## 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.

"For the private sector, we've imposed tight monetary policies, but for the government, it's still an expansionary stance," he added, referring to the increasing size of the budget year after year.

"This inconsistency is problematic."

Mintoo urged the authorities to frame a revenue and monetary policy that works for both the government and private sector.

"If one side is getting benefits and the other is being squeezed, that's not a real policy," he said.

He also said reducing harassment of taxpayers would help boost the country's tax-GDP ratio, which is among the lowest in the world.

"The low rate of return filing in Bangladesh is largely due to taxpayers' fear of harassment as soon as they submit their documents. So please ease the burden on those who pay taxes and take action against those who don't. We will fully support that."

Echoing those sentiments, former FBCCI president Mir Nasir Hossain urged the government to pay more attention to reducing its expenditure.

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

Bangladesh, urged the government to prepare for the country's graduation from the list of least developed countries (LDCs).

"This transition will also mean the loss of certain benefits, such as duty free and quota-free export privileges and relaxed conditions on development assistance. It may also potentially lead to a decline in exports," 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.

"Bangladesh can build a warehouse hub for cotton, which is likely to reduce lead time and distances," he suggested.



**ওয়েস্ট জোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ওজোপাডিকেলিঃ)**  
**West Zone Power Distribution Company Limited (WZPDCL)**  
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, ভোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ ওজোপাডিকেলিঃ, ভোলা

স্মারক নং-২৭.২২.০৯১৮.৬০২.৫৫.০০১.২৫.১০১৩

তারিখঃ ১৩-০৪-২০২৫ইং

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

১। মন্ত্রণালয়ের নাম	:	বিদ্যুৎ জ্বালানি ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়।
২। সংস্থার নাম	:	ওয়েস্টজোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিঃ।
৩। দপ্তরের নাম	:	ভোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ ওজোপাডিকো, ভোলা।
৪। কাজের নাম	:	ভোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহের আওতাধীন মনপুরা বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্রের ক্যামিড-২, ৫০০ কেভিএ ইঞ্জিনের ওভারহাউলিং কাজের মালামাল সরবরাহ ও স্থাপন কাজ।
৫। দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	:	খোলা দরপত্র (OTM)
৬। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	:	২৭/০৪/২০২৫ইং (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)।
৭। দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৮/০৮/২০২৫ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা। খোলার সময় ঐ দিন বিকাল ৩.৩০ ঘটিকা
৮। বিশেষ নির্দেশিকা	:	ক) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন দরপত্র অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল অথবা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। খ) অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী ওজোপাডিকোর ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

ফোনঃ ০১৭০০৭০৯৯৮৮

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

GD- 871



২০/০৪/২৫  
মোঃ ইউসুফ  
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী  
ভোলা বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ, ওজোপাডিকেলিঃ, ভোলা

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)**  
**Road Division, Bogura.**  
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**[eebogo@rhd.gov.bd](mailto:eebogo@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 Dhunot-Nanglu-Baliadighi-Poradah-Patchmle-Gabtol-Pirgacha-Mokamtola (Chowkirghat) Road (Z-5072) under Road Division, Bogura during the FY 2024-2025.	07-Apr-2025 18:00:00, 21-Apr-2025 14:20:00
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 Sultangoni (Litchutola)-Madla-Bagbari (Kadamtoli)-Gabtoli (Panchmle) 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 are 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 dampened 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.



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 Pishulal 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.

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 Rajarhat 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."

## 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.*



# Global trade dynamics amid US-China tariff war



ZAHD 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

demand for these goods will persist. Both nations will need to seek alternative sources to fulfil their needs. Exports from these alternative sources in the ROW are subject to a 10 percent TRT, but China imposes no equivalent tariff on them.

### GLOBAL IMPACT OF TARIFFS

The 10 percent TRT on countries outside the US and China is set to remain in effect for at least 90 days following the pause on April 10, 2025. If neither China nor the US backs down during this period, nations in the ROW could become increasingly attractive as intermediaries for trade between the two economic giants.

The trade volumes affected by these tariffs hold substantial global significance. In 2024, merchandise trade between the US and China totalled \$583 billion, with \$144 billion in US exports to China and \$439 billion in imports from China to the US.

Due to the tariffs, China's share in US imports is forecasted to decrease from 14 percent to 4 percent (The Budget Lab, April 10, 2025), potentially creating approximately \$167 billion in export opportunities for other nations to the US.

China's exports to the US are predominantly machinery, electronics and telecommunications equipment, which are categories that include computers, broadcasting

devices, and office machine parts. Other significant exports encompass clothing, textiles and footwear.

In 2024, Chinese imports from the US accounted for 5.5 percent of their total imports. If this share decreases in proportion to the decline projected in the US, it could drop to 1.5 percent, thereby generating \$105 billion in export opportunities for other countries to China.

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 theentanyl 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



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.

PHOTO: REUTERS/FILE

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