

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

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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

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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

Rezaul Karim made Sonali Bank DMD

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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

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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.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
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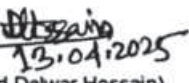
Memo No-25.38.9162.636.99.004.24-175

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	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, Habigonj District. Under Sylhet Division, National Housing Authority, Sylhet.	1086642	OTM	16-04-2025	21-04-2025
				14:00 PM	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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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

গুজ্জার 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

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GD-867