

# Star BUSINESS



## Govt has no connection with ACC probe of NBR officials Says finance adviser

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has no connection with the Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) investigation into allegations against officials of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), said Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday.

"The NBR staff can now perform their duties without any fear... We are happy that the NBR issue has been resolved," he told journalists at a press briefing following an event at the Finance Division in Dhaka.



On Sunday, the ACC launched an investigation into allegations against six officials of the NBR, including the president of the NBR Reform Unity Council, for facilitating large-scale tax evasion and amassing illegal wealth through bribery.

The announcement of the probe came hours before the NBR officials called off their shutdown programme.

However, when asked about the ACC probe, the adviser said, "I will not answer anything about the ACC. They have their terms of reference. You can ask them directly."

"While they are a government body, there is no interference from the government in any way," he said.

He gave an example of the Bangladesh Bank in a case of interference.

"During my time (as governor of the Bangladesh Bank), there was no interference from the Ministry of Finance, even though I was there," said Ahmed.

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## Customs operations resume at sea, land ports

Officials race to clear backlog after two-day nationwide shutdown



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Operations at Chattogram port have resumed for both import and export activities after a two-day shutdown, which had left approximately 3,500 TEUs of export containers stranded. The photo shows the bustling port with numerous containers and ships, indicating renewed activity.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Import and export activities resumed at sea and land ports across the country yesterday after revenue officials called off their two-day nationwide shutdown on Sunday evening.

Officials said they were trying to expedite customs procedures to clear the backlog accumulated on Saturday and Sunday.

At Chattogram port, customs operations for both import and export activities resumed soon after the shutdown was called

off, according to Mohammad Saidul Islam, deputy commissioner of the Custom House, Chattogram.

During the two-day work stoppage, some 3,500 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of export containers had been left stranded at the port, according to port sources.

After the shutdown was called off, 310 TEUs were offloaded from the MV Amalfi Bay, while 1,340 TEUs of export containers were loaded, they said.

Several trade bodies and clearing and forwarding agencies that operate on behalf of importers and exporters welcomed the resumption.

Saiful Alam, president of

the Chattogram C&F Agents Association, said the two-day suspension had caused severe congestion in both import and export operations.

"The port has started to clear the backlog," he said. Export customs duties were processed on Sunday night, and vessel registrations, along with other essential approvals, were underway, he added.

Alam hoped that normalcy at the port would be restored within the next few days.

At Benapole Land Port, import and export activities restarted in full swing yesterday morning, said Shamim Hossain, director of the port.

Around 3,000 handling workers returned

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### BY THE NUMBERS

<b>GDP growth</b> FY24: 4.22% FY25: 3.97%	<b>Annual inflation</b> May 2024: 9.73% May 2025: 10.13%
<b>Forex reserves</b> Jun 30, 2024: \$21.68bn Jun 29, 2025: \$26.32bn Growth: 21%	<b>Exchange rate</b> Jun 30, 2024: Tk 118/\$ Jun 26, 2025: Tk 122.75/\$ Depreciation: 4%
<b>Import</b> FY25 (Jul-Apr): \$54.79b Growth: 4.62%	<b>Export</b> FY25 (Jul-May): \$44.94b Growth: 10%
<b>Remittance</b> FY24: \$23.9b FY25 (until Jun 28): \$30b Growth: 26.5%	<b>Classified loan (In % of total loans)</b> Jun, 2024: 12.56% Mar, 2025: 24.13%

## New fiscal year starts on positive note but fault lines remain

SOHEL PARVEZ

Perhaps for the first time in several years, policymakers are entering the new fiscal year with a greater sense of ease.

In the past year, remittances from Bangladeshis living abroad surged to a record high of over \$30 billion.

This, coupled with the release of funds by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and other multilateral lenders, has helped lift the foreign exchange reserves to over \$26 billion – the highest in more than two and a half years.

Exports and imports have bounced back. Inflation shows signs of easing, as consumer price growth slowed for the second consecutive month in May.

However, these numbers tell only a partial story. A number of fault lines remain and continue to weigh on the economy. Tax collection remains sluggish, reducing the fiscal space for the government.

The reduction in the budget size for the new fiscal year 2025–26, for the first time in Bangladesh's history, is a glaring example of this.

Investment by the private sector, the key driver of the country's \$461 billion economy, remains dull due to persistent inflation, economic slowdown, and political uncertainty.

A tightening measure by the central bank also exposed the scale of bad loans in the financial sector. READ MORE ON B3

## CPD calls for reviewing 31 cancelled solar power deals

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) yesterday urged the interim government to review its cancellation of 31 letters of intent (LOI) which the past regime signed with potential investors of solar power projects without adopting any tender process.

A letter of intent is a document outlining the preliminary understanding between two or more parties who intend to enter into a formal agreement.

It is essentially a blueprint for a deal, setting out key terms and conditions before a legally binding contract is finalised.

The CPD said most of the investors had made investments and purchased land, but now can recoup neither of those.

On the other hand, the government floated tenders seeking bidders interested in setting up solar plants, but the number of bids has been very low, it said.

In such a situation, the CPD said the government should renegotiate with the investors of the cancelled projects to reduce the costs mentioned in the letters of intent as per the current market situation.

"Since a number of transitions took place and a government gave them primary approval means the government almost agreed to purchase power from them," said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director at the CPD.

"Some companies have invested in this direction. In such a situation, we think the projects may be reviewed," he said.

He said the review does not mean the revival and acceptance of those letters of intent, but rather an analysis of the purchase prices and costs with current trends.

Some of the projects were initiated in 2017 or 2019, when the prices of power from solar were quite high, said Moazzem.

"The interim government should have an interim arrangement to accelerate the renewable energy establishments...investors have already invested around \$300 million from foreign lenders through banking channels for these projects," he added.

Moazzem said the letters of intent which genuinely deserve merit should be taken up for implementation while those with political intent may be taken up for revisions.

Those 31 projects represent 3,287 megawatts of solar power and involve potential foreign investment worth \$6 billion, according

## Few banks thrived, others bled in 2024

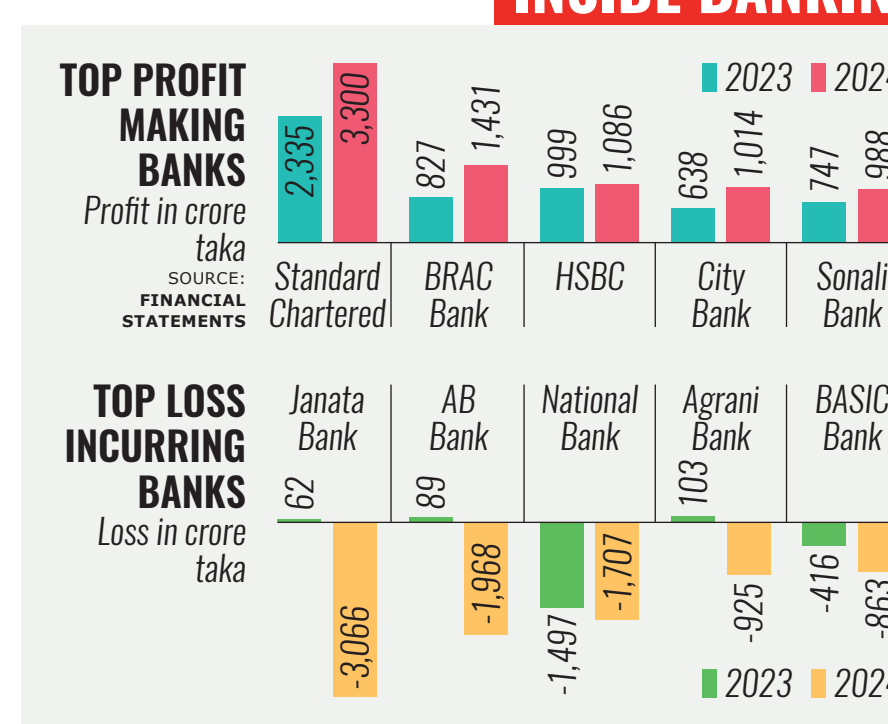
Three broke into Tk 1,000cr profit club while nine saw record Tk 9,500cr losses

AHSAN HABIB

For three banks, 2024 brought cause for celebration as they crossed the milestone of Tk 1,000 crore in annual profits for the first time. But for nine others, it was a year of reckoning, marked by mounting losses and a desperate fight for survival.

This stark divide followed sweeping reforms in the banking sector that were introduced following the July uprising last year. As political influence lost its grip on the industry, governance improved, and long buried toxic assets began to surface.

The fault lines separating strong lenders from struggling institutions became clearer, bringing the governance issue to



publish its report.

Islami Bank made headlines during the previous regime several times over allegations of loan irregularities and corruption. Had its data been available, the divide in fortunes would likely have appeared even more dramatic.

Standard Chartered Bank led the profit-makers, posting a record-breaking Tk 3,300 crore in profits last year, the highest annual profit ever recorded by a bank in Bangladesh. This marked a 41 percent

jump from its 2023 figure of Tk 2,335 crore, shows the analysis.

BRAC Bank, HSBC Bangladesh, and City Bank also crossed the Tk 1,000 crore profit threshold for the first time. BRAC Bank's earnings surged by 73 percent year-on-year, while City Bank saw a 60 percent increase.

"The real game-changer here is governance," said Asif Khan, president of CFA Society Bangladesh, a platform for investment professionals.

READ MORE ON B2

Part 2  
INSIDE BANKING

# City Bank declares 25% dividends

STAR BUSINESS DESK

City Bank PLC has declared a 25 percent dividend, including a 12.5 percent cash dividend, for the year 2024.

The announcement was made during the bank's 42nd annual general meeting (AGM), which was held virtually on Sunday, according to a press release.

Aziz Al Kaiser, chairman of the bank, presided over the meeting.

In his welcome address, Kaiser stated that the bank's consolidated profit after tax reached a record high of Tk 1,014 crore in 2024, reflecting a 58.9 percent increase from the Tk 638 crore recorded in 2023.

He also highlighted an improvement in the bank's current account and savings account deposit mix, which rose from 42 percent approximately four years ago to 45 percent as of December 2024.

"City Bank has once again demonstrated resilience and agility amid a challenging economic climate. I extend my sincere gratitude to all our shareholders, customers, regulators, and employees for their steadfast support," Kaiser said.

The AGM was attended by Hossain Khaled, vice-chairman; Rubel Aziz,



Aziz Al Kaiser, chairman of City Bank PLC, presides over the bank's 42nd annual general meeting (AGM), which was held virtually on Sunday. At the meeting, a 25 percent dividend, including a 12.5 percent cash dividend, was declared for 2024. PHOTO: CITY BANK

Savera H Mahmood, Hossain Mahmood, Rajibul Huq Chowdhury, Syeda Shaireen Aziz, and Rebecca Brosnan, directors; and Matul Islam Nowshad, independent director.

A substantial number of shareholders participated in the meeting, offering various observations and recommendations concerning the bank's

performance. Mashrur Arefin, managing director and chief executive officer, responded to all shareholder queries relating to the bank's current standing and future outlook.

"In 2024, we prioritised sustainable and inclusive growth," he said. "We introduced several digital first initiatives,

diversified our retail and SME portfolios, and upheld strong asset quality."

"As we move into 2025, we are guided by a clear roadmap focused on expansion, innovation, and deeper customer engagement," he added.

Md Kafi Khan, company secretary, was also present, alongside senior officials of the bank.

# Mitsubishi Electric subsidiary opens branch in Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Setuyo Astec Corporation, a wholly owned overseas sales subsidiary of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, has opened its new branch in Bangladesh, set to commence operations today, according to a press release.

Hisao Hanaoka, president and chief executive officer of Setuyo Astec Corporation, inaugurated the new branch in Dhaka.

Yusuke Imagawa will serve as the manager of the new branch.

The initiative is aimed at supporting the company's business expansion in the rapidly growing Bangladeshi market.

This development forms part of the company's broader strategy to strengthen its factory automation business across the Asian region.

The newly established branch will reorganise the company's representative office in Dhaka -- originally opened in November 2018 -- into a fully operational branch office.

Through this transition, Setuyo Astec seeks to establish more autonomous and agile business operations in Bangladesh, facilitating more precise product sales and enhanced customer service.

# Mercantile Bank executes PoC for blockchain-based inland green LC

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mercantile Bank PLC has executed the proof of concept (PoC) for a green Letter of Credit (LC), marking the bank's first inland LC transaction on a domestically developed blockchain-based digital trade platform.

Mati Ul Hasan, managing director of the bank, inaugurated the PoC at a ceremony held recently at the bank's head office in Dhaka, according to a press release.

This milestone represents a significant advancement in Mercantile Bank's digital transformation journey, paving the way for a secure, paperless, and fully digital trade ecosystem.

ONE Bank PLC participated in the transaction as the beneficiary bank. The PoC was conducted in collaboration with Spectrum Software and Consulting Limited (SSCL).

The initiative aligns with the directive of Bangladesh Bank, which encourages

the implementation of electronic solutions throughout all stages of LC processing, including transmission, advising, presentation, acceptance, and associated communications.

Shamim Ahmed, deputy managing director and CAMLCO; Ashim Kumar Saha, deputy managing director and head of ICCD; and Md Zahid Hossain, deputy managing director and chief business officer; along with other senior officials from the bank; were also present.



Khandker Badrul Hassan, a director of Southeast Bank PLC, inaugurates the CEPZ branch of the bank at Commercial Complex in Chattogram EPZ yesterday. PHOTO: SOUTHEAST BANK

# Southeast Bank opens 136th branch in Chattogram

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Southeast Bank PLC has recently inaugurated its CEPZ branch at the Commercial Complex within the Chattogram Export Processing Zone (EPZ), aiming to expand access to modern banking services.

According to a press release, this marks the bank's 136th branch.

The new branch will offer a comprehensive range of modern,

technology-driven conventional and Islamic banking services.

Khandker Badrul Hassan, director of the bank, inaugurated the new branch.

The ceremony was also attended by Mohammed Rashedul Amin, deputy managing director; and Md Musfiqur Rahman, senior vice-president and head of corporate affairs and CSR department; along with business leaders, industrialists, customers, academics, local dignitaries and other bank officials.



Mati Ul Hasan, managing director of Mercantile Bank PLC, poses for group photographs after launching the PoC at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. PHOTO: MERCANTILE BANK

# Tariffs will extend

FROM PAGE B4 and imports to the country accounted for more than a tenth of their global sales volume in 2024.

Toyota might be able to cope with the tariff pain if it endures, but Japan Inc, overall, will lose. Japanese carmaker Toyota Motor said on June 21 it will raise

prices for some vehicles sold in the US by an average of \$270 starting in July.

Japan's auto exports to the US fell 24.7 percent by value in May, compared with a year earlier, according to government data released on June 18. The volume of those exports fell 3.9 percent over the same

period. The US introduced a 25 percent tariff on all auto imports on May 3.

Japan also faces a 24 percent "reciprocal" tariff rate on other goods starting on July 9 unless it can negotiate a deal with Washington. The reciprocal tariffs will not stack on top of existing 25 percent auto tariffs.

# Few banks thrived

FROM PAGE B1

He said that many banks were overwhelmed by bad loans, which dented public confidence. Depositors grew more cautious and began shifting their funds to well-managed banks, even if it meant accepting lower interest rates.

"As a result, stronger banks attracted deposits at relatively low costs while earning solid returns from treasury bonds. That translated into healthy profits," Khan said.

Meanwhile, troubled banks began to falter. With closer scrutiny and stricter regulations in place, they were forced to acknowledge long-concealed non-performing loans and set aside hefty provisions. The financial hit was swift and severe, according to the investment analyst.

According to the analysis, bad loans of the 50 banks increased by 158 percent year-on-year, reaching Tk 348,892 crore in 2024. The worst-affected banks were those plagued by questionable lending activities during the previous regime.

Janata Bank reported the highest loss at Tk 3,066 crore, followed by AB Bank at Tk 1,968 crore and National Bank at Tk 1,707 crore. Collectively, these three banks accounted for Tk 108,738 crore -- nearly a third of the total bad loans across the banking sector.

Others in the red included First Security Islamic Bank, Social Islamic Bank, BASIC Bank, Agrani Bank, Bangladesh Commercial Bank, and IFIC Bank. Deposits at these nine banks shrank by 3.3 percent, or roughly Tk 15,000 crore, while deposits across the sector rose by 12 percent, or Tk

136,665 crore.

"These banks were not just inefficient, they were victims of systemic theft and loan scams under the previous regime," said Khan.

He commented that many banks had earlier painted an artificially healthy picture of their books, concealing the true extent of bad loans. "Now they are acknowledging reality. As they begin provisioning properly, profits are taking a hit, but this transparency is ultimately a step in the right direction."

Md Mazibur Rahman, managing director of Janata Bank, admitted that his bank's losses came from a reclassification of assets following the political changeover. "Many of our assets, previously shown as regular, were classified. That wiped out expected income from those and dragged down our bottom line," he said.

Janata Bank's bad loans soared by 171 percent in 2024, reaching Tk 62,805 crore. Rahman, however, said things have begun to improve. "Our cash recovery in the last six months has already surpassed the total recovery made in 2024. We are selling off defaulters' assets, and field-level collections are also up. It will take time, but we are on the road to recovery."

ZM Babar Khan, managing director and CEO (CC) of AB Bank, said over the past few years, they have faced significant challenges due mainly to non-performing loans.

As of December 2023, the bank's classified loan ratio stood at 30 percent, including deferred loans, which the bank hoped to recover within 2024.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)  
Road Division, Bogura.  
Phone/Fax: 051-66304  
eebog@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No.35.01.1000.405.16.100.25-1430 Date: 30/06/2025.

### Amendment / Corrigendum, 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
Tender ID No: 1122352 e-GP-106/EE/BRD/OSTETM/PMP-ROAD/2024-2025.	Emergency repair work by excavation, cutting, scarifying and recompact of existing bituminous layer including Surfacing work under Periodic Maintenance Program (PMP Road) at Ch:0+000 to 8+670 KM of Banani- Matidali Road (N-514) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025.

### Amendment / Corrigendum Detail

Amendment / Corrigendum No. : 1

Amendment / Corrigendum Text: Time extended for Tender due to Govt. Holidays during Eid-Ul-Azha.

Field Name	Old Value	New Value
Document last selling date & time	30/06/2025 17:00	09/07/2025 17:00
Opening Date & Time	01/07/2025 14:05	10/07/2025 14:05
Last date & time for Tender/Proposal Security Submission	01/07/2025 13:00	10/07/2025 13:00
Closing Date & Time	01/07/2025 14:05	10/07/2025 14:05

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

GD-1485

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়  
র‍্যাপিড অ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৯  
বর‍্যাা উত্তরভাগ, হেতিমপাড়া (শাহপাড়া) সেতু টোল প্লাজা সল‍্যাা বাইপাস সড়ক)  
গোলাপগঞ্জ, সিলেট

স্মারক নং-৮৬৩৬/নিলাম/এমটি তারিখঃ ২৯ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রি

### "নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি (যানবাহন)"

এতদ্বারা যোগ্য ও অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি ও/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে নিম্নলিখিত উপস্থিতি শর্তাবলীতে বর্ণিত যানবাহন ক্রয় করা যাবে।

ক্র.সং.	বিবরণ	শর্তাবলী
১।	স্বত্বাধার/বিভাগ	স্বত্বাধার, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
২।	সময়	র‍্যাপিড অ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৯, সিলেট।
৩।	অধিনায়ক	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাপিড অ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৯, সিলেট।
৪।	স্মারক নং	স্মারক নং-৮৬৩৬/নিলাম/এমটি তারিখঃ ২৯ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রি।
৫।	নিলাম পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত নিলাম।
৬।	স্মারক (সিডিউল) মূল্য	স্মারক (সিডিউল) মূল্য প্রতিটি গাড়ির জন্য ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র। (অফারের ক্ষেত্রে)
৭।	স্মারক (সিডিউল) বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাপিড অ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৯, সিলেট বরাবর ১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র ব্যাংক ড্র‍্যাফট/চেক অর্ডার (সেরত যোগ্য)।
৮।	স্মারক (সিডিউল) বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১০ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ ১০:০০ ঘটিকা।
৯।	স্মারক (সিডিউল) বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৪ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ ১২:০০ ঘটিকা।
১০।	নিলামযোগ্য যানবাহন প্রদর্শন	নিলামযোগ্য যানবাহন নম্বর ১২ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (০৯:০০ হতে ১৬:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত) র‍্যাপিড অ্যাকশন ব্যাটালিয়ন-৯, সিলেট এমটি গার্ডেজে প্রদর্শন করা যাবে।
১১।	নিলাম মূল্য	কিছ‍্যাটাই কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত মূল্যের অধিক মূল্য ব্যতীত যানবাহন নিলাম যোগ্য হবে না।
১২।	নিলামের বিবরণ	ক। ০১টি মিন্ডির‍্যাশি পাঞ্জো, জীপ ২০০৫। খ। ০১টি কার, শিয়ানামি ২০০৫। গ। ০১টি ডাবল ডেভিল পিকআপ মিন্ডির‍্যাশি ২০০৫, ২০০৬। ঘ। ১১টি মের্সেডেস-বেন্স গেলারি ১২৫ সিলি ২০০৬, ২০০৯, ২০১১, ২০১২। ঙ। ০৬টি মের্সেডেস-বেন্স গেলারি ২০০৫। চ। ০৫টি মের্সেডেস-বেন্স গেলারি ২০০৫।

অন্যান্য শর্তসমূহ

ক। নি পাবলিক প্রকিউর‍্যােন্ট অ্যান্ড-২০০৬ এবং র‍্যাশন-২০০৮ সর্বশেষ সংশোধন যোগ্যভাবে নিলাম কার্য পরিচালিত হবে।

খ। জাতীয় পরিষদ/বাংলাদেশের নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র।

গ। টিআইএন নম্বর উপস্থাপন করা যাবে।

ঘ। সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতার নিকট নিলামকৃত যানবাহন হস্তান্তর করা হবে। সরকারী বিধি মোতাবেক ক্রেতা ১৫% ভ্যাট এবং ১০% আয়কর পরিশোধ করত নিলামযোগ্য যানবাহন সমগ্র করতে পারবেন।

ঙ। নিলামের দিন হতে সর্বোচ্চ ০৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে নিলামকৃত যানবাহন সমগ্র করতে হবে। সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতা নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে নিলামকৃত যানবাহন সমগ্র করতে হবে।

চ। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে নিলামের সকল কার্যক্রম বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

GD-1485

# Over half of farmland deemed economically unsustainable: survey

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

More than half of Bangladesh's agricultural land fails to generate optimal economic returns, raising serious concerns about the long-term viability of the country's farming practices, according to a recent survey.

The study found that 55.63 percent of agricultural land is classified as economically unsustainable based on farm output value per hectare — a key metric for assessing land productivity. By contrast, 44.37 percent of land meets the criteria for economically productive and sustainable use.

Conducted under the Sustainable Agriculture Statistics project by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the survey gathered field-level data from January 20 to March 5, 2025, encompassing both agricultural households and institutional farms.

Alarming, the report notes that just 1.20 percent of agricultural land has attained the 'desirable' level of sustainability, while 43.17 percent falls within the 'acceptable' category —



PHOTO: STAR

evaluated across 11 key sustainability indicators.

The findings were unveiled at a dissemination event organised by the BBS in the capital yesterday.

One of the most pressing issues identified is soil degradation. The survey reveals that 72.75 percent of agricultural land is managed by households where at least half of the land is degraded, posing a major threat to long-term productivity.

Conversely, water availability appears to be a relative strength, with a national sustainability rate of 81.66 percent. Most agricultural households reportedly have

categorised access to water — a vital input for crop success, particularly in the face of increasing climate variability.

However, fertiliser and pesticide management continue to pose significant challenges. Only 56.95 percent of agricultural land is managed by households practising at least two of eight recommended fertiliser strategies, highlighting gaps in awareness, affordability, or access to training.

Pesticide practices fare marginally worse, with a sustainability rate of just 51.37 percent, measured by safety compliance, and mitigation measures.

The adoption of agro-biodiversity-supportive practices — such as crop rotation, intercropping, and conservation agriculture — currently stands at a sustainability rate of 71.05 percent, indicating moderate uptake.

Meanwhile, the agricultural wage rate — defined as the proportion of land where unskilled labourers earn more than the national average — registers a sustainability rate of 60.12 percent. While this points to progress, labour economists have urged stronger wage parity and enforcement mechanisms.

Encouragingly, secure land tenure rights remain a strong point, with a national sustainability rate of 89.35 percent, reflecting robust legal and institutional support for farmers' land use rights.

The survey's most promising finding came from the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, which recorded a sustainability rate of 98.82 percent — the highest among all indicators. This suggests significant advancement in reducing hunger and improving food access at the household level.

# Stocks end five-day gaining streak

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Indices on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) dropped yesterday, breaking the five-day winning streak.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of the premier bourse, lost 1.38 points, or 0.02 percent, to close at 4,838.39. The Shariah-compliant DSES index declined slightly by 0.06 percent to 1,060.75, while the DS30, which represents blue-chip stocks, dropped 0.03 percent to 1,816.51.

Turnover, a key indicator of market activity, was Tk 464.53 crore, down from Tk 494.34 crore in the previous session.

A total of 143,264 trades were executed during the session, with block transactions amounting to Tk 20.06 crore across 36 scrips.

Market breadth was negative, with 130 issues advancing, 205 declining, and 65 remaining unchanged.

Among A-category shares, 72 advanced, 118 declined, and 29 were unchanged. In the B category, 33 scrips gained and 42 declined, while the N category saw one issue advancing.

Performance across other segments was mixed. In mutual funds, 5 issues advanced and 19 declined. In corporate bonds, three issues advanced and one declined. Two government issues advanced and two declined.

Meghna Pet Industries posted the highest gain of the day, surging 9 percent, while Uttara Finance and Investments was the worst performer, shedding 8 percent.

# New fiscal year starts

FROM PAGE B1  
one-fourth of total outstanding loans, revealing the fragility of the banking sector.

Despite a slight easing, inflation has remained above 9 percent for more than two years, eroding real incomes and affecting low- and middle-income households.

"Most concerning, perhaps, is that youth unemployment remains very high. While more and more graduates join the labour market, employment generation has failed to keep pace," said Md Deen Islam, associate professor of economics at the University of Dhaka.

The NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) rate stood at more than 22 percent, according to the Labour Force Survey 2022.

"Underemployment and informality further cloud the employment picture, undermining the potential demographic dividend that Bangladesh is poised to enjoy," said Islam, also research director of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID), a private non-profit research organisation.

He said the outgoing

FY25 has been marked by a converging set of problems which have strained both the government's budget administration and the wider economy.

The Annual Development Programme (ADP) saw poor implementation, with actual expenditures falling well short of the target — a recurring issue that hampers long-term infrastructure and social investment goals.

"The country is entering a new fiscal cycle burdened with the unresolved economic issues of the last fiscal year," he said.

Ashikur Rahman, principal economist at the Policy Research Institute (PRI) of Bangladesh, said the outgoing fiscal year underscored the structural fragilities embedded within Bangladesh's macroeconomic framework.

"The erosion of fiscal space, manifested through stagnant revenue mobilisation, rising debt servicing costs, and elevated subsidy burdens, has constrained the state's developmental capacity," Rahman said. "This fiscal tightening has occurred alongside mounting stress in the financial sector, where rising non-performing

loans and weak governance have impaired credit intermediation and shaken depositor confidence."

Looking ahead to the upcoming fiscal year, he said, three interrelated priorities stand out.

Fiscal consolidation must be anchored in equity-enhancing tax reform and expenditure rationalisation that safeguard critical social investments, he said.

Second, restoring financial sector integrity requires decisive regulatory enforcement, strong political commitment to mergers of weak banks, enhanced supervisory autonomy, and credible governance reforms within state-owned and private banking institutions, he added.

The economist said the Bangladesh Bank has taken some decisive actions to discipline the financial sector, and the reform momentum must be continued.

"Third, and perhaps most importantly, the creation of a more predictable, transparent, and rules-based policy environment is essential to revive private investment and restore macroeconomic confidence."

Rahman said, "This fiscal tightening has occurred alongside mounting stress in the financial sector, where rising non-performing

# CPD calls for

FROM PAGE B1  
to a keynote paper presented by Moazzem and CPD Programme Associate Abrar Ahammed Buyan at Hotel Lakeshore, Dhaka.

The keynote paper, titled "Addressing Institutional Challenges in the Investment Cycle of Renewable Energy: Case of Chinese Overseas Investment" identified some investment challenges in Bangladesh.

Those include complex procedures to form companies, partial digitalised government processes, multiple licensing requirements each with separate procedures and the necessity to submit the same documents multiple times at different offices.

While the open tender process is a positive step toward transparency, several operational and structural issues remain, it said.

The process remains partially paper-based, requiring submission of documents physically, which increases the risk of administrative delays and errors, especially for foreign investors without a local office to support the process, it read.

Prolonged and multi-layered approval processes were also blamed, for which approvals took years whereas in India it took just three to four months, as per the study.

The paper recommended a central support system to guide the foreign investors in the full industry setup process.

The PDB's tender process disqualifies proposals over minor technicalities or formatting errors, even if

otherwise viable, it said.

There is no system to notify bidders of incomplete submissions. Additionally, there is no active bidder helpline or FAQ section on official websites, the study added.

Han Kun, president of the Chinese Enterprises Association in Bangladesh, said land was the most critical matter in power sector in Bangladesh.

When the investor already purchased land and managed the government's different wings' approvals, they took financial risks, he said.

The projects have been suspended at a time when they were about to receive final funding and go through tariff negotiations, he added.

Jalal Ahmed, chairman of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, said the government was working to overcome all challenges for achieving the target to generate 20 percent of power demand from renewable sources by 2030.

"The recommendation from the study will help us to overcome the challenges," he said.

Weiquan Wang, deputy secretary general of Chinese Renewable Energy Industries Association, said China has established a comprehensive framework that includes sustainable energy development goals supported by its national policy.

"Facilitating incentives, fixed tariff structures, total volume purchases, and special fund policies paved the way for investment in China's renewable energy sector," he said.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়  
র‍্যাপিড গ্র‍্যাকশন ব্য‍াটালিয়ন-৭  
পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম।

তারিখ: ১৬ আষাঢ় ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ  
৩০ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

স্মারক নং-৭৪৫৭/এমটি/র‍্যাব-৭/৫৮

**"উন্নত যানবাহন নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি"**

র‍্যাব ফোর্সেস সদর দপ্তর স্মারক নং-৩৩০/৪১/অকেজো/যানবাহন/অপারেশনস/৫২ তারিখ ১৭ জুন ২০২৫ মূলে আগামী ১৬ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ র‍্যাজ বৃধবার র‍্যাপিড গ্র‍্যাকশন ব্য‍াটালিয়ন-৭ (র‍্যাব-৭), পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম হতে মোটরসাইকেল হোতা সিঞ্জি-১২৫ সর্বমোট ০৪ টি যানবাহন নিলামের মাধ্যমে বিক্রয় করা হবে। নিলামের শর্তসমূহ নিম্নরূপ:

১. মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
২. নিলামকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম	অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়, র‍্যাপিড গ্র‍্যাকশন ব্য‍াটালিয়ন-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম।
৩. সংগ্রাহক সত্তা	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাপিড গ্র‍্যাকশন ব্য‍াটালিয়ন-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম।
৪. দপ্তর বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	স্মারক নং ৭৪৫৭/এমটি/র‍্যাব-৭/৫৮ তারিখ ৩০ জুন ২০২৫ ইং।
৫. বিষয়	মোটরসাইকেল হোতা সিঞ্জি-১২৫ সর্বমোট ০৪ টি যানবাহনের দরপত্র নিলাম।
৬. জামানত/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট	অধিনায়ক, র‍্যাপিড গ্র‍্যাকশন ব্য‍াটালিয়ন-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম বরাবর ২৫,০০০/- (পঁচিশ হাজার) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (ফেরত যোগ্য) জমা প্রদান সাপেক্ষে নিলামে অংশ গ্রহণ করা যাবে।
৭. দরপত্র তফসিলের (সিডিউল) মূল্য এবং দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সময়সীমা	দরপত্র তফসিলের মূল্য ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফারের যোগ্য) র‍্যাব-৭, পতেঙ্গা, চট্টগ্রাম এমটি অফিস হতে আগামী ০১ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ হতে ১৫ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময় সকাল ০৯:০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১৫:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে।
৮. জামানত/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট জমা/গ্রহণ এবং দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	আগামী ১৬ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখ ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ব্য‍াটালিয়ন সদরে গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং ঐ দিনই ১২:৩০ ঘটিকায় নিলাম দরপত্র বাতিল খোলা হবে।
৯. নিলাম যোগ্য মালামাল প্রদর্শন	নিলাম যোগ্য মালামাল প্রদর্শন পূর্বক ব্যাংক ড্রাফট করা যাবে।
১০. নিলাম মূল্য	বিআরটিএ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত মূল্যের অধিক মূল্য ব্যতীত মালামাল নিলাম যোগ্য হবে না।
১১. অন্যান্য শর্ত	I. দি পারবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধি ২০০৮ ও সংশোধনী ২০১০ মোতাবেক নিলাম কার্য পরিচালিত হবে।
১২.	II. সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতার নিকট নিলামকৃত দ্রব্যাদি হস্তান্তর করা হবে। সরকারি বিধি মোতাবেক ক্রেতা ১৫% ভ্যাট এবং ১০% অয়কর পরিশোধ করত নিলাম যোগ্য মালামাল সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন।
১৩.	III. নিলামের দিন হতে সর্বোচ্চ ০৫ (পাঁচ) দিনের মধ্যে নিলামকৃত মালামাল সংগ্রহ করতে হবে।
১৪.	IV. কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে নিলামের সকল কার্যক্রম বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মোঃ হাফিজুর রহমান, পিএসসি  
লেফ্ট কর্নেল  
অধিনায়ক  
তারিখ: ০২/০৩/২০২৫

# Govt has

FROM PAGE B1  
delivered the same message to the revenue officials.

"I urge all our revenue officials to leave behind whatever has happened and carry on their responsibilities for the sake of national interest," he said.

"Let us work together to take our tasks forward," he told journalists at the NBR headquarters in Agargaon yesterday.

He also informed that the NBR's regular operations resumed yesterday after six consecutive days of strike since June 23.

"Today, all our offices and agencies across the country are fully operational from the morning, including Chattogram, Dhaka, Mongla, Benapole customs houses, all ICDs, bonded warehouses, VAT offices, and tax offices," he said.

"The withdrawal of the shutdown has brought a sense of relief to everyone, especially among the business community and policymakers," he said.

On another note, the NBR chairman said the revenue agency collected Tk 3.60 lakh crore in fiscal year 2024-25 as of 10:00am yesterday.

"We are confident that collections will exceed last year's. There may be a slight shortfall from our initial expectations due to recent disruptions, but we still expect a certain percentage of growth," he said.

# Customs operations resume

FROM PAGE B1  
and Sonahat Land Port in Kurigram yesterday morning, offering relief to hundreds of traders and businesses on both sides of the border who had suffered heavy financial losses during the disruption.

Niaz Nahid, general secretary of the C&F Agents Association there, said, "Trade resumed yesterday morning after a two-day closure. But the financial blow has already been dealt to both traders and the treasury."

Mehedi Hasan, assistant director of Burimari Land Port, said, "On average, around 300 trucks are cleared daily here, mostly carrying imported goods from India and Bhutan. After two days of shutdown, we are now facing a large pile-up of cargo trucks, which may take time to clear."

Shamim Hossain said field officials had been instructed to speed up operations to ease the congestion and clear the accumulated cargo.

Trade also resumed through Burimari Land Port in Lalmonirhat

once again entering with imported goods and leaving with export cargo."

A similar scene was found at Sonahat Land Port. Akmal Hossain, president of the C&F Agents Association there, said, "Trade resumed yesterday morning after a two-day closure. But the financial blow has already been dealt to both traders and the treasury."

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**Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Resilience Urban and Teritorial Development Project**  
**Benapole Pourashava, District : Jashore, Bangladesh**

Memo No. Bena/Poura/Proku/001/2025-278 Date : 30.06.2025

**(e-Tender Notice) (OTM) No-08/2024-25**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works as mentioned in the following table:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Work	On-line(e-GP System) tender publication date & time	On-line(e-GP System) tender closing date & time
1128413	RUTDP/BEN/2024-25/W-01	(1) Re-habilitation of Poura Bhaban road by BC with streetlight and Drain with footpath (Ch.0+000 to 2+400m) under Benapole Pourashava, Sarsha, Jashore. (2) Re-habilitation of Doulatpur road by BC with streetlight and Drain with footpath (Ch.0+00 to 1270m) with Doulatpur Choto Achra link road of ch 0.00-1226.00m under Benapole Pourashava, Sarsha, Jashore.	02-Jul-2025 9:30:00	04-Aug-2025 13:00:00

There are an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-tendering documents from the national e-GP Portal have to be deposited on line through any registered banks branches up to 04-08-2025 at 12.00 AM.

Further information and guideline in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

MD-1484

(Md. Moshakar Hossain)  
Executive Engineer  
Benapole Pourashava

**Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur**  
[www.brur.ac.bd](http://www.brur.ac.bd)  
**Office of the Project Director**  
Development of Academic Buildings & Establishment of Residential Building at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur  
Planning, Development & Works, Administrative Building (2nd Floor)  
Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur  
Website: [brur.ac.bd](http://brur.ac.bd)  
E-mail: [director.pd@brur.ac.bd](mailto:director.pd@brur.ac.bd)

Ref. No. BRUR/Project-3292/Advertisement & Publication/2024/08/353 Date: 30-06-2025

**e-Tender No. 02**

Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following scheme listed below.

Sl No.	Name of tender	Tender ID	Procurement type & method	REOI publication date and time	EOI closing date and time
01	BRUR/eGP/22440000/Services/S1 Consultancy for Comprehensive Architectural, Structural, and Electromechanical (Electrical, Solar, Mechanical & Plumbing), Design Services with Top Supervision for a 6-storied Multi-Purpose Residential Building at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR)	1100969	NCT QCBS	01-Jul-2025 09:00	15-Jul-2025 09:00

This is an online 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 System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and form e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

MD-1493

Md. Osman Goni Talukder  
Project Director (Addl Charge)  
Development of Academic Buildings & Establishment of Residential Building at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur

## Eastern Refinery hits record in production

MD NAZRUL ISLAM, Ctg

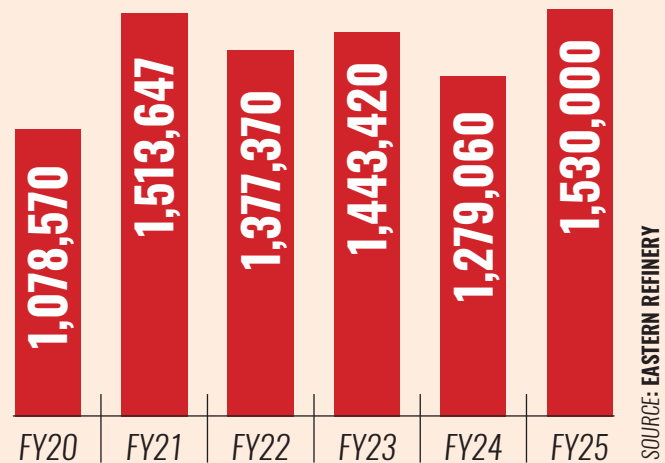
Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL), Bangladesh's sole state-run facility for processing crude oil into various petroleum products, set a record by surpassing its installed production capacity in fiscal year 2024-25.

A total of 1.53 million tonnes of crude oil were processed in the year, whereas its capacity is 1.5 million tonnes per year, as per records from 1968 when it was established.

Officials say the facility's annual output has occasionally surpassed the capacity in recent years, which they say is a testament to improvements in its operational efficiency. Several factors contributed to refining more crude oil than the facility's installed capacity, with manpower efficiency being a key one. In addition, an uninterrupted supply of raw materials made it possible to process additional fuel oil, they said.

In fiscal year 2020-21, the ERL processed 1.513 million tonnes of crude oil.

### CRUDE OIL REFINED BY EASTERN REFINERY (In tonnes)



As per estimates from the officials, the country's annual demand for fuel oil stands at over 5.7 million tonnes.

To meet this demand, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) imports refined oil from various countries alongside processing crude oil through its subsidiary, the ERL.

According to BPC officials, the ERL currently supplies about 27 percent of the nation's demand for petroleum products, including oil, gas, and lubricants.

"This achievement was made possible by the combined efforts of the power, energy and mineral resources ministry, the BPC, and the ERL team," ERL Managing Director Sharif Hasnat told The Daily Star.

"It is very encouraging that the refinery continues to exceed its installed capacity, which is a positive sign for the country," he said. Sources noted that the ERL sometimes has to suspend crude oil processing for maintenance, but this year, operations ran uninterrupted.

Expressing satisfaction, BPC Chairman Md Amin Ul Ahsan said the ERL's record output was achieved through coordinated efforts of its management. "This is a positive development for us," he said. "However, to meet the country's growing demand, the process for constructing Eastern Refinery Unit-2 is underway. The government is arranging funding for this project," he said.



Waterlogging has significantly disrupted production at small mills of the industrial estate and spoiled goods, including stored potatoes.

PHOTO: STAR

## Waterlogging hampers operations at Jamalpur BSCIC estate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Businesses inside the BSCIC Industrial Estate in Jamalpur, some 166 kilometres north of the capital Dhaka, are suffering due to dilapidated roads and, most recently, waterlogging caused by dysfunctional and clogged drainage systems.

During a recent visit, this correspondent observed severe waterlogging in several areas of the estate, including the main entrance.

The waterlogging has significantly disrupted production at small mills and led to the spoiling of goods, including stored potatoes.

Frequent power outages have further exacerbated the crisis. Entrepreneurs said prolonged power cuts were halting production, and many small factory owners now fear financial losses and possible closure.

Tarif Auto Flour Mill has already suspended operations, citing rising wheat prices due to the Russia-Ukraine war.

Additionally, the estate does not supply gas. As per agreements with tenants, the estate authorities were supposed to provide gas connections to all factories.

However, many factory owners claim they have not yet received the facilities promised.

Entrepreneurs also alleged that they are being forced to pay double the service charges, as both the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and Jamalpur municipality collect the fees.

"If we fail to pay the charges, the municipality refuses to renew trade licences," said a factory

owner, requesting anonymity.

Kamal Pasha, deputy general manager of Javed Agro Food Processing Limited, said, "Due to the lack of a boundary wall, we feel insecure, especially at night. On top of that, the poor drainage system continues to hinder our operations."

Many other factory owners voiced similar concerns.

Established in 1980 on 26.30 acres of land in Dapunia under Jamalpur municipality, the estate comprises 82 industrial units situated across 197 plots.

The estate prioritised women entrepreneurs in the early phase of plot distribution, and currently, all the plots have been allocated.

Of the 82 units, 56 are operational, six are in the process of being launched, 12 are closed, and eight units are entangled in legal disputes, according to BSCIC sources.

A total of 1,848 workers are employed in the estate — 723 male and 1,125 female.

Hafizur Rahman, executive officer of Jamalpur municipality, said, "Since the BSCIC is located within the municipal area, the municipality is authorised to collect housing and service charges. This is legal."

"However, I'm not sure why the BSCIC also collects such charges," he said.

Samrat Akbar, deputy general manager of the BSCIC office in Jamalpur, said renovation of 5,935 metres of drainage lines is currently underway and is expected to reduce the waterlogging soon.

## Capital market left behind in FY26 budget

M SHAHRIAR AZAD BHUIYAN

The national budget for FY2025-26 has disappointed capital market stakeholders. Despite persistent bearish trends, declining investor confidence, and repeated calls for reform, the budget offers little in terms of meaningful support for the country's capital market.

Although the Finance Division attempted to present the budget as investment and business-friendly, market participants will struggle to find any substantial incentives capable of reversing over a decade of stagnation. Aside from a symbolic tax cut for merchant banks, most policy recommendations have been ignored or watered down, leaving the market rudderless.

One clear measure is the reduction of corporate tax for merchant banks from 37.5 percent to 27.5 percent. This cut may ease some financial pressure on these intermediaries, who play key roles in underwriting, portfolio management, and capital raising. While welcome, the benefit is narrow and unlikely to attract substantial new investment or revive the market on its own.

The budget also lowers the source tax on stock trading from 0.05 percent to 0.03 percent. Though this may, in theory, encourage trading, the actual impact will likely be limited. Investor confidence remains stifled by deeper issues, including inconsistent policies, weak regulation, and poor returns. Without wider reforms, such token moves are unlikely to improve sentiment or market performance.

A major letdown is the decision not to withdraw or revise the 15 percent capital gains tax on individuals earning more than Tk 50 lakh in annual profits. Introduced last year, the tax has already dampened sentiment, especially among high-net worth individuals who are vital for liquidity and long term stability. Despite repeated appeals from market associations and both stock exchanges, the government remained unresponsive, risking further outflows of capital.

The tax gap between listed and non-listed companies has been reduced from 7.5 percent to 5 percent. This weakens the incentive for private firms to go public. Market participants have long advocated for widening the gap to at least 10 percent to stimulate IPO activity and broaden public participation. Instead, the narrowing may deter new listings and undermine transparency and good governance.

The budget also overlooks essential elements of a modern capital market. There is no mention of developing a bond market or introducing regulatory incentives for institutional investors. Proposals such as green bonds aligned with ESG standards, or tax breaks for mutual funds, insurance firms, and pension funds, were left out. These omissions are troubling, particularly given the need for long-term capital and the stabilising role institutional investors provide.

Adding to the concern, there are no new measures for IPOs, SMEs, or alternative trading platforms. Small and medium-sized firms that depend on market access for growth were hoping for fiscal support or easier access to finance. Likewise, calls to remove double taxation on dividends and grant tax relief to mutual funds remain unmet. Altogether, this neglect signals a broader failure to build a modern, inclusive market ecosystem that supports innovation, investment, and resilience.

The FY2025-26 budget was a chance for the government to address structural weaknesses in the capital market, vital for long-term growth, employment, and industrial development. Instead, it follows a pattern of neglect.

While the corporate tax cut for merchant banks is a modest concession, it is outweighed by the persistence of capital gains tax on individuals, the shrinking tax gap for listed companies, and the absence of broader support for bonds, institutional investors, and SME participation.

If Bangladesh genuinely wants to build a vibrant and inclusive market, the government must go beyond token measures. It must commit to investor-focused reforms that improve transparency, deepen liquidity, and diversify financial products. Regrettably, this budget falls short, yet another missed opportunity.

The writer is a capital market analyst and can be reached at shahriar@unicap-securities.com.

## Rupali Bank to issue over 45cr shares against govt equity

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Rupali Bank PLC will issue over 45 crore ordinary shares against government equity as part of its recapitalisation efforts.

According to a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website yesterday, the state-owned lender's board decided to issue 45.33 crore ordinary shares at a price of Tk 15 each.

### The lender's board decided to issue the shares at a price of Tk 15 each

The price includes a face value of Tk 10 and a premium of Tk 5 per share.

The total value of the shares will be equivalent to Tk 679.99 crore in favour of the secretary of the Finance Division.

The issuance is subject to the approval of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, the bank said in the disclosure.

This move came at a time when Rupali Bank is grappling with declining profitability.

Its profit plummeted by 82 percent year on year to Tk 11.22 crore in 2024, primarily due to a fall in operating income.

As of May 31, 2025, the government owned 90.19 percent of Rupali Bank's shares, while institutional investors held 3.39 percent and the general public 6.42 percent, according to DSE data.

## Tariffs will extend Toyota's lead over Japan Inc

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Tariffs will accelerate Toyota Motor's advantage. The world's largest carmaker is barely raising its prices in the US, despite President Trump's 25 percent levy on auto imports. If Tokyo fails to win a reprieve, manufacturers with slimmer margins will struggle to emulate the \$222 billion company and could lose market share fast.

Toyota said this month that it will raise prices for some vehicles sold in the country by an average of \$270 as part of a regular review. This represents just 0.7 percent of the mean unit price for a Toyota car sold in North America, according to Visible Alpha.

Other Japanese carmakers appear to have opted for similar tactics in the first month of

tariffs: the value of auto imports from Japan to the US fell 24.7 percent in May from a year earlier, though volumes dropped just 3.9 percent, according to official trade data released on June 18. These numbers suggest importers lowered the price of vehicles before duties, in effect absorbing the cost of levies rather than letting sticker prices rise.

For most companies, that strategy will not be sustainable. Toyota's operating margin was 10 percent in the financial year that ended in March, while the average for a basket of its domestic peers was 5 percent. That gives Toyota exceptional flexibility to keep prices stable; even if it absorbed costs associated with the levies, operating profit would only decline some 7 percent, Morningstar analyst Vincent Sun calculates.

By contrast, Honda Motor would face a 25 percent drop in earnings if it tried the same approach, while struggling Nissan Motor's operating loss would grow by nearly a third, Sun reckons. In the end, weaker companies will have little choice but to ask customers to foot the bill. Even if a US-Japan bilateral trade agreement were to halve the levies, Japanese importers statewide would probably still have to pass through about 80 percent of the impact to consumers, consultancy AlixPartners estimates.

That bodes ill for their market share. Those who can't avoid hiking may lose out to Toyota or, worse for Japan, to non-Japanese brands like Tesla. That would hurt: the US is the largest single market for Honda and Nissan,

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Vehicles are on display for sale at the Toyota of North Austin dealership in Texas. Toyota Motor said on June 21 it will raise prices for some vehicles sold in the US by an average of \$270 starting in July.

PHOTO: AFP/FILE

## Dollar sags

REUTERS, Tokyo

The dollar slid on Monday against the yen and wallowed near its lowest in almost four years against the euro, as market optimism over US trade deals bolstered bets for earlier interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve.

The dollar also languished near a four-year low against sterling and a trough of more than decade versus the Swiss franc after the White House neared a deal with China, while Canada scrapped a digital services tax to restart stalled talks.

Both the yuan and Canadian dollar gained. Investors interpreted Fed Chair Jerome Powell's testimony to US Congress last week as dovish, after he said rate cuts were likely if inflation did not spike this summer because of tariffs.

Bets for at least one quarter-point reduction by September have risen to 91.5 percent, CME Group's FedWatch Tool shows, from about 83 percent a week earlier. The Fed's rate-setting committee also meets next month, but does not gather in August.

"The market pricing implies a (September) cut as a slam dunk," Chris Weston, head of research at Pepperstone, wrote in a client note.

Friday's monthly US payrolls report is this week's "marquee risk event", Weston said, and the risk to the dollar "seems asymmetric, given the Fed's reaction function is biased towards the timing of the next cut."

That meant the dollar was more likely to suffer a rout on weak numbers than rally on a hot outcome, he added.

An additional weight on the dollar came from Donald Trump's continued assault on Powell, after the US president said on Friday he would "love" it if the Fed chief resigned before his term ended in May.

Trump also said he wanted to cut the benchmark rate to 1 percent from 4.25 percent to 4.5 percent now, and reiterated that he planned to replace Powell with a more dovish Fed chairperson.