

FBCCI election deadline extended by 45 days

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The commerce ministry has extended the deadline for the election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) by 45 days.

As a result, the FBCCI election board will announce a fresh schedule soon, according to a statement issued by its Secretary General Md Alamgir yesterday.

The announcement comes nearly two weeks after the FBCCI had set September 7 as the date for the polls for the 2025-2027 term.

The interim government appointed Md Hafizur Rahman, a member of the Bangladesh Competition Commission and a former additional secretary, as the administrator of the FBCCI in September last year, following the fall of the Awami League government in August 2024.

Bank booths, hotels can now get limited money changer licence

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bank branches, booths, hotels, and gift shops are now formally allowed to apply to the central bank for a limited money changer licence by paying a Tk 50,000 fee.

In detailed guidelines on the matter issued yesterday, the central bank stated that it has permitted certain entities to operate as Limited Money Changers (LMCs) under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947 (as amended in 2015).

This initiative allows the aforementioned organisations to deal with the buying and selling of foreign currency in a limited capacity for certain defined purposes with a valid licence.

As per the Bangladesh Bank guidelines, the eligible organisations must operate via designated hotel counters, airports,

or specific exchange booths approved by the central bank.

The concerned organisations must also meet institutional legal requirements, demonstrate financial soundness, and have strong internal control and compliance systems to get the licence.

The organisations will be allowed to deal with the buying and selling of foreign currency in a limited capacity for certain defined purposes

Eligible non-financial institutions in this regard may include entities such as travel agencies, hajj/Umrah service providers, and international ticketing or logistics companies.

The entities must apply using

prescribed formats available at the Foreign Exchange Policy Department (FEPD) of the Bangladesh Bank, state the guidelines, adding that the applications must be supported by relevant legal and registration documents, proof of business operations, etc.

The application fee will be Tk 50,000, and the renewal fee every two years will be Tk 10,000, the guidelines further state.

The entities must maintain foreign exchange transaction records, comply with AML/CFT obligations, submit periodic reports to the Bangladesh Bank, and keep updated KYC for all customers.

The BB licence is non-transferable and cannot be sublicensed; entities cannot operate beyond approved premises or engage in unauthorised forex trading or investment services.

BB relaxes lending limit for foreign companies

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has relaxed lending rules for foreign companies that have been operating in the country for at least three years, as part of efforts to ease their access to term loans from the domestic market.

In a circular issued yesterday, the banking watchdog said local banks can now lend up to 60 percent of the project cost to foreign firms in local currency, while the companies must provide the remaining 40 percent as equity.

Previously, the debt-equity ratio for such firms was capped at 50:50.

The BB said foreign companies engaged in manufacturing or service activities for three years or longer are allowed to borrow from local banks and financial institutions for capacity expansion or BMRE (balancing, modernisation, rehabilitation, and expansion).

These borrowings remain subject to applicable credit norms and prudential parameters, including the single borrower exposure limit and the revised debt-equity ratio.

Exports rose 8% to \$48b

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"Because both local suppliers and American buyers are waiting for the Trump administration's final reciprocal tariff rate," he said.

Hassan, however, expects that garment shipments to the USA will start to grow again from October onwards, as buyers will have the confirmed tariff rates and the lean season will be over. Furthermore, October will mark the beginning of the peak sales season in the USA, which will further contribute to increased shipments.

The decision on the looming US tariff is expected to come by July 9, when the announced 90-day pause on the reciprocal tariff imposition is set to end. In the meantime, US customs agents began collecting Trump's unilateral 10 percent tariff on all imports from many countries shortly after the April announcement. This is also expected to affect exports.

As of now, US buyers have offered to bear a portion of the 10 percent baseline tariff and have asked local suppliers to bear the remaining portion with the help of fabric suppliers, retailers, and brands. Usually, the tax burden is borne by the importing companies.

Speaking on the issue, BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan Babu said, "The future trend of garment exports should maintain this rate as the global supply chain is recovering gradually."

"If the current 10 percent baseline tariff also continues for other competitive countries, Bangladesh's garment exports are likely to continue growing by at least 10 percent."

Apart from garment items, the shipment of leather and leather goods performed well and grew by 10.19 percent to reach \$1.14 billion, as per EPB data.

Besides, the export of home textiles grew by 2.42

percent to reach \$871.57 million, reflecting increasing confidence of international buyers in Bangladesh.

Frozen food exports grew by 17.23 percent to \$41.58 million, EPB data also show.

Plastic goods exports grew by 16.21 percent to \$284.05 million, and ceramic exports grew by 6.44 percent to \$35.22 million, according to the data.

Pharmaceutical exports grew by 3.74 percent to \$213.16 million.

Headgear exports grew by 11.26 percent to \$364.46 million, and non-leather footwear exports grew by 25.37 percent to \$522.59 million. Wigs and human hair rose by 20.92 percent to \$142.85 million, the data also said.

However, some promising goods such as jute and jute goods, cotton and cotton goods including yarn, vegetables, cement, and terry towels could not perform well last fiscal year, according to EPB data.

Md Abul Hossain,

chairman of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Association, said, "The demand for jute and jute goods has been rising all over the world as consumers are abandoning plastic goods to save the environment."

"The days of jute and jute goods are coming back again in Bangladesh," he stated.

Idra puts

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He revealed that around 45 percent of the claims in the life insurance segment and 47 percent in the non-life segment remained unsettled at the end of 2024.

As of December 2024, some 13 lakh life insurance policyholders had pending claims worth Tk 4,414 crore, he said.

Over the past 14 years, the sector has seen 54 lakh policies lapse.

Currently, there are 71 lakh active policies, the Idra chairman said.

High interest rates threaten

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Trade leaders point to flaws in the credit assessment system. They also highlight several structural issues, such as banking concentration in Dhaka, limited outreach to rural areas, a lack of expertise in assessing SME borrowers, and disproportionately high loan processing fees.

"High operational costs and risk make it difficult to keep SME interest rates low," said Ashraf Ahmed, former president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI).

For example, he said processing a Tk 1 lakh loan for a small business can cost a bank Tk 10,000, or 10 percent of the loan value. In contrast, processing a Tk 100 crore corporate loan costs just 0.004 percent.

SME lending requires extensive branch networks and higher monitoring

expenses, unlike corporate loans that are managed centrally. "These factors push banks to shy away from SMEs and charge them with higher rates," he said.

Abdul Momen, additional managing director and head of SME banking at BRAC Bank, said they charge between 13 and 15 percent under the market-based interest system, which is still lower than many other banks.

"We aim for affordability despite higher costs from our relationship-based model," said Momen.

BRAC Bank is one of the country's leading SME financiers, with a loan portfolio exceeding Tk 32,000 crore and nearly 2.5 lakh clients. According to

Momen, about 90 percent of its SME loans go to micro and small entrepreneurs who are usually ignored by traditional banks.

"It is because our founder envisioned a financial system for these underserved groups."

Still, BRAC Bank usually lends between Tk 15 lakh and Tk 50 lakh, while the Bangladesh Bank policy allows loans up to Tk 10 crore for SMEs.

'GOVT NEEDS TO DO MORE'

Mushfiqur Rahman, chairperson of the SME Foundation, said micro and small businesses struggle to access affordable loans due to high interest rates, strict collateral requirements, and cautious lending by

banks.

To ease this, the foundation launched a credit wholesaling programme in 2009 that offers 9 percent loans, and also channelled stimulus funds during the Covid pandemic.

Women entrepreneurs now receive between 25 and 30 percent of the loans disbursed.

However, Rahman said outreach remains limited due to inadequate funding, despite a loan recovery rate of nearly 100 percent.

"With 70 percent of 1.18 crore entrepreneurs located outside Dhaka, broader coverage is essential," he said, calling for more government support.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (সওজ) এর কার্যালয়
সড়ক বিভাগ, শেরপুর
টেলিফোন নম্বর-০৯৩১-৬১১৫১; ফ্যাক্স-০৯৩১-৬১৮২১
E-mail: eeshed@rhd.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.৮৯০০.৪৭০.০৬.৪০৯.২৫-৯১২ তারিখঃ ০২/০৭/২০২৫ইং

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে (LTM) ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি লাইসেন্স নবায়ন সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি
এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগ, শেরপুর কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালনা (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (LTM) প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে ক্রয়কার্য সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/নবায়ন করা হবে। ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, শেরপুর হতে নিম্নোক্ত সময়সূচি মোতাবেক অফিস চলাকালীন সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

ছক-১				
বিবরণ	নবায়ন ফি	ভ্যাট ১৫%	বিনা জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা	৫০% জরিমানায় নবায়নের সময়সীমা
লাইসেন্স নবায়ন	২০০০.০০	৩০০.০০	০৭/০৭/২০২৫ হতে ১৩/০৯/২০২৫ পর্যন্ত	১৪/০৯/২০২৫ হতে ১৪/১০/২০২৫ পর্যন্ত

ছক-২				
বিবরণ	ফরমের মূল্য	তালিকাভুক্তি ফি ১৫%	ভ্যাট ১৫%	ফরম সংগ্রহ ও জমাদানের সময়সীমা
ঠিকাদারী তালিকাভুক্তি	১০০০.০০	৫০০০.০০	৭৫০.০০	০৭/০৭/২০২৫ হতে ১৩/০৯/২০২৫ পর্যন্ত

শর্তাবলীঃ
১। ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরের লাইসেন্স নবায়নের জন্য অফিসের হিসাব শাখায় লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ফি জমাপূর্বক মনি রশিদ সংগ্রহ করতে হবে।
২। তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য ১০০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা মূল্যের ফরম সংগ্রহপূর্বক ফরমে উল্লিখিত শর্তাবলী পূরণ করে দাখিল করতে হবে।
৩। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে কোনক্রমেই লাইসেন্স নবায়ন/তালিকাভুক্তি ফি গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
৪। লাইসেন্স নবায়নের ক্ষেত্রে ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থবছরের নবায়নকৃত লাইসেন্স বহিঃ ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরে নবায়ন করা হবে।
৫। ঠিকাদারী লাইসেন্স নবায়ন/তালিকাভুক্তির ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

মোঃ শাকিরুল ইসলাম
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২২৭২
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
সড়ক বিভাগ, শেরপুর

ক্রিডি-১৫১৭

Lack of bank support

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The finance adviser mentioned that Bangladesh Bank has refinance schemes for SMEs, which could be expanded with ministry support.

"The finance ministry will support it. We are giving Tk 60,000-Tk 62,000 crore in subsidies for fuel. Why not provide some subsidies for SMEs as well?" he questioned.

He also recommended developing a digital database for the SME sector, which is now being demanded by foreign investors. "If necessary, the finance ministry is ready to finance the creation of a digital SME information hub."

Salehuddin suggested strengthening the SME Foundation's financing capacity, similar to the Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF).

"Take good projects, recruit capable people. PKSF gets funding from the World Bank, IFAD, and others. PKSF is now a world-class institution because of its transparency and sound financial management. There must be no compromise in financial governance," he said.

Emphasising the importance of connecting SMEs to international markets, he added, "We must integrate the SME sector with both domestic and global markets to diversify exports. We can't rely on just one product anymore."

The adviser also announced that further reforms will be introduced in the banking sector by December.

"Some financial sector reforms will begin by December under the current interim government. I don't know about political reforms, but there will be changes in the banking sector. Depositors' money will be protected,

and budget allocations have been made for this. We will start the process and hope the next government continues it," he said.

Meanwhile, presiding over the event, Md Mushfiqur Rahman, chairperson of SME Foundation, said the foundation struggles with limited capacity and resources.

"Although there are around 1.18 crore SME entrepreneurs in Bangladesh, the foundation has been able to finance only 11,000 so far. Yet, the loan recovery rate in the SME sector exceeds 99 percent," he said, urging the finance adviser to help increase the foundation's funds.

Anwar Hossain Chowdhury, managing director of SME Foundation, said the foundation started in 2006 with an initial fund of Tk 200 crore, which was later raised to Tk 500 crore.

"So far, we have disbursed loans to 11,000 entrepreneurs under various refinancing schemes.

Without advancing the SME sector, the country's economic growth targets will be difficult to achieve," he said.

Chowdhury stressed the need for a permanent office, incubation centre, training facilities, and an exhibition centre for the foundation.

"A dedicated space would greatly benefit the SME Foundation," he said, seeking support from the former central bank governor.

ERF President Doulot Akter Mala, Md Jahangir Hossain, general manager of SME Foundation, and Abul Kashem, general secretary of ERF, also spoke at the event, which concluded with awards to 21 journalists for outstanding reporting on the SME sector.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
National Pension Authority (NPA)
Finance Division
Ministry of Finance
www.npa.gov.bd

No: 07.04.0000.001.26.001.23- 521 Date: 02/07/2025

Invitation for Tenders (IFT): Hiring of Six Vehicles for National Pension Authority

1	Ministry/Division	Finance Division, Ministry of Finance
2	Agency	National Pension Authority (NPA)
3	Procuring Entity Name	National Pension Authority (NPA)
4	Procuring Entity Code	N/A
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	Procurement of physical service: Hiring Six Vehicles (03 Sedan Car, 2015 model or updated, engine 1500 cc; 03 Microbuses, 2017 model or updated, Engine minimum 2000cc) for NPA through outsourcing
7	Invitation Ref No	Ref. No: 07.04.0000.001.26.001.23-521
8	Date	02.07.2025
KEY INFORMATION		
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering (National) for non-consulting services
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget and Source of Funds	The Government of Bangladesh and the NPA
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	N/A
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Tender Package No	GR1
13	Tender Package Name	Hiring Six Vehicles (03 Sedan Car, 2015 model or updated, engine 1500 cc; 03 Microbuses, 2017 model or updated, Engine minimum 2000cc) for NPA through outsourcing
14	Tender Publication Date	02.07.2025
15	Tender Last Selling Date	Date: 20.07.2025 up to 3.00 pm
16	Tender Closing Date and Time	20.07.2025 4:00 p.m.
17	Tender Opening Date and Time	20.07.2025 4:30 p.m.
18	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address: National Pension Authority (NPA), 43, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000.
19	Selling Tender Document	Agent's/office Name: Alamgir Hossain, Accounts Officer, Address: National Pension Authority (NPA) (2nd floor) 43, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Telephone no: +880226663316 E-mail address: accountant@npa.gov.bd
20	NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS	
21	Receiving Tender Document	A Tender Box will be kept at NPA Premises
22	Opening Tender Document	NPA Conference Room, 43 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
23	Eligibility of Tenderer	Mentioned in the Tender Documents
24	Brief Description of Services	Supply of 3 Sedan car and 3 Microbus including driver, maintenance, oil and fuel (Please see detail in Activity Schedule)
25	Brief Description of services	Hiring Six Vehicles (03 Sedan Car, 2015 model or updated, engine 1500 cc; 03 Microbuses, 2017 model or updated, Engine minimum 2000cc) for NPA through outsourcing
26	Price of Tender Document (Taka)	1000.00 (One thousand) Taka only (non refundable)
27	Package No	Identification of item
	GR1	Hiring Six Vehicles (03 Sedan Car, 2015 model or updated, engine 1500 cc; 03 Microbuses, 2017 model or updated, Engine 2000cc) for NPA through outsourcing
		Location
		Mainly Dhaka City and occasionally outside of Dhaka.
		Tender Security Amount (Tk)
		BDT 1,80,000.00
		Completion Time in Weeks / Months/Days
		Within 12 months from the date of contract signing
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
28	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Mahiuddin Khan
29	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Executive Chairman, National Pension Authority
30	Address of Official Inviting Tender	National Pension Authority, 43, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000
31	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	+880226665743, chairman@npa.gov.bd
32	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the Tender(s) without assigning any reason.	

Executive Chairman
National Pension Authority (NPA)
Finance Division.

GD-1514