



Md Khurshid Alam, country manager of Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), and Tamanna Quadry, executive vice-president and head of priority and women banking at Prime Bank PLC, pose for photographs after signing the agreement at the bank's corporate office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: PRIME BANK

Délifrance offers discounts to Prime Bank employees and customers

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Prime Bank PLC has entered into a strategic partnership agreement with Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), which specialises in developing new restaurant and café brands in Bangladesh, to offer dining and gifting discounts for its employees and customers.

Tamanna Quadry, executive vice-president and head of priority and women banking at Prime Bank PLC, and Md Khurshid Alam, country manager of Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), signed the agreement at the bank's corporate office in Dhaka recently, according to a press

release.

Under the partnership, Prime Bank cardholders will enjoy a 15 percent discount at all Délifrance cafés on dine-in and takeaway orders across the country throughout the year.

Through this collaboration, Prime Bank aims to strengthen its commitment to offering lifestyle-driven privileges and benefits that enhance the overall customer experience, the release added.

Takiyan Chowdhury, senior vice-president and head of consumer banking at the bank, was also present at the signing ceremony, along with other senior officials from both organisations.

Mintoo recognised by World Food Prize Foundation

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Abdul Awal Mintoo, founder of Lal Teer Seed Limited and Lal Teer Livestock Development (BD) Limited, has been recognised as the Top Agri-Food Pioneer (TAP), 2025 by the World Food Prize Foundation recently.



The recognition, coinciding with the Foundation's 39th anniversary, celebrates Mintoo's outstanding contributions to transforming food systems and strengthening global food security.

Based in Iowa, USA, the World Food Prize Foundation recognises individuals who have made exceptional achievements in improving the quality, quantity, and availability of food worldwide.

Its council of advisers — comprising former heads of state, ministers, and global leaders in agricultural science, education, and policy — oversees the selection of laureates whose work significantly advances human development and food sustainability.

The TAP award honours individuals whose innovative work and leadership have had a profound global impact on agriculture and food security.

The 2025 laureates were announced in Washington, DC, earlier this year, while the official award ceremony took place at the historic State Capitol in Des Moines, Iowa, on October 22 during the annual "Borlaug Dialogue".

"The 2025 TAP list showcases the extraordinary diversity, talent, and resolve of individuals working across borders and disciplines to build a more sustainable and just global food system," said Mashal Husain, president of the World Food Prize Foundation.

"In a world facing urgent and interconnected crises, these honorees are fearless change-makers driving impact where it matters most and offering real hope for the future," he added.

Dollar edges up

REUTERS, London/Tokyo

The dollar drifted higher against most peers, particularly the Japanese yen, on Thursday as traders waited for the delayed release of US consumer inflation data on Friday and digested trade threats between Washington and Beijing.

The US currency was last up 0.38 percent on the yen at 152.44 while the euro was marginally lower at \$1.1604, largely in the middle of its recent range.

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"There's a lot of uncertainty given the US shutdown and the lack of data, so some traders are keeping their powder dry and there's also a degree of nervousness ahead of US CPI," said Nick Rees, head of macro research at Monex Europe.

The inflation data is being released despite the shutdown, to assist the US Social Security Administration with its annual cost-of-living adjustment for 2026.

And, although the Federal Reserve's policy-setting focus has shifted from inflation to the state of the US labour market, the numbers will be closely watched.

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank PLC has signed an employee banking agreement with East West University, one of the leading private universities in Bangladesh, to provide customised banking solutions and superior services to the university's employees.

Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, and Prof Mohammed Farashuddin, chairperson of East West University and former governor of Bangladesh Bank, signed the agreement on the university premises in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the collaboration, employees of East West University will enjoy a seamless and rewarding banking experience, including salary accounts, multi-currency debit

cards, credit cards, loan facilities, deposit pension schemes (DPS), fixed deposits (FD), and a range of privileges under BRAC Bank's employee banking programme.

Prof Shams Rahman, vice-chancellor of East West University; Air Cdre (ret'd) Ishlaq Ilaqi Choudhury, treasurer; Touhidul Islam, director of finance; and Mashfiqur Rahman, registrar, attended the programme.

This partnership reinforces BRAC Bank's commitment to empowering educational institutions with innovative financial solutions and value-driven services designed to enhance the everyday banking journey of their workforce, the release said.

Md Mahiul Islam, deputy managing director (DMD) and head of retail banking at the bank; Sheikh Mohammad Ashfaq, deputy managing



Prof Mohammed Farashuddin, chairperson of East West University and former governor of Bangladesh Bank, and Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, pose for photographs at the deal signing ceremony on the university premises in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: BRAC BANK

director and head of branch distribution network; AKM Shahadul Islam, head of employee banking; Syed Maheen

Zubayed, head of premium banking; Syeda Mahzabeen, manager of the Motijheel Branch; and Zebun Nahar, head

of employee banking proposition and senior relationship manager, along with other senior officials, were also present.

Délifrance offers discounts to Dhaka Bank clients

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Dhaka Bank PLC has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), which specialises in developing new restaurant and café brands in Bangladesh.

HM Mostafizur Rahaman, senior executive vice-president and head of the retail business division of Dhaka Bank PLC, and Shahab Sattar, chairman of Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), signed the MoU at the latter's head office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the MoU, Dhaka Bank's

employees and cardholders will enjoy up to 20 percent discount on a variety of dining services at all Délifrance outlets across the country throughout the year.

The collaboration reflects a shared commitment to offering exclusive dining privileges and enriching customer experiences, the release added.

Aftab Ahmed Chowdhury, senior executive vice-president and manager of the bank's Islamic Banking Branch in Motijheel, and Md Khurshid Alam, country manager of the restaurant and café brand, along with other senior officials from both organisations, were also present.



Shahab Sattar, chairman of Les Bleus Limited (Délifrance), and HM Mostafizur Rahaman, senior executive vice-president and head of the retail business division of Dhaka Bank PLC, pose for photographs after signing the memorandum of understanding at the former's head office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: DHAKA BANK

IFIC Bank opens ATM booth at BKMEA office

STAR BUSINESS DESK

IFIC Bank PLC has opened an ATM booth at the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) premises in Chashara, Narayanganj, to make financial transactions easier and faster for its customers.

Md Mehmood Husain, chairman of IFIC Bank PLC, and Mohammad Hatem, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, jointly inaugurated the booth on Wednesday, according to a press release.

Through this new ATM booth, IFIC Bank customers will be able to withdraw cash, transfer funds to IFIC or other banks' accounts and cards, check balances, obtain mini-statements, activate cards, change PINs, and access other ATM-related services.

IFIC Bank is committed to providing greater customer convenience through such initiatives while accelerating the digital transformation of the country's financial sector, the release added.

Syed Mansur Mustafa, managing director of the bank; Md Monirur Rahman, deputy managing director, chief information officer and chief risk officer; Helal Ahmed, head of operations; and Abdur Rahman, chief manager of the Narayanganj branch, attended the event.

Fazlee Shamim Ehsan, executive president of BKMEA; Amal Podder, senior vice-president; Mohammad Morshed Sarwar, vice-president (finance); and Mohammad Rashed, vice-president, along with other senior officials from both the bank and the association, were also present.



Mohammad Hatem, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, and Md Mehmood Husain, chairman of IFIC Bank PLC, jointly inaugurate the ATM booth on the BKMEA premises in Chashara, Narayanganj on Wednesday.

PHOTO: IFIC BANK



Sharif Zahir, chairman of United Commercial Bank PLC, attends the launch of the bank's "Sustainability Report 2024" at its corporate office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: UNITED COMMERCIAL BANK

United Commercial Bank unveils 'Sustainability Report 2024'

STAR BUSINESS DESK

United Commercial Bank PLC (UCB) has launched its "Sustainability Report 2024" at its corporate office in Dhaka recently, marking a significant milestone in the country's banking industry.

With this publication, UCB has become one of the first banks in Bangladesh to formally disclose its carbon accounting, setting a new benchmark for sustainable banking practices, according to a press release.

Through the report, the bank has undertaken an initiative to measure and disclose total carbon emissions generated from its lending and investment activities, establishing a new precedent in transparency and environmental accountability within the financial sector.

Sharif Zahir, chairman of United Commercial Bank PLC, attended the event as chief guest, along with members of the board of directors and the senior management team.

"The greatest threat to human existence is the unchecked emission of carbon into the atmosphere. Without immediate and effective action, it will bring about catastrophic consequences," Zahir said at the

event.

UCB's Sustainability Report 2024 is not just a document; it reflects our steadfast commitment to a future where financial growth, social welfare, and environmental protection are deeply interconnected," he added.

The bank announced plans to strengthen financing in green and renewable energy sectors while gradually reducing investments in high carbon industries.

UCB also aims to enhance operational efficiency by reducing electricity and paper consumption, regularly measuring and disclosing its carbon footprint, and ultimately achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

The report further highlights UCB's commitment to embedding environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles at the core of its decision-making process.

In 2024, the bank made significant progress in green and sustainable financing, supporting projects in renewable energy, energy-efficient technologies, sustainable waste management, green buildings, and climate-resilient agriculture, thereby contributing to national food security and climate resilience.

Inflation outpaces wage growth

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"We, the economists, are hoping that after the upcoming national election, once a stable government takes office, labour demand will begin to rise again, and with it, wages will recover," he said.

In the meantime, he suggested two immediate measures for the government to cushion the blow for workers.

"The state cannot halt its essential development work. Infrastructure maintenance and road reconstruction must continue, because stopping them will create even bigger problems later," he said.

"There's no reason to wait for the next administration to fix broken roads or embankments. These must be repaired now. When the government steps in, it not only creates labour demand but also restores confidence in the economy," he added.

Secondly, he urged the government to expand food support.

"The worst effects of falling wages are felt by low-income workers. Providing basic food items at subsidised prices through open market sales programmes or rationing systems could help them cope with the inflation-wage imbalance," said the professor.