



## BB buys \$2.5b from banks so far

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank has purchased a total of \$2.51 billion from commercial banks so far in the fiscal year (FY) 2025-2026 as part of efforts to ensure stability in the exchange rate and keep reserves at a comfortable level to meet external payment needs.

In its latest purchase, the banking regulator bought \$202 million yesterday from 13 banks at rates between Tk 122.27 and Tk 122.29.

A senior BB official said the purchases aim to calm the forex market, as sharp swings either way are unhealthy.

Over the past three years until FY25, the central bank sold more than \$25 billion from its dollar stocks to pay for imports of fuel, fertiliser and food.

After the fall of the Awami League government in August last year in a mass uprising, the central bank suspended dollar support for government imports because reserves had sunk to a worryingly low level.

The political changeover brought a larger than usual flow of remittances and stronger export earnings, which gave the interim government some breathing space.

Since early July this year, the taka has strengthened against the dollar on the back of buoyant remittances. On July 2, the greenback traded at Tk 122.85, but yesterday it sold for Tk 122.25 to Tk 122.30.

The rise came as remittance and export inflows increased while import growth slowed.

With the recent purchases, the country's reserves stood at \$26.81 billion on December 4, up from \$18.84 billion a year earlier, according to central bank data.

READ MORE ON B3



## Rules on bonuses for bankers tightened

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has moved to impose stricter conditions on incentive bonuses for bank officials and employees, saying bonuses cannot be paid from accrued or unrealised income amid the sector's ongoing crisis.

The central bank issued a circular in this regard yesterday, stating that banks must ensure bonuses are awarded only when actual, realised profits are generated in a financial year.

Banks have also been barred from paying bonuses from retained earnings, while institutions with regulatory capital shortfalls or provision shortfalls will not be allowed to issue any incentive payments, according to the notice.

Any deferment facility granted on provisioning cannot be counted while calculating profits, it said.

The BB further instructed that banks must evaluate improvements in key performance indicators and demonstrate adequate progress in recovering classified or written-off loans before deciding on any incentive payments.

For state-owned banks, the newly approved Incentive Bonus Guidelines 2025 will apply, covering state-owned commercial banks, specialised banks, and non-scheduled specialised institutions.

READ MORE ON B3

**NBR targets 1 lakh new businesses as VAT week begins**

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has set a target of bringing 100,000 new businesses under the value-added tax (VAT) net this month to mark VAT Day and VAT Week beginning today.

The initiative is part of a broader push to strengthen revenue collection, said NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan at a press conference at the NBR headquarters in Dhaka.

Presently, Bangladesh has 6.44 lakh VAT-registered entities.

"Compared to the volume of business in the country, our VAT collection remains very low. We are working to recover the revenue that has been lost," he said.

Khan said tax collection this year has been affected by instability in the banking sector, which has weakened corporate tax receipts. Additionally, a cutback in the development budget has led to lower-than-expected revenue.

Tax collection might grow 16 percent in the first five months of the fiscal year 2025-26, he added.

The NBR chief also said the long-awaited automated VAT refund system is now at its final stage. Once operational, it is expected to reduce delays and ensure greater transparency for businesses seeking refunds.

The revenue board is also preparing to launch a one-click e-VAT return system, so that small businesses can file returns on their own without intermediaries.

He further said amendments to the VAT law are underway to simplify procedures and advance the ongoing automation drive.

## Onion prices start to fall after govt allows imports



Onion prices have started to drop after the government allowed imports of the kitchen staple to contain the spiral.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

SUKANTA HALDER and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Onion prices have started to decline after the government allowed imports, giving relief to consumers struggling with persistent inflation, particularly high food inflation.

Retailers in Dhaka and Chattogram said onion prices have dropped by Tk 25-Tk 30 per kg since the government announcement.

They, however, added that supply has not increased significantly in wholesale markets, resulting in less decrease in prices than expected.

Last week, retail onion prices surged by Tk 30-Tk 40, reaching Tk 150 per kg. In response, the agriculture ministry announced on Saturday that imports would be allowed.

In the past three days, the government has allowed the import of 4,500 tonnes of onions, said Boni Amin Khan, additional deputy director for import at the Plant Quarantine Wing of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), which issues phytosanitary certificates needed to import any plant into the country. "Of this, 510 tonnes have already arrived."

He added that all imported onions came from India.

Mohammad Ratul, a retail seller from Tejturi Bazar in Farmgate, Dhaka, said prices of onion dropped to Tk 140 per kg yesterday. Four days ago, I sold onions at Tk 170 per kg, he added.

"Onions are still available in wholesale markets according to demand," he said.

READ MORE ON B3

**Govt approves 12 solar power projects worth Tk 39,862cr**

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has approved 12 new solar power plant projects with a combined capacity of 918 megawatts (MW) across several districts, at an estimated cost of around Tk 39,862 crore.

The Advisory Committee on Government Purchase, chaired by Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, gave the green light to the plants at a meeting yesterday.

Unlike earlier projects under the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010, which were granted without competitive bidding, these plants were awarded through a competitive process.

Previously, electricity tariffs for such projects often crossed Tk 13 per kilowatt-hour, but the new process has reduced the rate to below Tk 10 per kilowatt hour.

The power ministry said this is expected to save the government Tk 1,169 crore annually.

The projects will be developed under the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) as part of the government's broader strategy to diversify the energy mix and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Key projects include a 200 MW solar plant in Fatikchhari, Chattogram, awarded to Confidence Power Holdings at a tariff of Tk 9.45 per kilowatt-hour, and a 150 MW project in Pabna given to a joint venture of Paramount PLC and Paramount Holdings at Tk 9.62 per kilowatt-hour.

In Noakhali, a 10 MW project in Sudharampur went to a joint venture of Maheen and Vidulamata at Tk 8.99 per kilowatt-hour. Hathazari, Chattogram, will host an 18 MW plant managed by FGL, FHL and GBB, Dhaka, at Tk 9.98 per kilowatt-hour, while Moulvibazar will see a 25 MW project awarded to Paramount Holdings and Paramount Textile at Tk 9.19 per kilowatt-hour.

Other major projects include a 45 MW plant in Fatikchhari assigned to the Karnaphuli Infraco Consortium at Tk 9.32 per kilowatt-hour; a 100

MW plant in Feni assigned to the Feni Infraco Consortium at Tk 9.32 per kilowatt-hour; and a 100 MW plant in Pabna assigned to the Pabna Infraco Consortium at Tk 9.32 per kilowatt-hour.

**Trust Retail Banking**

**LOAN AGAINST SALARY**



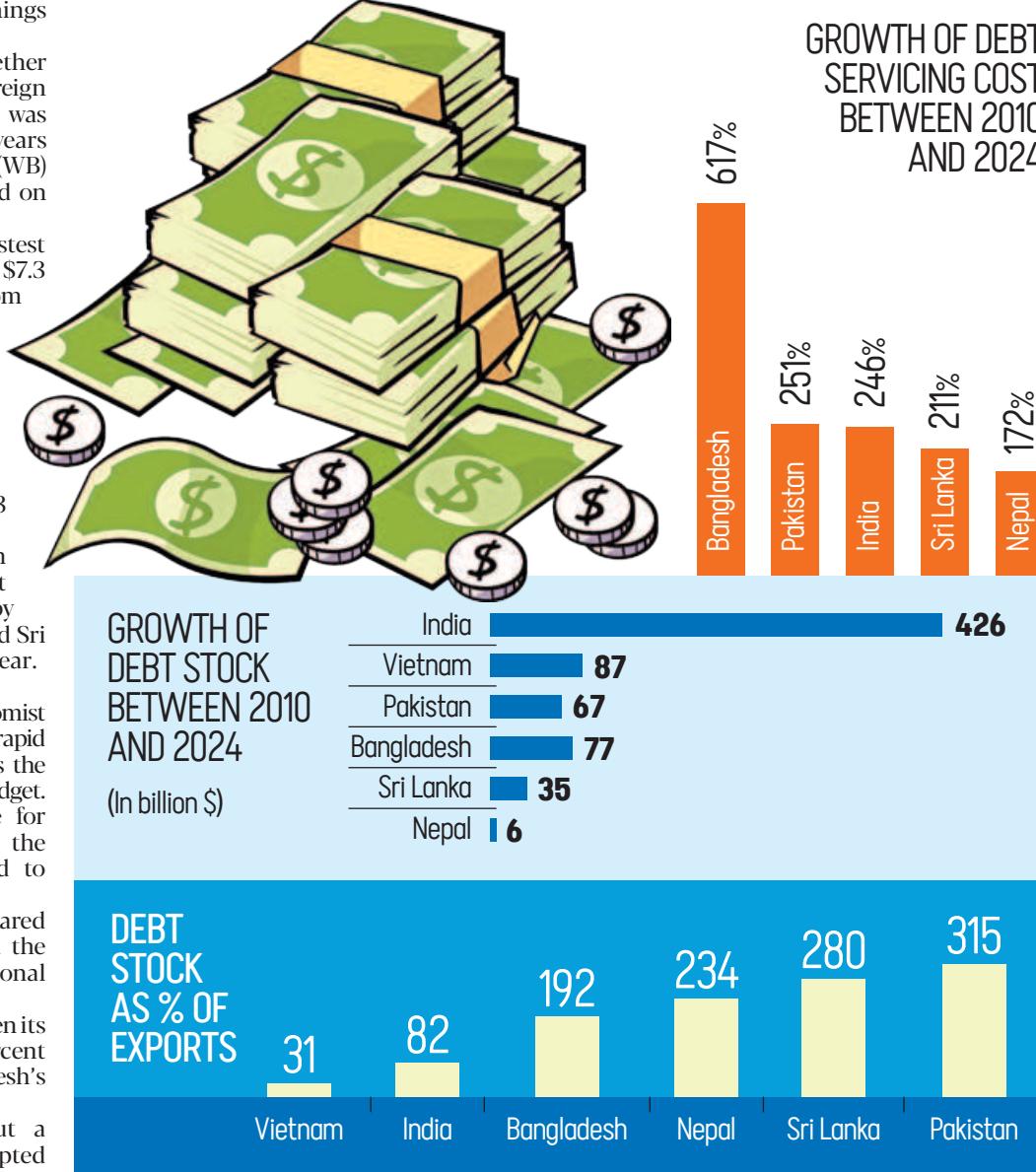
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**Trust Bank PLC.**

To Know More **16201**

## EXTERNAL DEBT: BANGLADESH AND ITS NEIGHBOURS



**VAT break on metro rail tickets likely to continue**

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government may extend the six-month value-added tax (VAT) exemption on metro rail tickets until June next year, a service that has gained significant popularity since the beginning of its operations.

Commuters of the metro rail are currently enjoying a VAT exemption on their fares, which is scheduled to end on December 31 this year.

Besides, the government has already decided to withdraw the Tk 5,000 excise duty on air tickets for Hajj pilgrims for their outbound and return flights from next year.

**Commuters of the metro rail are currently enjoying a VAT exemption on fares, which is scheduled to end this year**

Md Bodruzzaman Munshi, second secretary of VAT Policy at the National Board of Revenue (NBR), confirmed this to The Daily Star yesterday.

"A note has been sent to the advisory councils for approval on the metro rail, while the cabinet has already passed the excise duty exemption for Hajj pilgrims," he said.

The much-talked-about Dhaka metro rail began commercial operations at the end of December 2022 and has since become hugely popular among commuters, especially office-goers and students who now have an escape from travelling on chaotic buses.

# NCC Bank Securities signs loan deal with ICB

## STAR BUSINESS DESK

NCC Bank Securities and Financial Services Limited (NCCB Securities), a subsidiary of NCC Bank PLC, has recently signed a loan agreement with the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB).

Under the agreement, ICB has approved a loan of Tk 2,500 crore for NCCB Securities to invest in its own portfolio.

Niranjan Chandra Debnath, managing director of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), and M Shamsul Arefin, managing director of NCC Bank PLC and director of NCCB Securities, signed the agreement at a ceremony held at ICB's head office in Motijheel, Dhaka, according to a press release.

Speaking at the ceremony, Debnath said, "This agreement is not just a financial transaction; it is a symbol of mutual trust, cooperation, and our joint commitment to building a stronger and more sustainable capital market."

Arefin remarked, "We highly value our long term relationship with ICB, which has been playing a significant role in the development and stability of the country's capital market."

"Today's collaboration is an expression of mutual trust and a joint commitment



**M Shamsul Arefin, managing director of NCC Bank PLC and director of NCCB Securities, and Niranjan Chandra Debnath, managing director of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, pose for a photograph after signing the agreement at the latter's head office in Motijheel, Dhaka recently.**

PHOTO: NCC BANK

to responsibly strengthening and stabilising the capital market."

"NCC Bank is committed to financial transparency and corporate governance. This agreement will not only further

strengthen our relationship but also pave the way for new strategic collaborations with ICB in the future," he added.

Md Nurul Huda, deputy managing director of ICB; Md Habib Ullah, general

manager; Babul Chandra Debnath, deputy general manager; Ahsanul Arefin, chief executive officer of NCCB Securities; and Mohammad Delwar Hossain, first assistant vice-president, were also present.



**ANM Moinul Kabir, director of the Department of Off-Site Supervision (DOS) at Bangladesh Bank, poses for a group photograph with participants of the "Annual Risk Conference 2025", organised by Eastern Bank PLC, at the latter's head office in Dhaka recently.**

PHOTO: EASTERN BANK

## Eastern Bank organises annual risk conference

### STAR BUSINESS DESK

Eastern Bank PLC (EBL) recently organised its "Annual Risk Conference 2025" under the theme "Transforming Risk Culture-Within & Beyond" at its head office in Dhaka.

ANM Moinul Kabir, director of the Department of Off-Site Supervision (DOS) at Bangladesh Bank, attended the conference as the chief guest, according to a press release.

Ali Reza Iftekhar, managing director of Eastern Bank PLC, presided over the programme, where Surabhi Ghosh, additional director of the DOS at the

central bank, was present as the special guest.

During the event, participants reviewed key areas of risk, including liquidity, market, operational, credit, and other core risks, and discussed the way forward for strengthening the bank's overall risk management framework, the release added.

Mahdior Rahman, chairman of the executive risk management committee of EBL, was also present, along with deputy managing directors, the risk management division, division heads, senior executives, and senior managers from across the country.

## Mutual Trust Bank hosts '5th Annual Risk Conference 2025'

### STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mutual Trust Bank PLC (MTB) recently organised its "5th Annual Risk Conference 2025", underscoring the bank's commitment to fostering a robust risk management culture and aligning with regulatory expectations.

The event brought together over 425 participants, including branch managers, branch operations managers, customer service officers, and executives involved in managing risks at both branch and head-office levels.

This year's conference theme, "Adaptive Risk Strategies: Balancing Regulation, Innovation, and Sustainability", reflected the bank's proactive approach to addressing emerging challenges.

ANM Moinul Kabir, director of the Department of Off-site Supervision (Division-2) at Bangladesh Bank, attended the conference at MTB Tower on III Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in Dhaka.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank PLC, presided over the event.



**ANM Moinul Kabir, director of the Department of Off-site Supervision (Division-2) at Bangladesh Bank, and Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank PLC, pose for a group photograph with participants of MTB's "5th Annual Risk Conference 2025" at MTB Tower in Dhaka recently.**

## Mercantile Bank hold anti-money laundering training in Sylhet

### STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mercantile Bank PLC recently organised a training programme on "Prevention of Money Laundering & Combating Financing of Terrorism" in Sylhet, aimed at strengthening awareness and capacity among banking and financial professionals in the region.

A total of 50 participants from the Sylhet region attended the event.

Khaled Ahmed, executive director of Bangladesh Bank, attended the programme as the chief guest, according to a press release.

Shamim Ahmed, deputy managing director and chief anti-money laundering compliance officer of Mercantile Bank PLC, was present as the special guest.

The speakers emphasised the importance of continuous training in preventing financial crimes and ensuring regulatory compliance.



**Khaled Ahmed, executive director of Bangladesh Bank, poses for a group photograph with participants of a training programme on "Prevention of Money Laundering & Combating Financing of Terrorism" in Sylhet recently.**

PHOTO: MERCANTILE BANK

## Bitcoin's 2025

### FROM PAGE B4

Saylor, speaking to Reuters last week, said his company could survive a 95 percent fall in the price of bitcoin.

Those April and October plunges highlighted the growing correlation between bitcoin and equities, and in particular, artificial intelligence stocks, which share similar attributes and have been hit

by worries that valuations are in bubble territory.

Historically, bitcoin and stocks did not move in tandem because crypto was seen as an alternative investment. But with broader crypto adoption by traditional retail investors and some institutions, the correlation looks to be strengthening, analysts said.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun did not directly confirm the agreement when asked, but said that "China has always advocated for mutual benefit and win-win outcomes through cooperation between China and the United States."

Under Biden-era

similar advanced chips were blocked from export to China.

"We applaud President Trump's decision to allow America's chip industry to compete to support high paying jobs and manufacturing in America," an Nvidia spokesperson told AFP.

"Offering H200 to

customers, vetted by the Department of Commerce, strikes a thoughtful balance that is great for America."

Trump emphasized that Nvidia's most advanced chips -- the Blackwell series and forthcoming Rubin processors -- are not included in the agreement and remain available only to US customers.

## Trump says US will allow sale

### FROM PAGE B4

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Under Biden-era

restrictions, the H200 and

## bKash redefines 'Amar bKash' icon based on customer needs

### STAR BUSINESS DESK

The country's leading mobile financial service (MFS) provider, bKash, recently redefined its app to make it simpler and more efficient, tailoring its features to each customer's usage patterns and needs.

The new presentation of the 'My bKash (Amar bKash)' icon now gives users an instant snapshot of their daily financial transactions.

By consolidating all transaction details into one customised space, overall financial management has become easier and more effective, according to a press release.

The interfaces of 'My bKash' and 'My Offers' have also been redesigned in a cleaner and more organised way.

Along with this, new themes have been added, bringing significant changes to the overall look of the widely used app.

Additionally, the latest version of the bKash app includes features such as bonus points, the option to purchase insurance policies directly from the app, coupons, rewards, and more.

## Dollar steady

REUTERS, Singapore/London

The dollar held steady on Tuesday ahead of an expected rate cut from the Federal Reserve, while the Aussie dollar was firmer after its central bank ruled out more easing.

Markets are anticipating a rate cut from the Fed, and preparing for several more central bank decisions before the weekend.

"The Fed is tomorrow so market participants probably aren't really looking for repositioning ahead of this," said Michael Pfister, FX analyst at Commerzbank.

The US dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, slipped 0.1 percent to 98.977.

Traders are also looking ahead to the US NFIB's small business optimism index for November as well as the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) for October due later in the session.

Bond investors are dialling back expectations of rate cuts in 2026 as scepticism mounts that Kevin Hassett, the frontrunner to succeed Jerome Powell, whose eight-year term as Fed chair ends in May, will prove as dovish as hoped by US President Donald Trump.

"গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।"

"বিদ্যুৎ ও জ্বলনী নির্মাণ সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রিমিকার"

**বাংলাদেশ গ্যাস ফিল্ডস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড**

(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)

**Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd.**

(A Company of Petrobangla)

**INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE**

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/ Energy & Mineral Resources Division
2	Agency	Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL), A Company of Petrobangla
3	Procuring Entity	Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL)
4	Procuring Entity Code	-----
5	Procuring Entity District	Brahmanbaria
6	Invitation Reference No.	Tender Ref. No. BGFCL/GOODS(FP)/235 Dated December 09, 2025
7	Invitation for	Procurement of Spare Parts of Waukesha Engine, Engine Model: 16V275GL+
8	Procurement Method	One stage two envelope tendering (International Competitive tendering)
9	Budget & Source of Fund	Own Fund of BGFCL
10	Tender Publication Date	December 10, 2025
11	Tender Selling Date & Time	a) Tender documents will be available between 09:00 hrs & 15:00 hrs (BST) on all working days (Sunday to Thursday) from December 10, 2025 to January 21, 2026. No extension in closing date for selling of tender documents will be allowed. b) Place: BGFCL's Liaison office at Petrocentre (14th Floor), 3 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka.
12	Tender Closing Date & Time	c) Price of Tender Document: Tender documents will be sold on payment of USD 20.00 or BDT. 2,500.00 (Non-refundable)
13	Tender Opening Date & Time	a) Date & time: January 22, 2026 up to 11:15 hrs (BST). b) Place: BGFCL, Head Office, Meeting room at 2nd floor, Birashar, Brahmanbaria - 3400.
14	Date, Time & Place for Pre-Tender meeting	a) Date & time: January 22, 2026 at 11:30 hrs (BST) in presence of the Tenderer's representatives, if any. b) Place: BGFCL, Head Office, Meeting Room at 2nd floor, Birashar, Brahmanbaria-3400.
15	Eligibility of Tenderer	Not Applicable
		Reputed firms, manufacturers and suppliers from all countries except Israel with the following international experience: (a) Tenderer must have overall minimum 05 (five) years experience. (b) If the tenderer is not the manufacturer himself, the tenderer must submit Authorization Letter from the manufacturer or manufacturer's authorized distributor to prove the quoted materials are genuine. (c) Tenderer shall have experience in supplying similar materials to other than the Tenderer's own country. (d) Manufacturer shall have minimum 10 (ten) years experience in manufacturing the offered products. (e) Manufacturer shall have valid ISO 9001, ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001 certificates as well as tenderer shall have valid ISO 9001 certificate.
16	Description of Goods	Spare Parts of Waukesha Engine, Engine Model: 16V275GL+
17	Tender Security Amount	USD 4,750.00 or BDT. 5,60,000.00 In the form of Bank Guarantee only
18	Delivery Time	120 days from the date of L/C opening
19	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Engr. M. K. Masuk
20	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	General Manager (Technical Services)
21	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL), Head Office, Birashar, Brahmanbaria - 3400, Bangladesh, Telephone no. +8801730 093679, E-mail: prbgfcl@gmail.com/dgmp@bgfcl.org.bd
22	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.	
	Special Information	i. Tenders must remain valid for 120 (one hundred twenty) days from the date of closing of the tender. ii. The tender security must remain valid for 148 (one hundred forty eight) days from the date of closing of the tender. iii. In case of any unavoidable circumstances such as strike, civil commotion, Govt. declared holiday, etc. tender will be received and opened on the following working day. iv. Tender(s) submitted after the deadline for receiving of tenders will be rejected and returned unopened to the tenderer. v. Tender submitted by e-mail will be rejected. Likewise photocopy of e-mailed tenders will also be rejected. vi. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders or annul the tendering process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected tenderers. vii. This tender will be conducted as per the Public Procurement Act 2006 and the Public Procurement Rule 2025. The aforesaid notice is also available at and BPPA website @ www.cptu.gov.bd, Petrobangla website @ www.petrobangla.org.bd and BGCL website @ www.bgccl.gov.bd.

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Engr. M. K. Masuk  
General Manager (Technical Services)

# BTRC pledges easier import, faster vendor enlistment for mobile handset traders

A meeting was held between the Mobile Business Community Bangladesh and the BTRC yesterday

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has assured mobile handset traders of streamlined processes for handset imports and vendor enlistment, following a meeting with representatives of the Mobile Business Community Bangladesh (MBCB) yesterday.

According to a BTRC press release, the discussion was held at the commission's office, where both sides reviewed the existing procedures for mobile phone import approvals and vendor enlistment certificates.

This development comes amid ongoing protests by unofficial mobile handset traders against the planned enforcement of the National Equipment Identity Register (NEIR), which is set to block unauthorised devices from December 16 this year.

The protesting traders have demanded a delay in implementing NEIR, a reduction in taxes, and simplification of the import process.

The meeting focused on simplifying documentation requirements while preventing the entry of clone, copy, used, and refurbished devices into the local



Customers browse mobile phones at a shop on Sadar Road in Barishal.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

market.

The commission said it will provide vendor enlistment certificates within a shorter timeframe and with fewer documents than before.

In an effort to curb the inflow of unauthorised devices, BTRC stated that import approval will be granted not only on the basis of certification from the original manufacturer but also

upon submission of an attestation from any authorised distributor, even in the absence of a formal contract.

This measure aims to support legitimate traders who often face delays due to stringent documentation requirements, the release added.

During the meeting, BTRC called on the MBCB to submit a clear written proposal detailing ways to further simplify the

import process while ensuring that clone, copy, used, and refurbished handsets do not enter the country.

Responding to a request from the trader community, BTRC agreed to facilitate the regularisation of all unsold mobile handsets currently in the country's market.

Traders have been asked to submit relevant information in the prescribed format by December 15 this year, after which the commission will take necessary steps.

The BTRC reaffirmed that all legally imported mobile phones will receive full cooperation from the regulator, in line with the "Guidelines for the Use, Marketing and Listing of Wireless Equipment 2024."

After the meeting with BTRC officials, MBCB leaders said they were informed that representatives of several government ministries would sit for a discussion tomorrow.

The leaders urged handset sellers to remain calm until the outcome of that meeting is known.

Earlier, both the BTRC and the telecom ministry had written to the government recommending that import duties on mobile handsets be reduced by nearly half.

## Bangladesh's debt repayments jump

FROM PAGE B1  
the IMF in 2024 to downgrade Bangladesh's risk rating from "low" to "moderate".

According to the WB report, Bangladesh's total foreign debt stood at \$104 billion in 2024, up from \$26 billion in 2010. By the end of last year, the country spent 16 percent of its export earnings on debt repayment alone.

This surge also comes at a time when the National Board of Revenue (NBR), which is responsible for collecting 90 percent of the country's revenue, has consistently fallen short of reaching its target for the 13th year as of fiscal year 2024-25.

Speaking at an event in Dhaka on Monday, economist Prof Mustafizur Rahman said if the trend continues, Bangladesh is poised to fall into a "debt trap".

Falling into a debt trap would mean the government will have to repay loans by taking loans, he added.

At the same event, NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan said, "We have already fallen into a debt trap; unless we acknowledge this truth, it will not be possible to move forward."

However, economist Hussain believes Bangladesh is not yet in a severe debt crisis but warned that the pace at which loans and repayments are rising could push the country into a riskier position sooner than expected.

He attributed part of the problem

to what he called "irresponsible borrowing".

The economist noted that foreign loans should be backed by well-prepared projects and clear repayment plans, but that has not always been the case. "If you take a project at a cost of Tk 500 instead of its real cost of Tk 100 and launder the excess money, then how will you repay the loans?"

However, Bangladesh's debt position is still stronger than that of Pakistan and Sri Lanka, both of which have seen much larger mismatches between external debt and export income.

Pakistan's external debt is 315 percent of its exports; Sri Lanka's is 280 percent and Nepal's is 234 percent. India's is 82 percent, while Vietnam's is just 31 percent. The South Asian average stands at 93 percent, World Bank data show.

Hussain said Bangladesh should treat the rising ratio as an early warning that it could move towards the same difficulties faced by some neighbouring countries.

In this situation, he recommended that the government reschedule foreign funded projects that are already underway but unlikely to generate enough revenue to repay the loans tied to them.

For projects that have been approved but have not yet begun, he said the disbursement should

be reviewed and, if necessary, restructured or repurposed.

"Potential new borrowing should be analysed rigorously so that wastage cannot happen," he added.

The WB report also highlighted a wider global trend. Between 2022 and 2024, developing countries collectively paid \$741 billion more in loan repayments and interest than they received in new financing. This was the biggest net outflow related to debt in more than half a century.

By 2024, the total foreign debt of low and middle-income countries reached a record \$8.9 trillion. Of this, \$1.2 trillion was owed by the 78 most vulnerable countries that qualify for low-cost loans and grants from the WB's International Development Association.

These record-high burdens, the report noted, came at a time when global interest rates are at their highest levels since just before the 2008-09 financial crisis.

## Govt approves

FROM PAGE B1

MW project in Chakaria, Cox's Bazar, to Confidence Power Bogra Unit 2 at Tk 9.86 per kilowatt-hour; and a 100 MW project in Ramu awarded to a joint venture of China Northeast Electric Power Engineering & Services and BM Star Trade at Tk 7.96 per kilowatt-hour.

A 50 MW project in Jaldhaka, Nilphamari, went to Concord Pragatik Consortium at Tk 10.07 per kilowatt-hour, and another 50 MW project in Bibiyana, Sylhet, was awarded to Paramount Holdings and Paramount Textile at Tk 9.91 per kilowatt-hour.

Bagerhat, Mongla, will host a 100 MW solar plant given to Confidence Power Bogra Unit-2 and Asian Entech Power Corporation at Tk 9.86 per kilowatt-hour, while a 70 MW project in Hemayetur, Pabna, went to Paramount Holdings and Paramount Textile at Tk 9.63 per kilowatt-hour.

Additionally, the pre-approved tariff for a 210 MW combined cycle power plant in Mymensingh was revised downward from Tk 6.35 per kilowatt-hour to Tk 5.34 per kilowatt-hour.

The committee also approved the import of 50,000 tonnes of rice from India-based Nutriagro Overseas at \$351.49 per tonne, and a cargo LNG import at \$10.37 per MMBTU from TotalEnergies Gas & Power, United Kingdom.

The DAE estimates last season's harvest at over 39 lakh tonnes, enough to meet domestic demand. However, it projects that an additional 6.7 lakh tonnes of imports will be needed to offset post-harvest losses.

## Onion prices start to fall

FROM PAGE B1  
Abdul Majed, general secretary of the Shyambazar Onion Traders' Association, said before the import permission, the wholesale price was around Tk 140 per kg. After approval, prices dropped to Tk 110 Tk 115 per kg yesterday.

"It looks like prices will drop further," said Majed, also an importer based in Shyambazar, a major wholesale market.

Wholesale and retail prices in Chattogram have fallen by Tk 20-Tk 25 per kg. In major wholesale hubs such as Khatunganj, Chakta, Chawkbazar, Oxygen, and Kazir Dewri, locally produced onions sold for Tk 100-Tk 110 per kg yesterday, depending on quality, while Indian onions were priced at Tk 116-Tk 120 per kg.

At the retail level, local onions sold for Tk 120-Tk 130 per kg and Indian varieties for Tk 125-Tk 135 per kg.

Omar Faruk, owner of Era Trading in Khatunganj, said, "The port city needs around 30 truckloads of

onions daily, but only 5-7 trucks are entering the market now. It may take another two to three weeks for newly harvested onions to arrive, so prices have not stabilised yet."

He added that only three truckloads of Indian onions entered Chattogram in the past two days.

Ahsan Uddin, a retailer at Kazir Dewri market, said, "Supply is much lower than demand, so prices remain high. Retailers are also buying smaller quantities, in hopes of prices falling at any time."

"Reduced purchasing volumes, along with rising transport and handling costs, have kept prices elevated. Although Indian onions have entered Khatunganj, many retail markets, including mine, have not received any yet due to limited supply," he added.

The DAE estimates last season's harvest at over 39 lakh tonnes, enough to meet domestic demand. However, it projects that an additional 6.7 lakh tonnes of imports will be needed to offset post-harvest losses.

## GOVT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, RANGPUR

ee.eed.rang/2025-26/1197

Date: 09.12.2025

### e-GP (IFT) 48/6821 TMED LTM

e-Tender has been published through National e-GP system portal for the procurement of following works:

Tender ID	Name of Works	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
1141108	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Osmanpur BU Fazil Madrasa, Badarganj, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141110	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Dhantola Bazar Dakhil Madrasa, Gangachara, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141111	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Baruahat Keramotia Kamil Madrasha, Kaunia, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141112	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Haragach Dhumer Per Alim Madrasha, Kaunia, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141113	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Mirzapur Kaderia Fazil Madrasha, Mithapukur, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141798	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Boirati Rahmania BL, Dakhil Madrasha, Mithapukur, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00
1141832	Manufacturing and Supply new furniture at Dr MR Mohila Technical and BM College, Mithapukur, Rangpur.	23.12.2025 15.00	24.12.2025 12.00

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. The Tender who have registered in the National e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is eligible to participate in this tender. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

(Md Mehedi Iqbal)  
Executive Engineer

GD-2698

DHAKA WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 10, 2025  
AGRAHAYAN 25, 1432 BS **B3**  
The Daily Star

## Chinese firm to invest \$10.32m in Bepza EZ

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Wing Tai Garments (Bangladesh) Co Ltd, a Chinese company, will invest \$10.32 million to set up a ready-made garment factory in the Bepza Economic Zone (Bepza EZ) at Mirsharai, Chattogram.

The company will produce a diverse range of apparel, including knitwear garments such as ladies', kids', and men's tops, trousers, and shorts, with an annual production target of 1.56 million pieces.

The investment will create employment opportunities for 3,158 people, according to a press release.

Md Ashraful Kabir, member for investment promotion of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza), and Li Qingqi, general manager of Wing Tai Garments (Bangladesh) Co Ltd, signed the agreement at the Bepza Complex in Dhaka yesterday.

Major General Mohammad Moazzem Hossain, executive chairman of Bepza, attended the signing ceremony. At the event, Hossain emphasised Bepza's unwavering commitment to providing seamless support and a conducive environment for businesses to thrive.



Muhymin Chowdhury, director of impact investments and partnerships at Sajida Foundation, receives aid cheques worth Tk 10 lakh from Md Ahsan-uz Zaman, managing director and CEO of Midland Bank PLC, at the bank's head office in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: MIDLAND BANK

## BB buys \$2.5b

FROM PAGE B1

Foreign exchange reserves began to recover in March this year, and the pace of depreciation of the taka slowed. The central bank then resumed buying dollars.

In May this year, the BB shifted to a floating exchange rate to meet conditions linked to the ongoing \$5.5 billion loan package by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The move came a year after the banking regulator introduced a crawling peg that allowed the exchange rate to move within a band.

Central bank officials said that even with a market-based rate, they would step in if the dollar rose above Tk 123 or fell below Tk 121 to keep the band intact.

## Midland Bank donates Tk 10 lakh for Korail fire victims

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Midland Bank PLC yesterday donated Tk 10 lakh to Sajida Foundation, a charitable organisation, to support relief efforts for victims of the Korail slum fire.

Of the total amount, Tk 5 lakh was provided from the bank's Islami Banking Fund under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, while the remaining Tk 5 lakh was contributed by Midland Bank family members.

Md Ahsan-uz Zaman, managing director and CEO of Midland Bank PLC, handed over the cheques to Muhymin Chowdhury, director of impact investments and partnerships.

Recognising Sajida Foundation's long-standing commitment to supporting disadvantaged communities and its role in various humanitarian initiatives, Midland Bank employees decided to extend additional support for the Korail fire victims.

Among others, Farhin Ahmed Twinkle, coordinator of partnership and fundraising at Sajida Foundation; Md Rashed Akter, head of retail distribution and chief bancassurance officer; Didarul Islam, chief financial officer; and Md Bajlur Rahman Khan, head of CRM and the sustainable finance unit, were also present.

### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD

Kishoreganj Road Division

E-mail: eekis@rhd.gov.bd

Dated: 02.12.2025

### Corregendum-1

e-Tender

