

HSBC facilitates sustainable finance arrangement for Grameenphone

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) recently signed an agreement with Grameenphone to structure the first-ever sustainability-linked loan (SL) in Bangladesh's telecom industry.

HSBC was the sole arranger, according to a press release. Yasir Azman, chief executive officer of Grameenphone, and Md Mahbub ur Rahman, chief executive officer of HSBC Bangladesh, signed the agreement in Dhaka.

Commenting on the financing facility, Azman said, "As we work towards our ESG ambitions by reducing our carbon

footprint by 50 percent by 2030, achieving 100 percent e-waste recycling, driving digital inclusion and more, this partnership further accelerates our journey to keep sustainability at the core of our business."

"We remain dedicated to ensuring that every individual can participate in and benefit from a digitally empowered and sustainable society," he added.

Md Mahbub ur Rahman, chief executive officer of HSBC Bangladesh, remarked, "Supporting our customers is core to our strategy, and supporting their sustainability transition is both critical to them and aligned with our net-zero ambition."



Md Mahbub ur Rahman, chief executive officer of HSBC Bangladesh, and Yasir Azman, chief executive officer of Grameenphone, pose for a photograph after signing an agreement in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: HSBC

Pubali Bank opens 515th branch in Teknaf

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Pubali Bank PLC opened a new branch in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar yesterday.

This is the bank's 515th branch, according to a press release.

Mohammad Ali, managing director and CEO of Pubali Bank PLC, inaugurated the branch as the chief guest.

In his speech, Ali said the expansion of banking services is very important for Bangladesh's economic development, the growth of trade and commerce, and the advancement of people's savings and investment activities.

"By opening a new branch of Pubali

Bank in the Teknaf region, local people will have the opportunity to receive modern and convenient banking services. This branch will give new impetus to savings, loans, remittances and other financial services, and will play an important role in the economic development of the area," he said.

Md Shahnewaz Khan, deputy managing director, and Mohammad Abdur Rahim, general manager and head of the Chattogram Principal Office, attended the event. Md Shahed Ali, deputy general manager and regional manager for Chattogram South, presided over the ceremony.

Monzur Mofiz appointed AMD of Premier Bank

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Md Monzur Mofiz has been appointed additional managing director (AMD) of Premier Bank PLC.

He has also been entrusted with the responsibility of managing director (current charge), effective from December 14 this year, according to a press release.

A veteran banker with nearly 32 years of experience, Mofiz began his professional career at Sonali Bank PLC in 1993.

Before joining Premier Bank, he worked at ONE Bank PLC, Dutch-Bangla Bank PLC, City Bank PLC, AB Bank PLC and Sonali Bank PLC in various capacities.

Key achievements under his leadership include centralising corporate banking operations,

formulating robust fund management policies, streamlining cost control, driving retail and SME deposit growth, expanding mobile financial services (MFS) and agent banking to remote areas, and launching full-fledged Islamic banking services.

He obtained his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and an MBA in finance from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at the University of Dhaka.



Mohammad Ali, managing director and CEO of Pubali Bank PLC, inaugurates the bank's new branch in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar yesterday.

PHOTO: PUBALI BANK

BRAC Bank branch network posts Tk 15,000cr net deposit growth in 11 months

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank's branch network achieved a net deposit growth of Tk 15,000 crore during the first eleven months of 2025, marking one of the strongest deposit mobilisation performances in the bank's history.

The milestone continues the bank's consistent upward trajectory in deposits over recent years, reflecting sustained customer confidence and sustainable growth, while reinforcing its balance sheet strength, according to a press release.

The achievement was celebrated at the "Branch Managers' Business Conclave 2025", held in Dhaka recently.

Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, attended the event as the chief guest.

Commenting on the milestone, Khan said, "Consistent deposit growth is the backbone of a strong balance sheet, and this achievement reflects the deep trust our customers place in us."

"Our journey to become the most

trusted, innovative and inclusive bank in Bangladesh is grounded in good governance, strict compliance and transparency."

"This foundation has driven our success, and it will continue to guide our growth," he added.

He also praised the efforts of the branch network team nationwide, noting that their professional execution, customer-centric approach and unwavering commitment to service excellence were instrumental in achieving the milestone.



Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, poses for a group photograph with bank employees at the "Branch Managers' Business Conclave 2025" in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: BRAC BANK

UCB holds town halls in 16 regions



Employees of United Commercial Bank attend a town hall. Sharif Zahir, chairman, and Mohammad Mamdudur Rashid, managing director and CEO, were present at the inaugural ceremony.

PHOTO: UCB

STAR BUSINESS DESK

United Commercial Bank PLC (UCB) organised town halls simultaneously across 16 regions of the country.

Sharif Zahir, chairman of United Commercial Bank PLC, attended the inaugural ceremony of the programme as the chief guest.

This month, the bank crossed a

milestone of more than Tk 11,000 crore in net deposit growth and added over 650,000 new accounts—the highest in UCB's history and more than two-and-a-half times higher than last year.

From January to December, UCB achieved the highest deposit growth in the country, while also setting notable benchmarks in classified loan recovery and improved profitability across most branches.

Mohammad Mamdudur Rashid, managing director and CEO of UCB, said, "Everything we do is driven by customer satisfaction—together, united, and moving forward on the same path."

Notably, the January town hall was completed in December this year, ensuring that planning for the year was finalised even before it began.

NEIR launching

FROM PAGE B1 prevent the use of unregistered devices and protect local manufacturers from unfair competition. The system is also pitched as a tool to help law enforcement trace crimes involving mobile phones.

Unofficial traders have pushed back hard. With import taxes reaching as high as 59 percent and procedures widely seen as cumbersome, they warned that full enforcement could wipe out their businesses unless taxes are lowered and rules simplified.

However, local manufacturers see things differently. Companies that began investing in Bangladesh from 2017 argue that without NEIR, their factories and jobs are at risk.

They say the grey market controls between 50-60 percent of sales. Estimates presented at a BTRC event suggest the government loses about Tk 2,000 crore a year in unpaid taxes due to illegal handset trading.

Over the NEIR launch, civil rights groups have also raised alarms.

Some analysts argue that IMEI-based registration under the blocking system shifts the cost of regulatory failure onto consumers, potentially locking out low-income users. Others warn that it could widen state surveillance in a country with a fragile data protection record.

The government has dismissed those concerns, saying legal

safeguards, oversight mechanisms and strict penalties for data misuse are already in place.

Public concern, however, has proved harder to calm. Despite repeated assurances that existing unofficial phones will not be disconnected, many users remain uneasy. Those who bought devices from unofficial sellers or received phones from relatives abroad fear they could eventually be left with useless handsets.

NEIR's past troubles have only deepened the scepticism.

More than Tk 29 crore in public funds was spent under the previous Awami League government on failed attempts to make the system work.

On November 25, 2020, BTRC signed a contract with a joint venture of Synesis IT, Radisson and Computer World to supply and operate NEIR, followed by a trial run in July 2021.

That trial showed millions of unauthorised phones in use, alongside technical glitches such as hundreds of feature phones sharing a single IMEI number. Full enforcement, the authorities feared, would trigger widespread backlash.

Although the system was formally launched on November 1, 2021, without the blocking feature, it delivered little. The grey market kept expanding to the frustration of local manufacturers.

The latest revival began early this year, when BTRC moved to award a Tk 5.67 crore contract to Synesis IT Ltd for maintenance and database licensing. The plan was later scrapped after protests over the lack of an open tender, including objections from the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS).

With the tender stalled, the Mobile Phone Industry Owners Association stepped in, offering to finance the revival. Meanwhile, amid protest, BTRC also tried to cool tempers by simplifying import and vendor enlistment rules.

Fewer documents will be required for vendor certificates, approvals should come faster, and unsold handsets already in the market may be regularised. The government has also pledged to cut import taxes.

Yet politics looms large. With the national election set for February 12 next year and handset blocking delayed until March 26, enforcement will fall to the next government.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has already said that if elected to office, it would review NEIR in consultation with stakeholders.

For now, the question remains unresolved. Will the next administration finally switch on NEIR's core function, or will the system once again fall short of its promise?

| MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES DIRECTOR OF WORKS & CHIEF ENGINEER (ARMY) | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| INVITATION FOR TENDER | | | | |
| 1. | Ministry/Division | Ministry of Defence | | |
| 2. | Agency | Military Engineer Services | | |
| 3. | Name of Procuring Entity | DW & CE (Army) Dhaka Cantt | | |
| 4. | Tender Name | Different E/M Works of Bangladesh Army for the Financial Year 2025-2026 (As per ser no.15). | | |
| 5. | Invitation for Tender No | 14 of 2025-2026/E-4 Dated 07 December 2025 | | |
| 6. | Procurement Method | Open Tendering Method (OTM) | | |
| 7. | Source of Funds | GOB | | |
| 8. | Tender Publication Date | 16 December 2025 | | |
| 9. | Tender Last Selling Date | 06 January 2026 upto 1430 hours. | | |
| 10. | Tender Submission Date & Time | 07 January 2026, 1200 hrs. | | |
| 11. | Tender Opening Date & Time | 07 January 2026, 1230 hrs. | | |
| 12. | Name & Address of the office(s) | | | |
| | Selling of Tender Documents | a. Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka Cantt. b. DW & CE (Army), Dhaka Cantt. | | |
| | Receiving Tender Document | Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka | | |
| | Opening Tender Document | Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka | | |
| 13. | Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting | 04 January 2026, 1000-1100 hours. | | |
| 14. | Eligibility of Tenderer | For Serial No. 15 (a & b) MES enlisted Contractors Class 'C' or 'D' & 15 (c) MES enlisted Contractors Class 'D' in other Govt./Semi-Govt./autonomous organizations in similar capacity having necessary Security Clearance from DGFI. | | |
| 15. | Description of Works | Location | Price of Tender Document (Non refundable) | Amount of Tender Security (Taka) (In the shape of Bank Draft/Pay Order in favor of DW & CE (Army) (Taka) |
| | a. Repair/Replacement/Improvement of Bldg No. 363 & 384 (SMBK) for 37 ST Bn including ancillary works through abnormal repair works at Shaheed Salahuddin Cantt. | Ghatail Cantt | 2 000.00 | 1,12,000.00 |
| | b. Repair/Replacement/Re-fixing/Extension/Improvement of 1x 350x150 mm dia Deep Tube-well including ancillary works for Pump house No-06 through abnormal repair works under AGE (Army) Qadirabad at Qadirabad Cantt. | Qadirabad Cantt | 2 000.00 | 1,18,000.00 |
| | c. Repair/Replacement of fire fighting system with fittings/fixtures for Bldg No-187 (Academic Complex), 194 (100 BOQ), 193 Officers Qtr (Totini) and 192 (1200 Cadet Dormitory) through abnormal repair works at BMA Bhatary, Chattogram. | BMA Bhatary, Chattogram. | 1 000.00 | 64,000.00 |
| 16. | Contact Details | Phone : 9832680 Extn 2680, Fax : (02) 9833284 Web Site : www.army.mil.bd. | | |
| 17. | Special Instructions | a. Tenderer shall submit copy of letter of valid Enlistment & Security Clearance with application when purchasing Tender. b. Detailed requirements are mentioned in Tender Data Sheet of Tender documents. c. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders. | | |

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/৮৪৬

GD-2745

SO-II E/M
DW & CE (Army)