



Farm fish accounts for more than half the fish produced annually in Bangladesh. In this photo, fishermen are seen catching carp fries at a farm in Subhasini, Satkhira.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# Fisheries, livestock get Tk 100cr subsidy

## STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The interim government has approved a Tk 100 crore subsidy package for the fisheries and livestock sectors and decided to extend a 20 percent rebate on electricity bills to farmers and hatcheries, aiming to cut production costs and support agro-based industries.

The policy decision brings marginal fish farms, hatcheries, and cattle and poultry farms under the electricity rebate framework, according to a press release issued yesterday.

The rebate will apply to electricity consumption by eligible agricultural producers

and related processing units.

At present, a 20 percent electricity rebate is provided to 16 sectors under the government's electricity rebate policy to promote agricultural production, exports, and industrial growth, the release adds.

Of these, the finance wing of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has earmarked Tk 100 crore as subsidy support for four priority subsectors: livestock and poultry feed manufacturing, fish feed production, the poultry industry, and the dairy processing industry.

Dairy processing activities eligible for

support include milk pasteurisation, powdered milk, ice cream, condensed milk, desserts, cheese, ghee, butter, chocolate, and yoghurt, among others, it mentioned.

The government anticipates that the initiative will lead to reduced input costs, encourage new investment, and improve competitiveness across the value chain.

As per the press release, the measures are also expected to contribute to greater self-sufficiency in the production of safe and quality animal protein, while supporting employment and export potential in agro-processing industries.

## Telenor shrinks Asian footprint Five organisations

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This marks the first time senior Telenor officials have publicly floated the possibility, however cautiously, that Grameenphone could be part of a future deal if circumstances align.

As recently as a year and a half ago, Telenor took a much firmer stance. In an interview with The Daily Star on April 3, 2024, Sigve Brekke, former president and CEO of Telenor Group, stressed the company's long-term commitment to Bangladesh.

"...we're very committed (towards Bangladesh)," Brekke said at the time.

His statement came as Telenor was restructuring its Asian operations in Thailand and Malaysia through local mergers, after which it emerged as a minority shareholder. At the time, the strategy appeared to be to remain in

sharply. In Malaysia, Telenor holds a 33.1 percent stake in CelcomDigi Berhad, the country's largest mobile operator, after a merger completed in late 2022. It is a minority shareholder with limited operational control.

In Bangladesh, Telenor has a much stronger presence. Through Grameenphone, the telecom market leader, it owns a 55.8 percent majority stake. Grameenphone serves 45.46 percent of the country's total subscribers, generates nearly half of industry revenue, and accounts for 88 percent of sector profits. It is also the most valuable company on the country's stock market.

"Telenor has been a growth partner in Bangladesh for 28 years. We remain committed to bringing global expertise to support the country's

trust, ensures technical feasibility, and produces balanced outcomes that reward competition and innovation rather than narrow interests."

The Daily Star spoke with half a dozen senior executives from various telecom companies to understand industry sentiment, which was divided.

Several executives said Bangladesh remains Telenor's "golden goose" in Asia, consistently generating strong returns over the years.

"Grameenphone is not only profitable, Telenor also holds a majority stake, giving it control and strategic comfort. That makes Bangladesh fundamentally different from its other Asian markets," said one senior executive.

Others, however, see a changing scenario. "Telenor's overall strategy has shifted. We are seeing

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Denmark and Sweden, along with the delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, recognise excellence across five categories — green manufacturing, energy efficiency, climate-smart agriculture, climate education and policy advocacy, and climate adaptation and resilience. The Daily Star was the media partner of this year's event.

Siam City Cement (Bangladesh) Limited won the green manufacturing award for its low-clinker cement product, INSEE ECO Plus+.

The product has been developed especially for saline-prone coastal regions. By reducing clinker content to 45-50 percent and using supplementary materials such as fly ash and slag, the product cuts carbon emissions by 46 percent compared to ordinary Portland cement.

Endorsed by Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET), the solution offers improved durability and chloride resistance and aligns with Bangladesh's climate action roadmap, Nationally Determined Contribution 3.0 and the Paris Agreement, while promoting circular economy practices in construction.

Cassetex Ltd received the energy efficiency award for establishing Bangladesh's first distributed lithium-ion battery swapping network, aimed at replacing hazardous lead-acid batteries.

The start-up's traceable, solar-powered, pay-as-you-go model addresses widespread lead pollution risks and aligns with the Renewable Energy Policy 2025. The initiative is projected to reduce carbon emissions by 1.35 million tonnes annually. Users have reported lower energy costs and higher income levels.

Youth Action for Sustainable Future (YASF) was recognised in the climate-smart agriculture category for introducing a climate-resilient agroecology

model in Mehendiganj of Barishal. Using bamboo and plastic drum-based floating structures, the system secures fish nets during floods and enables vegetable cultivation.

Piloted in three community ponds, the model increased fish survival rates to 78 percent and reduced losses by up to 22 percent, offering a low-cost alternative to conventional embankments.

Somoy Nature won the climate education and policy advocacy award for transforming abandoned land into a biodiverse forest ecosystem through regenerative agriculture.

By integrating fruit trees, medicinal plants and timber with organic fertilisers and multi-layered planting, the initiative has improved soil health and achieved a high plant survival rate, positioning it as a scalable model for climate resilience and food security.

Green Delta Insurance PLC was honoured in the climate adaptation and resilience category for protecting more than 1.6 million vulnerable households through parametric insurance solutions.

Since launching the country's first weather-index crop insurance in 2015, the insurer has expanded coverage to floods, cyclones and heatwaves across 50 districts, disbursing over Tk 232 million through automated mobile payouts.

The awardees were selected through a two-stage process, with the Center for Participatory Research and Development shortlisting nominations and an independent jury assessing impact, scalability, innovation and long-term sustainability.

EBL Managing Director Ali Reza Iftikhar said the initiatives demonstrated the strength of locally driven solutions in addressing climate risks through cross-sector collaboration.

The ceremony was also addressed by ambassadors from Germany, Denmark, France, Sweden and the European Union.

**BANGLADESH OPERATIONS**

Telenor holds a **55.8%** stake in Grameenphone

GP accounts for more than **45%** of local mobile subscribers

Telenor says Bangladesh business could also be a future deal

Asia while reducing direct operational exposure.

### TELENOR'S JOURNEY IN ASIA

Telenor's expansion in Asia began with the launch of Grameenphone in 1997. Its success in Bangladesh became the foundation of the company's regional growth, paving the way for entries into Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, Myanmar, and India.

However, Telenor's journey in Asia has also involved several exits. Nearly eight years after entering India, it withdrew in 2017. In Myanmar, it entered in 2014 but left in 2022 following the military coup and new junta-imposed regulations.

After these departures, Telenor now remains in only two Asian markets: Bangladesh and Malaysia, where its role differs

connectivity and digital development goals," said Revhaug.

When asked about Bangladesh's long-term growth potential and regulatory environment, as Telenor refocuses on the Nordic region following its exits from Pakistan and Thailand, Revhaug said the country must prioritise a sustainable investment climate. "Investors need long-term predictability and forward-looking regulations to boost market growth and confidence," he added.

Revhaug further said, "This depends on a strong, objective regulatory framework with fair dispute resolution mechanisms based on international best practices, and streamlined consultations that rely on evidence-based input from industry stakeholders. Such rigour builds

a gradual withdrawal of capital from non-core markets, except the Nordic region," said another top executive. "Growth in Bangladesh's telecom market has slowed, making it less attractive for foreign investors."

The telecom market should ideally see at least 5 percent annual growth, but Grameenphone is currently facing stagnation and, in some cases, a decline. Its revenue has fallen by around 1 percent in 2024 and first three quarters of 2025, though its profit in 2024 rose, largely due to a sharp drop in finance expenses.

"Within the next two to three years, there could be a drastic shift. If Telenor makes a major decision regarding Bangladesh, it will not come as a surprise," the executive added.

## Glittering gold draws both buyers and sellers

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— are being merged into a new state-run institution, Sammilito Islami Bank PLC. This led to discontent growing among the depositors of these banks, as many account holders were unable to access their funds for months on end.

On January 18, the Bangladesh Bank decided not to pay profit on deposits for 2024 and 2025, a move it partially reversed a day later following protests.

At the same time, the central bank has been moving to shut down nine troubled non-bank

financial institutions, where depositors have also endured liquidity shortages.

The capital market, another traditional investment option, has remained sluggish for some time now.

As these formal financial institutions fell out of favour, investors naturally turned to gold.

### OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

The rush into gold has another side — its near-instant liquidity, which made it a fallback for those in financial distress.

Shahidul Islam, a stock

market investor, said his earnings from the capital market have declined recently. He was in dire need of money and recently opted to sell a gold item for Tk 60,000 at a jewellery shop in Mirpur after running out of alternatives. "Since the price per bhoori crossed Tk 2 lakh, even a small gold item fetches a good price," said Abdul Khalek, manager of New Haven Jewelers at New Market in Dhaka.

But no matter the rise, for gold, the selling price is always lower than the buying price, thanks to an

asymmetric value added tax (VAT) deduction system.


"Buyers must pay the prevailing market price along with a 5 percent VAT when purchasing gold, while selling gold for cash results in a deduction of up to 17 percent," explained Dewan Aminul Islam Shahin, chairman of Bajus' Standing Committee on Pricing and Price Monitoring.

However, he said exchanging old gold for new products is more favourable, with a lower deduction of around 10 percent based on current market rates.

He stated that gold bars and coins are more profitable for investment purposes compared to ornaments, as their value is calculated purely on gold content.

Jewellery, while less efficient as an investment, offers additional utility because it can be worn and later sold or passed down to future generations, he said.

"Overall, gold investment should be approached with a long-term perspective, as its stability and enduring value continue to make it a reliable store of wealth," said Shahin.

**ARMY HEADQUARTERS  
E IN C'S BRANCH  
WORKS DIRECTORATE  
DHAKA CANTONMENT**

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR PREPARATION OF DETAIL ARCHITECTURAL, STRUCTURAL AND MEP DRAWING, DESIGN ETC FOR INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR ARMY INSTITUTE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY & REHABILITATION AT SAVAR

EOI REF. 600/15/37/2025-2026/E-6 Dated: 21 January 2026

**MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES**

1.	Ministry/Division:	Ministry of Defence		
2.	Agency:	Military Engineer Services		
3.	Procuring Entity Name:	E in C		
4.	Procuring Entity Code:	-		
5.	Procuring Entity District:	Dhaka		
6.	Expression of Interest for Selection of:	Consulting Firm		
7.	EOI Ref No	600/15/37/2025-2026/E-6		
8.	Date	<u>21</u> January 2026		
9.	Procurement Method:	Selection of Consultant under Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS) Method.		
10.	Budget and Source of Funds:	GOB and Development Budget.		
11.	Development Partners:	None		
12.	Project/Programme Code	-		
13.	Project/Programme Name	Infrastructure Development for Army Institute of Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation at Savar		
14.	EOI Closing Date and Time:	Date	Time	
		<u>11</u> February 2026	12:00 Hours	
	Brief Description of Assignment:	Appointment of Consultant for Preparation of detail Architectural, Structural and MEP drawing/design for Infrastructure Development for army Institute of Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation at Savar for following services  a. Preparation of Architectural, Structural and MEP Drawing/Design including HVAC systems and external services etc.  b. Preparation of detail 3D View/Animation, Master plan of the area including Digital Survey, Site layout plan, working drawing, Design Modeling, Priced Bill of quantities detail specification against the items of work including all other related services etc of following works: i. Construction of Dormitory (7 Storey with 11 storied foundation) Ground floor car parking), Land Development/Land Scarping, Construction of Sub Station Building (3 Storey with 3 Storied foundation), Construction of Cook House building (Single storied foundation), Construction of Hospital Complex building (6 Storey with 11 storied foundation), Construction of ADL Flat (Activities of Daily Living) Building (Single storied foundation), Construction of Boundary wall with 1 x Gate, Surface Drain, RCC Road, Water Reservoir, Lines and Wires : HT line/HT Cable, LT Cable etc, Electrical Equipment : Diesel Generator, Transformer, PFI, VCB, LT Panel, BBT, Lightning Conductor, Lift, AC, CCTV, Internet, PA Equipment etc, Solar System, Firefighting System, Tele Communication, Sanitation and Water supply, Gas Line, Motor Vehicle, Medical Machinery, Computer and accessories, Furniture Lay out plan  ii. Any Structure not listed above but required to Complete the Project. iii. As built drawing of all Projects as per DPP/RDPP. iv. Other related and services if required by the Client. v. Top supervision will be required as per mentioned in the TOR.		
16.	Experience, Resources and Delivery Capacity Required:	a. Brochures. b. Background of the consulting firm. c. Experience of performing similar type of job. d. Financial capability of the consulting firm. e. Bio data of skilled professionals who will perform the job. f. General and relevant experience of the consulting firm. g. Experience in similar operating condition.		
17.	Other Details :	<b>Consultant should fulfill the following criteria :</b>  a. Consultant shall have completed Architectural, Structural and MEP design/drawing, 3-D view/perspective view (Max, Sketch up, Revit etc) and other services mentioned in serial or in similar nature.  b. Consultant shall have completed MEP design/drawing using modern design Technology etc mentioned in serial 15 (i-xii) or in similar nature.  c. Consultant shall have at least 01 x Team leader/Medical Equipment Consultant with 05 Yrs experience, 02 x Bio Medical Engineer with 05 Yrs experience, 01 x Environment Engineer with 05 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc. Sr Arch with 05 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Junior Arch with 04 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Civil Engineer (Foundation) with 04 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Engineer (Structural) with 03 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Engineer (Urban Planner) with 04 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Engineer (Plumbing & Sanitation) with 04 Yrs experience, 01 x B Sc Engineer (Electrical) with 03 Yrs experience, 01 x Mechanical Engineer/AC Mechanic/Fire Engineer B Sc Engineer/Diploma with 03-05 Yrs experience, 03 x Surveyor (Diploma) with 05 Yrs experience, 01 x Site Engineer with 05 Yrs experience, 02 x CAD (Diploma) Operator (Diploma) (Architecture) with 05 Yrs experience, 02 x CAD Operator (Electrical) with 05 Yrs experience and 02 x CAD Operator/Drafts (Diploma) (Civil) with 05 Yrs experience in Surveying when required in their related works/field and full time employee for services serial 15 (i-v).  d. Additional experiences and qualification other than mentioned in Para 15 (i-xxii) will get preference for the short listing of consultant.  e. Consultant without having eligible criteria should not apply for EOI.		
18.	Association with foreign firms is	Not Applicable		
	Ref No.	Phasing of Services	Location	Indicative Start Date
	EOI No. 600/15/37/2025-2026/E-6 dated <u>21</u> January 2026	No Phase	Dhaka Cantonment	02 April 2026
				a) 01 June 2026 (All Drawing & Documents) b) June 2028 or Completion whole of the project including Top supervision.
19.	Name of Official Inviting Expressions of Interest	Director of Works		
20.	Designation of Official Inviting Expressions of Interest	Director of Works		
21.	Address of Official Inviting Expressions of Interest	Army Headquarters, E in C's Branch, Works Directorate, Dhaka Cantonment Web address : <a href="http://www.army.mil.bd">www.army.mil.bd</a>		
22.	Contact details of Official Inviting Expressions of Interest	Army Headquarters, E in C's Branch, Works Directorate, Dhaka Cantonment Tel No. : 9832870 Fax No : 9832906		
23.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Expressions of Interest (EOI).			

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