

## iFarmer raises \$1.5m in foreign funding

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh based agri-tech startup iFarmer has secured \$1.5 million in foreign funding as it seeks to strengthen the country's agricultural value chain.

The funding comes from Symbiotics, a Switzerland-based market access platform for impact investing, according to a statement.

The investment will support iFarmer's working capital requirements, enabling it to expand agricultural input distribution and strengthen market linkages for farmers across Bangladesh.

iFarmer said the investment marks another important milestone as international investors continue to back technology-driven agricultural platforms that improve efficiency, transparency and access to financing in emerging markets.

Bangladesh's agriculture sector employs nearly 40 percent of the workforce and contributes significantly to the national economy, supporting around 25 million farmers across 17 million farms and accounting for about 12 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

However, farmers continue to face challenges related to financing, input quality and market access.

# Automotive trade show begins on April 23

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The 19th Dhaka Auto Series of Exhibitions 2026, the country's largest running automotive trade event, will be held from April 23 to 25 at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB) in Purbachal, Dhaka.

The event will bring together multiple segments of the automotive industry under one roof, featuring the 19th Dhaka Motor Show 2026, 10th Dhaka Bike Show 2026, 3rd Electric Vehicle (EV) Expo 2026, 9th Dhaka Auto Parts Show 2026, and 8th Dhaka Commercial Automotive Show 2026.

Shaikh Rabiul Alam, minister for road transport and bridges, railways, and shipping, is expected to inaugurate the three-day fair as the chief guest, according to a press release.

Meherun N Islam, president and group managing director of CEMS Global USA and Asia Pacific, disclosed the details at a press conference held at Pan Pacific Sonargaon in the capital recently.



PHOTO: CEMS-GLOBAL USA

Meherun N Islam, president and group managing director of CEMS-Global USA and Asia Pacific, attends a press conference to share details of the 19th Dhaka Auto Series of Exhibitions 2026, at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka recently.

"The Dhaka Auto Series is not just an exhibition; it is the automotive marketplace of Bangladesh," she said.

"With growing demand and ongoing infrastructure development, this year's edition is expected to be bigger, bolder, and more impactful."

More than 70 companies from over 10 countries, including Japan, India, China, Malaysia, Germany, and the United Kingdom, will showcase their products and innovations through around 200 booths.

Leading automotive brands such as Mitsubishi, Toyota, Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai, MG, Proton, Changan, GAC Motor, and Dongfeng are set to display new models at the event.

In the two-wheeler segment, brands such as Zecho Bangladesh, CFMOTO Bangladesh, Longjia, and Vmoto will participate, while commercial vehicle makers such as Foton and Forland will also be featured.

A wide range of auto parts, accessories, and electric vehicles will be showcased at the shows.

According to the organisers, the 2026 edition will feature new vehicle launches, a stronger focus on electric vehicles and sustainable mobility, and opportunities for business-to-business networking, dealership expansion, and direct engagement with consumers.

The expo will remain open from 10am to 7pm daily.

## Govt doesn't want

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"There are several reasons for this, including declining production, rising outstanding loans in the industrial sector, a high rate of non-performing loans, reduced credit flow to the private sector despite no liquidity shortage, and increased government borrowing from the banking sector," he said.

To address the situation, he stressed the need for structural reforms in the banking sector to ensure stability and good governance, as well as strengthening coordination between the banking and private sectors.

Ahmed said that the public sector credit growth has surged to an unprecedented 26.15 percent. Meanwhile, government borrowing from the banking system reached Tk 73,035 crore during the July-January

period, a 673 percent increase compared to the same period last year, indicating that banks are increasingly prioritising risk-free lending.

"This trend has created a severe 'credit crowding out' effect, leaving the private sector deprived of adequate access to credit."

He noted that many businessmen and SMEs are suffering because of a small number of wilful defaulters.

Nawshad Mustafa, director of the SME and Special Programmes Department of Bangladesh Bank, said a key challenge in the financial sector is the shortage of authentic and accurate data, which hampers effective decision-making.

He stressed the need for stronger AI-based connectivity among financial institutions and government agencies to improve data flow and

policy formulation.

Abdul Hai Sarker, chairman of Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB), said there is no alternative to simplifying SME financing, noting that private banks are now increasingly stepping in to fund the sector.

He also pointed to a lack of coordination between policymakers and stakeholders, which he said needs to be addressed.

## BB resumes

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However, between FY21 and FY25, Bangladesh Bank sold more than \$25 billion from its foreign exchange reserves to meet import payments for fuel, fertiliser, and food.

Due to BB's recent dollar purchases, gross foreign exchange reserves rose to \$34.87 billion yesterday, up from \$34.60 billion two days earlier.

## Middle East

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of the existing 10 percent income tax deduction on cash incentives to boost garment exports.

They also called for normalising trade relations with India and removing barriers to yarn imports and product exports through land ports.

To further speed up garment exports, they proposed amending relevant sections of the Import Policy 2024-2027 and automating the process for determining CIP (Commercially Important Person) status for industry entrepreneurs.

The minister acknowledged the importance of the sector as the country's leading foreign currency earner in the current global context.

He assured that the government would provide necessary policy support to address challenges and maintain Bangladesh's competitiveness in the global market, the statement added.

## Govt drafts 5-year strategic plan

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Strategic free trade agreements at bilateral, multilateral, and minilateral levels are planned with key economic blocs across East and Far East Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

On the energy front, the draft proposes ensuring supply of at least 20 percent of electricity from renewable sources – solar, wind, hydropower, and waste-to-energy – by 2030.

The power generation capacity is set at 35,000 megawatts, with transmission lines to be expanded to 25,000 circuit kilometres.

## INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS

The outlined framework aims to increase foreign direct investment (FDI) from 0.45 percent to 2.5 percent of GDP within the next five years.

It proposes dedicated liaison officers and a formal complaint resolution system to build investor confidence, alongside a commitment to avoid sudden policy changes in

tariffs, taxes, and export incentives.

To improve the business environment, it has set a target to complete digitalisation of approval processes to eliminate red tape and reduce physical contact in business transactions.

Company registrations are to be completed within 48 hours, and work permits within seven days.

A Bangladesh International Commercial Court will be established for fast-tracking commercial dispute resolution, and a Deposit Protection Ordinance is planned to ensure repayment from distressed banks as quickly as possible.

Besides, the tax-to-GDP ratio is targeted at 15 percent by 2035, to be achieved through expanded economic activity rather than a higher tax burden.

## BLUE, CREATIVE ECONOMIES

The blue economy – covering oil and gas exploration, renewable

energy, fish harvesting, and shipbuilding – will be developed as a national priority within Bangladesh's maritime area.

The proposed framework has also set a target for the government to raise the contribution of the creative economy – spanning film, music, theatre, gaming, VFX, and content creation – to 1.5 percent of GDP, and create 5 lakh new jobs by 2035.

## TOURISM AND SMES

A national tourism policy update has been proposed, alongside a programme to help each village produce and market its own traditional product through design support, order-based loans, and e-commerce connectivity.

The draft also recommends that government channels low-interest loans based on each district's heritage and renowned products, support for cottage industries, links to global e-commerce platforms.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
District Primary Education Office  
Patuakhali  
<https://dpe.patuakhali.gov.bd>  
Memo No. 682 Date: 15-04-2026

**e-Tender Notice No. 1/2025-26**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works:

Sl. No.	Name of scheme	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Tender/proposal document last selling/downloading date & time	Tender/proposal closing date & time	Remarks
1	Goods, Procurement of school furniture of 169 set high-low benches, 56 chairs, 70 tables and 9 rakes for selected 25 GPS of different upazila of Patuakhali district under Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP 4) of Kolapara, Golachipa, Dashmina, Patuakhali Sadar, Bauphal Mirzagonj, Dumki and in Patuakhali District. FY-2025-20256	1258141	GD 808.59	29-May-2026 15:00	30-May-2026 14:00	OTM

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. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for Tender/Proposal Document to be deposited Online through any registered banks branches. 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)).

GID-835

Md. Masud Karim  
District Primary Education Officer  
Patuakhali

**Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Education Engineering Department  
Patuakhali  
E-mail: [ee\\_pat@eedmoe.gov.bd](mailto:ee_pat@eedmoe.gov.bd)  
E-Tender Notice No: e-GP/EED/Patua/7016/TMED/2025-26/62 Date: 13/04/2026

E-Tender is invited in the e-GP Web Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of following Works. Details are given below:

SL No	Tender ID	Type Method	Description of Works.	Last Selling (Date & Time)	Last Submission (Date & Time)	Tender Closing & Opening (Date & Time)
01	1248656	LTM	Construction of Pile Work & Single Storied Academic Building with 04- Storied Foundation in/c Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works (FY:2024-25) at Karkhana Darul Islam Alim Madrasah, Bauphal Upazila, Patuakhali District (RMS NO-2012113).	29-Apr-2026 17:00	30-Apr-2026 12:30	30-Apr-2026 13:00
02	1248658	LTM	Construction of Pile Work & Single Storied Academic Building with 04- Storied Foundation in/c Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works (FY:2024-25) at Sajir Hawla Akbaria Dakhil Madrasah, Rangabali Upazila, Patuakhali District (RMS NO-2012115).	29-Apr-2026 17:00	30-Apr-2026 12:30	30-Apr-2026 13:00
03	1201538	LTM	Construction of Pile Work & Single Storied Academic Building with 04- Storied Foundation in/c Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works at Dhankhali Technical & B.M College, Kalapara Upazila, Patuakhali District.	29-Apr-2026 17:00	30-Apr-2026 12:30	30-Apr-2026 13:00

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. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Web Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is required. The fees for down loading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP Web Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank any branch up to above mentioned Date & Time. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP Web portal & e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

(Md. Manirul Kabir)  
Executive Engineer (C. C.)  
Education Engineering Department  
Patuakhali.

GID-829

**Eastern Bank PLC.**  
REGISTERED ADDRESS: 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, GULSHAN, DHAKA-1212, BANGLADESH

**INFORMATION SENSITIVE TO SHARE PRICE**  
**Recommendation for Cash Dividend & Stock Dividend for the year 2025**

This is to notify for information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL), in the 796<sup>th</sup> Board meeting held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, from 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM, approved the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2025 and took the following decisions:

**1. Dividend Details:**

<b>Recommended Dividend (Total 28.00%)</b>	<b>Cash Dividend @ 25.00% (Twenty Five Percent)</b>
	<b>Stock Dividend @ 3.00% (Three Percent)</b>

**2. Key Financial Indicators:**

Particulars	Solo		Consolidated	
	2025	2024 (Restated)	2025	2024 (Restated)
Net Asset Value (NAV) in Crore BDT	5,085.00	4,333.91	5,008.33	4,323.35
Net Asset Value Per Share in BDT	31.86	27.16	31.38	27.09
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in BDT	5.65	4.70	5.23	4.14
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT	20.26	15.58	20.12	15.09

**Rationale for Stock Dividend Recommendation:**  
[Stock dividend is recommended in compliance with BSEC Notification (Ref: BSEC/CMRRCD/2009-193/46/Admin/138, Dated: October 03, 2022)].

a. Stock dividend has been recommended to strengthen the capital base of the Bank (EBL) in order to support projected business growth and to improve certain regulatory ratios.  
b. Stock Dividend has been declared out of the current year's profit of the bank; and  
c. Stock Dividend has not been declared from capital reserve or revaluation reserve or any unrealized gain or out of profit earned prior to incorporation of EBL or through reducing paid-up capital or through doing anything so that the post dividend retained earnings become negative or a debit balance.

**3. The Board also decided to hold the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Bank as per following schedule:**

<b>Day &amp; Date</b>	<b>Thursday, June 11, 2026.</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>12:00 Noon (Bangladesh Standard Time).</b>
<b>Record Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, May 06, 2026.</b>
<b>Venue &amp; Mode</b>	<b>Virtual Meeting through online/ Digital Platform (Link to be communicated in due course)</b>

**4. Dividend Entitlement:** The Shareholders whose names would appear in the Register of Members of the Bank (EBL) and/or in the Depository Register on the 'Record Date' (May 06, 2026) will be eligible to join the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) and to receive the Dividends.

By order of the Board of Directors

Dated: April 15, 2026  
Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Sd/-  
Md. Abdullah Al Mamun FCS  
Company Secretary

**Note:**

- All Honorable Shareholders of EBL are requested to update their respective BO accounts [mailing address, email address, bank account details, Taxpayer's Identification Number (e-TIN), contact number, etc.] through their respective Depository Participants (DPs) by May 05, 2026 (before the Record Date).
- Tax will be deducted as per the Income Tax Act, 2023.
- The concerned Depository Participants (DPs) are requested to provide us with detailed information (both soft and hard copies) of their margin loan holders (if any) who hold shares of the Bank as of the Record Date (May 06, 2026), to the Share Department or via email at [sharedepartment@ebl-bd.com](mailto:sharedepartment@ebl-bd.com) by June 03, 2026.
- The Annual Report of the Bank (EBL) for the year 2025 will be available on the Bank's website ([www.ebl.com.bd](http://www.ebl.com.bd)) within the specified timeframe. Additionally, it will be sent to shareholders via the email addresses available to us as of the Record Date (May 06, 2026).