

# Bangladesh-Japan EPA sets benchmark for future trade deals: ICCB

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Bangladesh and Japan is set to serve as a precedent for future agreements with major economies such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), and the United Kingdom, as Bangladesh seeks to expand its global trade network.

As Bangladesh's first comprehensive economic partnership with a developed economy, the EPA is viewed as a strategic step in preparing for its post-Least Developed Country (LDC) era, according to the latest news bulletin of the International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB), released on Monday.

Under the agreement, Japan has granted duty-free access to 7,379 Bangladeshi products, covering nearly 97 percent of the country's export basket, including readymade garments.

This is expected to help Bangladesh mitigate potential tariff shocks as it graduates from LDC status.

The EPA goes beyond tariff benefits,

incorporating provisions on services, investment, customs facilitation, intellectual property, and digital trade.

Japan will open 120 service sub-sectors to Bangladeshi professionals, while Bangladesh will allow access to 97 sub-sectors, creating new opportunities in areas such as IT, engineering, and caregiving.

The ICCB bulletin noted that the agreement could play a key role in diversifying Bangladesh's export base, which has long been dominated by garments.

Sectors such as electronics, automotive components, and processed goods are likely to benefit from increased Japanese investment and integration into regional supply chains.



# Pubali Bank opens 1,000th ATM/CRM booth at DU

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Pubali Bank PLC yesterday launched its 1,000th (ATM/CRM) booth at the Registrar Building of the University of Dhaka.

The newly installed booth will enable customers to avail a wide range of automated banking services, including cash withdrawal and deposit, ensuring a modern, convenient, and time-efficient banking experience. Prof ABM Obaidul Islam, vice-chancellor of the university, inaugurated the booth as the chief guest, according to a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Islam said, "The expansion of digital banking services is an essential requirement of the present time. This initiative by Pubali Bank PLC will facilitate students, teachers, and other stakeholders of the university community with easy, fast, and secure financial services and play an important role in promoting digital transactions."

Mohammad Ali, managing director and CEO of the bank, also attended the event and reaffirmed the bank's commitment

to delivering customer-centric and technology-driven banking services.

"The establishment of our 1,000th ATM/CRM booth at the University of Dhaka marks a significant milestone in our ongoing digital transformation journey," he said. "Pubali Bank PLC will continue to expand its technology-based services, promote financial inclusion, and actively contribute to building a cashless economy," he added.

Prof Sayema Haque Bidisha, provice chancellor (administration) of the University of Dhaka, attended the programme as a special guest, while Prof M Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, treasurer of the university, presided over the event.

Among others, Fatema Bintu Mustafa, estate manager of the university; Ashim Kumar Roy, general manager and head of the card operation division at the bank; Abu Laich Md Samsujaman, general manager and regional head for Dhaka Central; and Masuma Khatun, deputy general manager of Shabbag Avenue Branch, were also present.



Prof ABM Obaidul Islam, vice-chancellor of the University of Dhaka, inaugurates Pubali Bank's 1,000th booth at the university's Registrar Building yesterday. Mohammad Ali, managing director and CEO of Pubali Bank PLC, was present. PHOTO: PUBALI BANK

# Mutual Trust Bank hosts workshop on foreign direct investment



Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, a former minister for home and commerce, poses for a group photograph with participants of a workshop on foreign direct investment organised by Mutual Trust Bank PLC in Dhaka recently.

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Mutual Trust Bank PLC, in association with its MNC Banking Department, recently organised a workshop on "Foreign Direct Investment in Bangladesh".

The event brought together policymakers, regulators, foreign investors, and business leaders, to discuss strategies for strengthening Bangladesh's investment climate and attracting sustainable foreign direct investment (FDI).

Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, president of the Bangladesh-China Cultural, Economic & Mass Communication Centre and former minister for home and commerce, inaugurated the programme as the chief guest, according to a press release.

In his address, Chowdhury emphasised the importance of policy consistency, infrastructure development, and enhanced international cooperation to unlock Bangladesh's full FDI potential.

# Bangladesh Finance, 7 Ton Express partner to boost delivery efficiency

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Bangladesh Finance PLC has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with 7 Ton Express Limited, a Bangladesh-based logistics and courier company, appointing it as its official delivery partner.

Md Kyser Hamid, managing director and CEO of Bangladesh Finance PLC, and Mohammad Sazzadul Islam, founder and CEO of 7 Ton Express Freight Limited, signed the MoU at a ceremony held in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the agreement, 7 Ton Express Limited will provide comprehensive delivery and logistics support to Bangladesh Finance, ensuring the efficient, timely, and secure distribution of documents, packages, and other operational materials across the country.

The partnership reflects Bangladesh Finance's continued commitment to operational excellence and improved service delivery, the release added.

Through this initiative, Bangladesh Finance aims to streamline internal processes, reduce turnaround time, and further strengthen the customer experience.

The move also aligns with Bangladesh Finance's ongoing efforts to adopt efficient, technology-driven solutions and collaborate with reliable partners to deliver seamless financial services.



Mohammad Sazzadul Islam, founder and CEO of 7 Ton Express Freight Limited, and Md Kyser Hamid, managing director and CEO of Bangladesh Finance PLC, pose for a photograph after signing the memorandum of understanding in Dhaka recently. PHOTO: BANGLADESH FINANCE

# Missed targets

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He warned that domestic borrowing carries serious risks. "It creates serious challenges, including fuelling inflation and potentially crowding out private sector investment," he said.

Without fundamental reform in revenue administration, any substantial increase in collections is "almost impossible".

Abdur Razzaque, chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID), said weak imports will further dampen revenue in the final quarter.

"If the government depends heavily on banks, it will affect credit flow to the private sector," he said, warning that without revenue growth, more extreme measures such as money printing could not be ruled out.

Describing the broader pattern, Razzaque said, "The revenue target is not binding, it's aspirational. We set targets and repeatedly fail to meet them. We are stuck in a Catch-22."

"Big budget, big revenue deficit, and the NBR failing to raise revenue -- this is the typical Bangladesh story," he added, noting that despite talk of reforms, "we are not seeing

the momentum or a firm commitment." He mentioned the IMF's recent decision to withhold a loan instalment, citing that the country has failed to implement agreed reforms in the revenue and banking sectors.

This decision by the multilateral lender adds to the country's pressure. "It sends a signal about reform commitment, and other development partners take such signals seriously," Razzaque said.

Within the July-March figures, VAT from domestic activity was the largest contributor at 38 percent of total collection, rising 13.66 percent year-on-year to Tk 1.09 lakh crore. Direct taxes accounted for 33.5 percent, climbing 11.25 percent to Tk 98,501 crore, while import tariffs grew more modestly at 7.77 percent to Tk 80,223 crore.

Facing mounting pressure, the NBR is eyeing structural changes for next year. Speaking at a pre-budget discussion earlier this month, NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan pledged to strengthen enforcement to curb tax evasion and gradually reduce existing tax exemptions aiming to raise revenue collections.

He informed that the board is considering a range of measures to strengthen

revenue collection in the upcoming fiscal year 2026-27 (FY27), including the reintroduction of a wealth tax, a new inheritance tax, higher rates for the ultra-rich, and a rationalisation of existing tax exemptions.

"We are exploring the possibility of reintroducing a wealth tax," Khan said at the event, noting that Bangladesh had such a levy from 1963 until it was abolished in 1999.

A committee has been formed to examine the matter. Khan added that the NBR is weighing the introduction of an inheritance tax, at least on a limited scale, with a focus on high-value property transfers.

On tax exemptions, Khan signalled a gradual shift away from the status quo. "We are committed to gradually phasing them out and bringing beneficiaries into the regular tax regime."

The NBR also plans to raise the top marginal income tax rate for ultra-rich individuals from 30 to 35 percent, a measure tentatively set for FY28.

More immediately, he said the NBR is considering raising the tax rate for individuals earning over Tk 1 crore annually by around five percentage points from FY27.

# BB removes

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These included showing a Tk 49.9 crore loan to Keya Cosmetics Ltd as unclassified without prior approval from the central bank, which significantly reduced GSP Finance's classified loan ratio.

He was also found to have restructured loan facilities of a subsidiary in violation of regulatory circulars, leading to a financial penalty under the Financial Institutions Act, 1993.

In addition, the regulator alleged that excess penal interest was imposed on a loan account of Dorin Hotels & Resorts Ltd during the Covid period, despite repeated instructions to comply with regulatory directives.

According to the Bangladesh Bank, Islam failed to disclose these issues in his application and affidavit when seeking appointment as managing director of International Leasing.

"Considering his involvement in the irregularities and submission of a false affidavit, he has been removed from the post under Section 19 of the Finance Company Act, 2023," the central bank said.

The regulator also advised the leasing company to appoint a qualified senior official as acting managing director in line with existing guidelines.



## CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY BANGLADESH

Office of the Executive Engineer

Civil Division-2, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229

Website:- [www.caab.gov.bd](http://www.caab.gov.bd)

File No. 30.31.0000.423.02.017.25-1487

Date:- 20/04/2026

### e-Tender Notice

This is to notify for all concerned that e-Tender is invited and published in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of works for the following Tender. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the website [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

Sl No	Tender ID	Brief description of Works	Tender Reference No.	Last date & time of selling	Last date & time of submission
01	1260509	R.M.O. Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H):- Repair & maintenance works of different building units No.E-1/4, E-3/3, E-3/5, E-5/2, E-5/7, E-6/3, E-11/7, E-13/2 units at Kurmitola R/A), Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 89.26.378, Dt:16/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
02	1260481	Essential repair and maintenance of wooden, uPVC door, floor & wall tiles, curtain rail, mosquito net, plaster, painting, sanitary fitting fixing including other allied works of B-type building No. B-3/6 & B-3/4 = 02 units at Banani R/A, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 88.26.375, Dt:16/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
03	1259065	Re-Construction of main gate and boundary wall including other allied works at Banani Residential area, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.14.00 43.26.336, Dt:06/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
04	1258954	Essential repair and maintenance of roof with water proofing works of building No. B-1, B-2 & B-3 including other allied works of Banani Residential area, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 80.26.359, Dt:12/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
05	1257183	Essential repair & maintenance works of B-type buildings units No. B-1/4 & B-1/6-02 units in/c. other allied works at Banani R/A, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 86.26.343, Dt:07/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
06	1257168	Renewing venetian blind of P&D/QS building ground & 1st floor at HSA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 82.26.332, Dt:06/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
07	1256227	R.M.O. Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H):- Providing main water distribution line to different types of quarters at Kurmitola Residential Area) at HSA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 56.26.341, Dt:07/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
08	1254804	Clearing sludges & night soil from septic tank, soak well, inspection pit, soil pipe & sewer line, surface drain and Sanitary blockage removal with cleaning overhead water tank in/c. other allied works of CAAB H.Q, FSR, CEMSU (old HQ), CATC Manager Bldg, CATC Canteen, Civil Aviation Academy, CATC Mosque, MT Bldg. and P&D/QS Bldg. etc. at HSA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 13.26.335, Dt:06/05/2025	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
09	1254769	Repair & maintenance works of providing floor tiles, door, plaster, painting & sanitary fitting fixing in/c. other related works of F-type Bldg. units No.F-26 ( 1 to 10) = 10 units at Kurmitola R/A) Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 71.26.328, Dt:05/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00
10	1254072	Repair & maintenance of existing footpath, drain & providing palasiding work Ambagan 10 No. pond corner to security guard room in/c. other allied works at Kurmitola R/A, HSA, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.00 12.26.327, Dt:05/04/2026	03-May-2026 12:00	03-May-2026 14:00

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তারিখ: ২১/০৪/২০২৬ খ্রি.

20.04.26

(Engr. Nasim Al-Islam)  
Executive Engineer (Civil)  
Civil Division-2  
CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.  
Email:- [xcncd2@caab.gov.bd](mailto:xcncd2@caab.gov.bd)