

Higher tax rates may fuel money laundering risks: MCCI

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Raising tax rates on high-income earners without expanding the tax net could backfire, potentially encouraging money laundering and capital flight, the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) said yesterday.

"Raising tax rates on high-income taxpayers may discourage compliant taxpayers and increase the risks of tax evasion or capital flight," MCCI President Kamran T Rahman said while presenting budget proposals for the upcoming fiscal year 2026-27 at a pre-budget discussion with the National Board of Revenue (NBR) in Dhaka.

"In the context of regional competition, it is essential to keep tax rates reasonable. Expanding the tax base, rather than increasing tax rates, could be a more effective and sustainable solution for boosting revenue," he added.

The chamber said maintaining a rational and predictable tax regime is essential to retain investment and ensure compliance in the region marked by growing tax competition.

The trade body recommended broadening the tax base to bring more individuals and businesses, particularly from the informal sector.

Currently, despite having more than one crore registered taxpayers with electronic tax identification numbers (e-TINs), fewer than half regularly file returns, pointing to a structural weakness in the system.

The MCCI proposed introducing a symbolic minimum tax, ranging from Tk 100 to Tk 1,000 annually, along with a simplified one-page digital return-filing system via mobile applications.

"This would encourage first-time taxpayers to enter the formal system and gradually build a culture of compliance," Rahman said.

The chamber also flagged concerns over the effective tax rate faced by businesses, noting that multiple layers of advance income tax (AIT), tax deducted at source (TDS), and various conditionalities often push the actual burden to as high as 40-50 percent, far exceeding statutory rates.

Such distortions reduce the benefits of nominal tax cuts and create disincentives for formal business operations, it said.

MCCI urged policymakers to move towards a simplified, income-based taxation system, reduce conditionalities tied to corporate tax rates, and accelerate digital integration across income tax, VAT, and customs platforms.

It also called for easing compliance requirements, such as the Proof of Submission of Return (PSR), rationalising VAT rates, and ensuring faster, automated input tax credit mechanisms.

Govt plans higher spending

FROM PAGE B1
serious about deregulation to simplify business. You will see this reflected in the upcoming budget."

Despite deep structural weaknesses inherited by the BNP government, Chowdhury said maintaining macroeconomic stability and financial discipline remains their top priority.

Turning to the country's battered capital market, which he previously described as having been "looted" by political cronies, the minister promised sweeping interventions to restore investor confidence.

"We have a major programme for the stock market; wait a little, and you will see changes," said Chowdhury. "The capital market will be fully reformed."

PRINTING MONEY CLAIMS

The authorities categorically rejected recent media reports claiming that the central bank had printed Tk 20,000 crore for the government.

Banking Bank (BB) Governor Md Mostaqur Rahman dismissed the reports as "completely untrue," saying that such claims could damage the country's sovereign rating and raise borrowing costs.

He said fluctuations in the government's "Ways and Means" advance account are part of routine

financial operations. Chowdhury echoed the governor, saying he was "deeply saddened" by the rumours.

"During our political movement, we repeatedly protested against printing money and the government's heavy borrowing from banks, which crowded out the private sector," said the finance minister. "We cannot deviate from our manifesto promises."

He said that creating "high-powered money" would fuel inflation and squeeze an already undercapitalised private sector. He described fiscal restraint as "one of the foundational principles of the government's economic policy."

Banking has been facing inflation of around 9 percent since March 2023, and economists have cautioned that expanding money supply could make it harder to bring prices under control.

The minister blamed the country's economic difficulties on a legacy of "political patronage" that allowed the state to fall "into the hands of oligarchs."

He said this system enabled widespread tax avoidance, pushing the tax-to-GDP ratio down from 11 percent to below 7 percent. "The financial sector became so heavily politicised that banks have essentially been emptied,

and the stock market was looted," he said.

He added that the private sector is now "severely undercapitalised", with currency depreciation and high inflation eroding working capital and contributing to job losses.

Responding to pressure from international lenders to raise revenue quickly, he offered a reality check. "Raising taxes right now is an extremely difficult task. When institutions like the IMF and the World Bank push for a higher tax-to-GDP ratio, you must understand the situation before demanding reforms."

"We cannot act like dictators and forcefully extract money from those who simply cannot afford to pay," he said.

Instead, the government is working on restructuring the tax system, which Chowdhury described as "half-baked". A committee has been formed to separate tax policy from implementation, with the aim of making future policy more representative.

To revive economic growth without adding inflationary pressure, he promised further deregulation to reduce the "cost of doing business", which he said had been driven up by port delays, customs procedures and road extortion.

Deploying police to inspect markets, he said, would not resolve the problem. "The issue must be fixed in the supply chain," he said. He also said the government aims to strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises, which is central to job creation. "We need mega-industries, yes, but the SME sector is the true engine of employment."

BANKING SECTOR AND LAUNDERING

BB Governor Mostaqur Rahman also gave a stark assessment of the banking

sector, saying nearly one-third of deposits are in default. He described many bad loans as "essentially thefts" with little or no collateral.

To claw back capital, the government is stepping up efforts to recover money allegedly smuggled abroad by former business elites.

Nazma Mobarek, secretary of the Financial Institutions Division, said a joint investigation team is working on 11 priority cases, with Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests sent to 23 countries to trace and recover assets.

Domestically, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) is trying to plug a severe revenue shortfall by widening the tax base and increasing digital enforcement rather than raising rates on existing taxpayers.

Noting that corporate tax rates have already fallen from 50 percent in the 1980s to 20 percent today, officials said that further cuts would not resolve chronic tax evasion.

"If we reduce it further, the tendency of tax evasion remains a challenge; we will consider how to address this gap," NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan said. "Expanding the tax base is highly relevant. Currently, our VAT base is very small. We are planning how to expand it and ease compliance."

He added that online tax filing would become mandatory from next year. "The system automatically identifies non-filers," he said. "We will pursue them and expect substantial tax collection."

Senior journalists, including Channel 1's Head of News Shykh Seraj and The Financial Express Editor Shamsul Huq Zahid, attended the second budget discussion.

At the earlier session, ERF President Doulot Akter Mala and General Secretary Abul Kashem spoke.

Bangladesh readies

FROM PAGE B1
Earlier on February 19, the newly elected government sent a letter to Jose Antonio Ocampo, chair of the UNCDP, requesting that the preparatory period be extended until November 24, 2029, mentioning that more time is needed to ensure readiness.

Following Bangladesh's request, the UNCDP discussed the issue at its annual meeting in February and agreed on a process to assess the proposal.

The UNCDP has now called a public hearing on Bangladesh's request on April 29. After the hearing, the committee will submit its recommendations to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in June.

ECOSOC will then forward its assessment to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which is scheduled to meet in September. The final decision on the deferral will be taken through a vote at the UNGA.

A UN assessment report last month said Bangladesh still faces serious gaps in its readiness for graduation, as its economy continues to be affected by both domestic and international shocks, including the US-Israel war on Iran.

The report highlighted a series of disruptions between 2017 and 2026, including climate vulnerability, the Rohingya crisis, a prolonged macroeconomic slowdown that predated the regime

change, the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, inflation, and pressure on the balance of payments.

It also noted that while Bangladesh meets all three criteria for graduation, significant risks persist, including the loss of trade preferences, fiscal and financial vulnerabilities and weak institutional coordination.

The report stressed the need for urgent reforms, stronger implementation capacity, adequate policy space and a whole-of-society approach to ensure a smooth and sustainable transition.

It added that a difficult political changeover and prolonged macroeconomic stress have eroded socio-economic gains, increasing risks linked to graduation.

Rising import costs for fossil fuels have created operational constraints, with gas shortages worsening due to the Middle East conflict, the report said. Economic growth slowed from 7.1 percent in FY22 to 3.5 percent in FY25, weakening momentum ahead of graduation.

Inflation has outpaced wages, pushing millions into hardship and vulnerability.

Private investment has also weakened, with capital machinery imports falling from \$5.1 billion to \$2.8 billion during the 2019-2024 period. The labour market has also come under pressure, with nearly 1.9 million jobs lost between 2023 and 2024, disproportionately affecting women.

Outages

FROM PAGE B1
Under such circumstances, transporting generators to filling stations to collect fuel is not a practical solution, he added.

Hatem said overall production costs have increased by at least 20 percent, but exporters are unable to pass on the additional costs to buyers as prices are fixed in advance.

Meanwhile, global demand has declined, leading buyers to reduce order placements.

He said exports have been declining in recent months, while factories

are currently operating at only 50-60 percent of their capacity.

At the press conference, the BKMEA president also announced that a four-day Bangladesh International Textile, Knitting and Garment Industry Exhibition (BTG Expo 2026) will begin in Dhaka on April 29 and continue until May 2.

The BKMEA and Inforchain Digital Technology Co Ltd are jointly organising the exhibition at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB).

WALTON CABLES
নিরামদ আগামী সংযোগ

২৯.৯৯% ডিস্কন্ট
৯০% কভারেজ

বাংলাদেশ অভ্যন্তরীণ নৌপরিবহন কর্তৃপক্ষ (বিআইডব্লিউটিএ)
প্রবহমান নদীর সাথে
১৪১-১৪৩, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১০০০

ঘাট/পয়েন্ট/হিকোপার্ক ইজারা/লাইসেন্স প্রদানের টেন্ডারের তারিখ পরিবর্তনের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। বাংলাদেশ অভ্যন্তরীণ নৌপরিবহন কর্তৃপক্ষ (বিআইডব্লিউটিএ)-এর ঢাকা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ, বরিশাল, খুলনা, চাঁদপুর, আরিচা, আশুগঞ্জ-ভৈরব বাজার, মেঘনাঘাট, পটুয়াখালী, বাঘাবাড়ী, শিমুলিয়া (মাওয়া), বরগুনা, নওয়াপাড়া (যশোর), ভোলা, টঙ্গী, নগরবাড়ী-কাজিরহাট-নারাদহ, নাজিরগঞ্জ, চিলমারী, মজুটৌধুরীরহাট, চরফ্যাশন (বেতুয়া), হাতিয়া, কক্সবাজার নদী বন্দর এবং চট্টগ্রাম ও সিলেট আঞ্চলিক দপ্তরের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন লঞ্চঘাট, ফেরীঘাট, ল্যান্ডিং স্টেশন, ইকোপার্ক, উপকূলীয় টার্মিনাল জেটি ঘাট, ফেরী টার্মিনাল, পার্কিং ইয়ার্ড, খাল-টোল স্টেশন, কালেকশন পয়েন্ট, মালামাল উঠানামার শুক আদায় পয়েন্ট ও মালামাল উঠানামার লেবার হ্যাঞ্জলিং পয়েন্টসমূহে ০১ জুলাই ২০২৬খ্রিঃ হতে ৩০ জুন ২০২৬খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত ১ (এক) বছরের জন্য (তবে শুধুমাত্র ইকোপার্ক সমূহ ১০ (দশ) বছরের জন্য) সরকার কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত শুকহার অনুযায়ী শুক/ চার্জ আদায়ের নিমিত্ত ইজারা/লাইসেন্স প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে গত ০৮-০৪-২০২৬ তারিখ বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, দৈনিক যুগান্তর: ০৯-০৪-২০২৬ তারিখ দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক, দি ডেইলী স্টার: ১৭-০৪-২০২৬ তারিখ বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, দৈনিক যুগান্তর: ১৮-০৪-২০২৬ তারিখ দি ডেইলী স্টার এবং ১৯-০৪-২০২৬ তারিখ দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত টেন্ডারের পূর্ব নির্ধারিত তারিখ অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নিম্নোক্তভাবে পুনর্নির্ধারণ করা হলোঃ

| নদী বন্দরের নাম | দফা | পুনর্নির্ধারিত টেন্ডারের তারিখ |
|---|--|--|
| ঢাকা, বরিশাল, খুলনা, চাঁদপুর ও পটুয়াখালী নদী বন্দর। | ১ম দফা ২য় দফা ৩য় দফা ৪র্থ দফা | ১১-০৫-২০২৬, ১২-০৫-২০২৬ ও ১৩-০৫-২০২৬ = ০৩ দিন। ২০-০৫-২০২৬ ও ২১-০৫-২০২৬ ০২ দিন (১ম দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ০৩-০৬-২০২৬ ও ০৪-০৬-২০২৬ ০২ দিন (২য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ১০-০৬-২০২৬ ও ১১-০৬-২০২৬ ০২ দিন (৩য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। |
| নারায়ণগঞ্জ, আশুগঞ্জ-ভৈরব বাজার নদী বন্দর। | ১ম দফা ২য় দফা ৩য় দফা ৪র্থ দফা | ১২-০৫-২০২৬ ও ১৩-০৫-২০২৬ = ০২ দিন ২০-০৫-২০২৬ ও ২১-০৫-২০২৬ = ০২ দিন (১ম দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ০৩-০৬-২০২৬ ও ০৪-০৬-২০২৬ = ০২দিন (২য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ১০-০৬-২০২৬ ও ১১-০৬-২০২৬ ০২দিন (৩য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। |
| বাঘাবাড়ী, বরগুনা, নওয়াপাড়া, নগরবাড়ী-কাজিরহাট-নারাদহ ও শিমুলিয়া (মাওয়া), চরফ্যাশন (বেতুয়া), কক্সবাজার ও মজুটৌধুরীর হাট নদী বন্দর। | ১ম দফা ২য় দফা ৩য় দফা ৪র্থ দফা | ১১-০৫-২০২৬ ২০-০৫-২০২৬ (১ম দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ০৩-০৬-২০২৬ (২য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ১০-০৬-২০২৬ (৩য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। |
| আরিচা, মেঘনাঘাট, নাজিরগঞ্জ, চিলমারী ও হাতিয়া নদী বন্দর। | ১ম দফা ২য় দফা ৩য় দফা ৪র্থ দফা | ১২-০৫-২০২৬ ২০-০৫-২০২৬ (১ম দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ০৩-০৬-২০২৬ (২য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ১০-০৬-২০২৬ (৩য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। |
| চট্টগ্রাম আঞ্চলিক দপ্তর, সিলেট আঞ্চলিক দপ্তর, ভোলা নদী বন্দর ও টঙ্গী নদী বন্দর। | ১ম দফা ২য় দফা ৩য় দফা ৪র্থ দফা | ১৩-০৫-২০২৬ ২১-০৫-২০২৬ (১ম দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ০৪-০৬-২০২৬ (২য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। ১১-০৬-২০২৬ (৩য় দফায় অনিশ্চিন্ত ঘাট/পয়েন্টসমূহ)। |

২। ইতিপূর্বে প্রকাশিত টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত শর্তাবলী, নিয়মাবলী এবং টেন্ডার দাখিলের স্থান ও সময় অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে। তাছাড়া ইতোমধ্যে ক্রয়কৃত টেন্ডার ফরম পুনর্নির্ধারিত ১ম দফা টেন্ডারে ব্যবহার করা যাবে।

পরিচালক
বন্দর ও পরিবহন বিভাগ
ফোন নং-০২-২২৩৩৮২৬৭৩
port.biwa@gmail.com

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)
TCB Bhaban, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
www.tcb.gov.bd
Commercial Section
Invitation For Tender (National) for Purchase of

(a) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) piece of Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar of 100gm
(b) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) piece of Laundry Soap Bar of 125gm
(c) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) packet of Synthetic Detergent Powder of 500gm
(d) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) packet of Iodized Salt of 1kg

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Ministry/Division | Ministry of Commerce. |
| 2 | Agency | Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) |
| 3 | Procuring Entity Name | Additional Director (Commercial), TCB, Dhaka. |
| 4 | Procuring Entity Code | Not applicable. |
| 5 | Procuring Entity District | Dhaka. |
| 6 | Invitation for | a) Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar b) Laundry Soap Bar c) Synthetic Detergent Powder d) Iodized Salt |
| 7 | Invitation Ref. No. | a) 26.05.0000.016.25.119.26.1494, b) 26.05.0000.016.25.119.26.1495, c) 26.05.0000.016.25.119.26.1496, d) 26.05.0000.016.25.119.26.1497 |
| 8 | Date | 23-04-2026 |
| KEY INFORMATION | | |
| 9 | Procurement Method | Open Tendering Method (OTM) (National) |
| FUNDING INFORMATION | | |
| 10 | Budget and Source of Funds | TCB's Own Fund. |
| PARTICULAR INFORMATION | | |
| 11 | Tender Package No. | a) TCB/Imp-74/ Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar/2025-26, b) TCB/Imp-75/ Laundry Soap Bar/2025-26, c) TCB/Imp-76/ Synthetic Detergent Powder/2025-26, d) TCB/Imp-77/ Iodized Salt/2025-26 |
| 12 | Tender Package Name | a) Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar b) Laundry Soap Bar c) Synthetic Detergent Powder d) Iodized Salt |
| 13 | Tender Invitation/ Publication Date | 26-04-2026 |
| 14 | Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time | Date: 13-05-2026 Time: 16:00 P.M. |
| 15 | Tender Closing Date and Time | 14-05-2026 12:00 P.M. |
| 16 | Tender Opening Date and Time | 14-05-2026 (a) 12:15 P.M (b) 12:30 P.M (c) 12:45 P.M (d) 01:00 P.M |
| 17 | Name & Address of the office(s) | Address: (1) Sonali Bank Ltd. Kawran Bazar Branch, TCB Bhaban, Dhaka and (2) Accounts & Finance Division, TCB's Principal Office at Dhaka. In front of TCB's reception (2 nd floor), TCB Bhaban, 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. |
| | - Selling Tender Document of each item can be purchased from the banks & offices as mentioned in right column. | |
| | - Receiving Tender Document | Board Room, TCB |
| | - Opening Tender Document | Board Room, TCB |
| INFORMATION FOR TENDERER | | |
| 18 | Brief Eligibility of Tenderer | Bonafide Suppliers. Details conditions have been mentioned in the Tender documents. |
| 19 | Brief Description of goods | a) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) piece Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar. Per piece net weight will be 100gm. b) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) piece Laundry Soap Bar. Per piece net weight will be 125gm. c) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) packet Synthetic Detergent Powder. Per packet net weight will be 500gm. d) 20,00,000 (Twenty Lac) packet of Iodized Salt. Per packet net weight will be 1kg. |
| 20 | Price of Tender Document | Price of (a) Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar tender document is Taka 4,000 (Four Thousand), (b) Laundry Soap Bar tender document is Taka 4,000 (Four Thousand), (c) Synthetic Detergent Powder tender document is Taka 4,000 (Four Thousand), (d) Iodized Salt tender document is Taka 4,000 (Four Thousand). |
| 21 | Lot | Identification of Lot Location Tender Security Amount (BDT) Supply Schedule |
| | a) Toilet Soap (Beauty Soap) Bar | Offers are to be made on TCB's Godowns of Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barisal, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Cumilla, Madaripur, Jhenaidah, Bogura, Dinajpur, Gazipur/District's godown/Upazila's godown. |
| | b) Laundry Soap Bar | Tender is to be submitted along with Tender Security amounting to: a) BDT 13,00,000 (BDT Thirteen Lac) Only. b) BDT 8,00,000 (BDT Eight Lac) Only. c) BDT 18,00,000 (BDT Eighteen Lac) Only. d) BDT 14,00,000 (BDT Fourteen Lac) Only. |
| | c) Synthetic Detergent Powder | Entire quantity of Goods is to be supplied within (a) 40 days after signing contract. (b) 40 days after signing contract (c) 40 days after signing contract (d) 40 days after signing contract |
| | d) Iodized Salt | |
| PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS | | |
| 22 | Name of Official Inviting Tender | Md. Golam Khorsheed |
| 23 | Designation of Official Inviting Tender | Additional Director (Commercial), TCB Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. |
| 24 | Address of Official Inviting Tender | Principal Office, Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. |
| 25 | Contact details of Official Inviting Tender | Telephone No. 8180074 Fax No. 88-02-55014279 E-mail: tcbimp@tcb.gov.bd |
| 26 | Special Instruction | a) All terms and conditions related to the tender and product details are mentioned in the tender document. b) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in whole/in part without assigning any reason. |

(Md. Golam Khorsheed)
Additional Director (Commercial)
Trading Corporation of Bangladesh