ICCB urges India to ease trade barriers, expedite CEPA

STAR BUSINESS DESK

International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh (ICCB) President Mahbubur Rahman has called for the swift conclusion of the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Bangladesh and India to reduce the bilateral trade gap.

He also urged India to improve market access for Bangladeshi products, reduce non-tariff barriers, harmonise standards and simplify customs procedures at a meeting with Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi at the ICCB secretariat in Dhaka yesterday, according to a press release.

Bangladesh and India continue to enjoy one of the largest trading relationships in South Asia, the release said. Bilateral merchandise trade stood at approximately $11.39 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2024-25, with Bangladesh exporting goods worth $1.76 billion and importing goods worth $9.62 billion.

Mahbubur underscored the importance of stronger private sector engagement to unlock the full potential of bilateral cooperation and promote sustainable economic growth.

The ICCB president further highlighted the importance of revitalising regional cooperation through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) and expediting the implementation of the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement.

He also stressed the need to advance practical cooperation under the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec) to enhance connectivity, reduce logistics costs and strengthen regional supply chains.

Indian High Commissioner Dinesh said the two neighbouring countries should translate their shared strengths into stronger economic collaboration and sustainable development.

He said many longstanding bilateral issues could be resolved through sustained engagement and dialogue at the highest political level.

Dinesh emphasised the indispensable role of the private sector in driving economic growth, investment and employment, saying businesses are the foundation of a stable and prosperous economy.

He also highlighted the significant potential for establishing joint venture industries in border areas, which could strengthen regional value chains, attract investment and generate employment.

Reaffirming the Indian High Commission's commitment to supporting the business community, Dinesh encouraged Bangladeshi entrepreneurs and investors to approach the mission whenever they face challenges in expanding bilateral trade and investment.

During the interactive discussion, Naser Ezaz Bijoy, vice-president of ICCB, emphasised the importance of facilitating business travel and called for further improvements in the issuance of business visas to strengthen commercial engagement between the two countries.

Simeen Rahman, an executive board member of ICCB, highlighted the vast opportunities for expanding bilateral cooperation in trade, business, healthcare, medical services and tourism. She noted that India is home to many globally recognised companies and institutions, creating significant potential for enhanced partnerships and greater people-to-people and business-to-business collaboration.

The meeting also discussed opportunities to deepen cooperation in investment, regional value chains, multimodal connectivity, renewable energy, cross-border power trade, digital commerce, fintech, artificial intelligence, climate finance, sustainable manufacturing, healthcare, education and skills development.



Dinesh Trivedi, the Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, joins Mahbubur Rahman, president of the International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh, and the chamber's leadership for a group photograph after a meeting at ICCB secretariat in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: ICC BANGLADESH

NBR asks businesses to switch to new BIN by Nov 30

BSS

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has requested all businesses to complete the transition from their old business identification number (BIN) to the newly assigned BIN by November 30 of this year, following the restructuring of VAT Commissionerates aimed at strengthening tax administration and improving taxpayer services.

In a press release issued yesterday, the NBR said it has reorganised the jurisdiction of existing VAT commissionerates and established new commissionerates to expand the tax net, enhance revenue collection and ensure a more business-friendly environment through improved taxpayer services.

The move is part of the government's broader administrative reform initiative to make the indirect tax system more dynamic, efficient and modern, it said. As part of the restructuring, the BINs of businesses have been transferred to the newly designated jurisdictions.

The NBR said only the last four digits of the BIN have been changed to reflect the respective VAT commissionerate and division, while all other business information associated with the BIN remains unchanged.

To ensure that import and export operations continue without disruption, both the old and new BINs of the affected businesses have been kept temporarily active in the customs' ASYCUDA World system.

As a result, importers and exporters will be able to complete ongoing customs procedures-including letters of credit (L/Cs), bills of entry, customs declarations and other existing transactions-using their previous BINs during the transition period. The NBR urged all concerned businesses to complete all pending activities under their old BINs and ensure the use of the new BINs by the set deadline.

It warned that after the deadline, the old BINs will be automatically deactivated in the ASYCUDA World system. Thereafter, all customs-related import and export activities must be carried out exclusively using the new BINs.

BGMEA rejects reports of gas crisis forcing

FROM PAGE B1

According to BGMEA, this is a normal and established operational practice during periods of gas shortages and has no connection with factory closures.

The association warned that publishing unverified and inaccurate reports about factory closures could create serious confusion and unnecessary concern among domestic and international buyers, business partners and other stakeholders.

It added that such misinformation undermines the credibility Bangladesh's garment industry has built over the years and poses a significant risk not only to the industry but also to the livelihoods of millions of workers who depend on it.

Describing the ready-made garment (RMG) sector as the backbone of Bangladesh's economy, BGMEA urged all media outlets and stakeholders to ensure accurate, responsible and fact-based reporting in the greater interest of the industry and the country.

Speaking to The Daily Star, DBL Group Managing Director M A Jabbar also rejected the reports, saying the company's factories remained operational. "It is fake news. It was done to demean us," Jabbar said.

Accelerate domestic gas

FROM PAGE B1

In this context, protecting existing investment is more important than attracting new investment.

"The immediate priority should be ensuring that existing factories continue operating," said Moazzem.

He also urged the government to prioritise financially distressed but operational factories when providing incentives, arguing that supporting struggling businesses would generate greater economic benefits than focusing on factories that have already closed.

He added that industries should gradually reduce their dependence on natural gas by investing in energy-efficient machinery, electricity-based production systems, renewable energy and other technologies that could cut energy use by 15 to 20 percent.

M Masrur Reaz, chairman and chief executive officer of Policy Exchange Bangladesh, said years of inadequate onshore and offshore gas exploration have left Bangladesh heavily dependent on imported LNG, making the country vulnerable to global supply disruptions and price volatility.

He said limited LNG import infrastructure has further constrained gas supply, forcing many industries to operate below capacity.

According to him, gas shortages have reduced production by 30 to 50 percent in sectors such as garments, textiles, steel and ceramics, while power disruptions caused by fuel shortages have also affected small and service-oriented businesses. The resulting uncertainty has discouraged both local and foreign investors from expanding operations or making new investments.

Masrur said Bangladesh should urgently secure additional long-term LNG supply agreements to stabilise gas availability and prices while ensuring adequate foreign exchange support for imports.

Over the medium term, he called for faster onshore and offshore gas exploration and quicker progress on renewable energy projects to reduce dependence on imported fuel. Mohammad Abdur Razzaque, chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID), said Bangladesh is facing more than a temporary industrial slowdown.

"The country is confronting a deepening investment and production crisis, where the energy shortage, banking-sector weaknesses, high financing costs, policy uncertainty and weak business confidence reinforce one another," he said.

He said the gas shortage had become a major burden on industry. Factories operating below capacity faced higher unit costs, delayed deliveries and weaker competitiveness. The impact was even greater on new investment.

Razzaque said Bangladesh continues to pursue industrial growth despite declining domestic gas production, costly LNG imports that are vulnerable to external shocks, and inadequate transmission and distribution infrastructure, raising questions about the credibility of its policy approach.

"There has been no shortage of recommendations. The priority now is implementation," he added.

Exports dip nearly 1%

FROM PAGE B1

"Against that extraordinary base, the current figure of $3.88 billion represents a welcome start to the new fiscal year," he said in a statement.

He said woven garment exports faced the largest decline, falling 3.16 percent year-on-year, while knitwear exports remained relatively stable with a decline of 0.9 percent.

BGMEA's Utilisation Declaration (UD) data showed a similar trend, with UD value declining 2.8 percent in July compared with the same month last year.

Mahmud said the performance came despite major challenges, including a severe gas shortage that reduced production capacity utilisation and geopolitical uncertainties affecting global trade and supply chains.

"Despite these headwinds, Bangladesh's RMG sector has demonstrated resilience by crossing nearly $3.88 billion in exports in a single month," he added.

The EPB said the RMG sector's monthly growth recovery has boosted policymakers' confidence in achieving the export targets set for fiscal year 2026-27.

According to EPB data, garment exports rose 14.73 percent month-on-month in July from $3.38 billion in June. However, they fell year-on-year as global buyers continued adjusting inventories after the pandemic. The United States remained Bangladesh's largest export destination, with shipments reaching $918.74 million in July, up 0.25 percent from the same period last year.

Germany ranked second with exports worth $495.30 million, followed by the United Kingdom at $478.42 million.

Among major markets, exports to India and Saudi Arabia recorded the highest growth, rising 15.30 percent and 10.64 percent respectively.

The EPB said strong demand from the US market and renewed momentum in the RMG sector have placed Bangladesh in a favourable position to benefit from upcoming autumn and festive-season orders.

Exporters are also working to reduce the yearly gap by launching new products and exploring non-traditional markets to maintain export growth, it added.

Besides garments, several sectors recorded positive growth in July, including plastic goods, leather and leather products, jute and jute products, carpets, home textiles and non-leather footwear.

However, some potential growth sectors, including frozen and live fish, agricultural products and cotton-made items, recorded negative growth during the month.

North-West Power Generation Company Ltd.
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Certified
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)
Office of the Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2)
Soydabad, Sirajganj.

Ref: 27.28.8878.000.206.07.0001.26.174 **Date:** 03/08/2026

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd):

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Brief Description of Tender	Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date
1	1309508	Supply of carbon molecular sieves for nitrogen generator	02-Aug-2026	24-Aug-2026; 15:00	25-Aug-2026

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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

03.08.2026
Md. Abu Zafar Siddique
Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2)
NWPGCL, Soydabad, Sirajganj.

GD-1887

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Panchagarh.
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.7700.000.07.001.26-১৩৪৪ Date: ০৩/০৮/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ

Invitation for Tender (Works)
e-Tender Notice No: 04/2026-27

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of works below under LGED, District: Panchagarh.

SI No	Name of Scheme, Package No & Tender ID No	Procurement Method	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	Construction of 1 Nos 7 Storied (48 unit apartment) Panchagarh Paurashava Cleaners Residential Building including internal electrical works, lift & external electrical connection, electro-mechanical work, sanitary and water supply, boundary wall, internal road, drainage, earth work etc. under Upazila: Sadar, Dist: Panchagarh. (Package No. Pd/pori.Abashan/ Panchagarh. W1.61) [Tender ID: 1312633]	OTM	30-Aug-2026 15.00	31-Aug-2026 13.00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders 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 portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the national e-GP system portal have to be deposited through online from any registered bank's branches up to specified date & time mentioned in the e-GP system. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (**helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd**)

(Md. Safiul Alam)
Executive Engineer
LGED, Panchagarh
Telephone No: 02587-718140
xen.panchagarh@lged.gov.bd

GD-1896

Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.
(A Company of Petrobangla)
(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)

গ্যাস ব্যবহারে সশ্রেয়ী হোন এবং সময়মত গ্যাস বিল পরিশোধ করুন

বিনা কারণে গ্যাসের চুলা জ্বালিয়ে রাখা আর বিপদকে ডাকা একই বিষয়

Ref. No: 28.16.9100.098.07.001.26.685 Date: 03-08-2026

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concerned that the following International Tender published through the National e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) as stated below:

SL. No.	Tender ID, Package No & Tender Publication Date	Description	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
01.	Tender ID: 1309754 Tender Package No: 28. 16.9100.098.07.001.26.03 Tender Publication Date: 03-August-2026 Time: 14:00	Procurement of Regulator, Slam Shut-off Valve & Relief Valve.	14 September, 2026 Time: 16:00	15 September, 2026 Time: 15:00	15 September, 2026 Time: 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. Interested Tenderers may Visit the website http://www.eprocure.gov.bd to obtain the detailed tender notice and Tender Documents.

To submit an e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP system portal shall be deposited online through any Bank registered in the e-GP System.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal or from the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Engr. Md. Masud Rana)
Deputy General Manager (Procurement Department)
E-mail: dgm.procurement@jgtdsl.gov.bd

GD-1894