# Steps taken to boost indigenous fish production

## Says fisheries minister

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has taken steps to boost the natural production of indigenous fish species and protect their breeding grounds, said Mohammed Amin Ur Rashid, minister for fisheries, livestock and agriculture, yesterday.

Fish sanctuaries are being established across haors and rivers, as well as in the sea, the minister said at a workshop, titled "Annual Research Progress Review (2025-26) and Planning Formulation (2026-27)", organised by the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFRI) at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) in Dhaka.

The country has achieved self-sufficiency in fish production thanks to quality research in the past, he said.

"Significant progress has been made in farmed fish production, quality enhancement, and feed management."

"However, natural fish breeding grounds are now on the verge of destruction due to climate change and a lack of public awareness," he said.

Following direct instructions from Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, the government is moving forward this year with a substantial budget and a long-term plan to overcome this crisis, he added.

The minister directed researchers to intensify research on breeding, breed development and the recovery of endangered indigenous fish species.

He urged them to address the adverse impacts of climate change and take steps to prevent diseases.

He also emphasised the need to harness the potential of coastal and marine fisheries, raise public awareness, enforce laws against harmful fishing nets and ensure safe fish production.

Sultan Salauddin Tuku, state minister for fisheries and livestock, stressed the importance of maintaining quality standards while boosting fish production.

Noting that the taste and quality of fish largely depend on water quality, he said pollution in water bodies must be prevented.

He added that excavating rivers and canals would increase water flow, reduce waterlogging and create a suitable environment for fish.

# Locally developed disability-inclusive banking training goes global

STAR BUSINESS DESK

A disability-inclusive banking training module developed in Bangladesh has expanded internationally, with a four-day training programme held in Indonesia to prepare trainers to promote accessible financial services for persons with disabilities.

The programme, titled "Breaking Attitudinal Barriers: Inclusive Banking for Persons with Disabilities", took place from October 12 to 15 at Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS) in Surabaya.

The module was jointly developed by Prime Bank PLC, Team Inclusion Bangladesh Foundation and Monash University, Australia, reads a press statement by the bank yesterday. It was first implemented in Bangladesh at Prime Bank in May 2025.

The initiative combines behavioural science, practical banking experience and the lived experiences of persons with disabilities to address attitudinal, communication and institutional barriers to financial inclusion.

The Indonesia programme brought together banking professionals, disability rights advocates, academics and representatives of financial institutions.

It was organised in collaboration with Prime Bank, Team Inclusion Bangladesh Foundation, the Opportunity Tech Lab at Monash Business School, ITS Surabaya and PERTUNI Surabaya.

MM Mahbub Hasan, senior vice-president and head of financial inclusion and school banking at Prime Bank, served as a trainer, sharing practical insights into inclusive financial services and banking practices.




PHOTO: PRIME BANK

**Participants pose with their certificates after completing the disability-inclusive banking training programme at Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember in Surabaya, Indonesia, held from October 12 to 15.**

Md Jahirul Islam, founder and executive director of Team Inclusion Bangladesh Foundation, designed the programme and led the training, including adapting the module to the Indonesian context.

Abu Zafar Shahriar, associate professor of Monash Business School, provided academic and research leadership, while Berto Mulia Wibawa, head of the Department of Business Management at ITS Surabaya, coordinated the initiative with support from faculty members Mohamad Rijal Iskandar and Dr Puti Sinansari.

The programme also involved disability rights practitioner Yustitia M Arief and trainers with visual and hearing disabilities. Participating and supporting institutions included PNM, Uprintis Indonesia, Kawan Ayu, Bank Indonesia and Bank Mega Syariah.

The training used experiential learning, accessible communication, behavioural exercises, disability rights principles and institutional action planning to strengthen participants' ability to deliver inclusive banking training.

Monash University completed the programme's evaluation and certification process, assessing participants' learning outcomes and readiness to facilitate disability-inclusive banking training.

The evaluation found improvements in participants' knowledge, confidence in facilitating training and preparedness to conduct sessions independently, said the press statement.

The initiative is expected to expand further through a proposed national training-of-trainers programme in Bangladesh under the Lead Bank Model, with the involvement of Bangladesh Bank, added the press statement.

# Nagad, ONE Bank partner to ease remittance transfers to rural areas




**Kazi Ziaul Islam, deputy managing director of ONE Bank PLC, and Mohummed Shahin Sarwar Bhuiyan, chief commercial officer of Nagad Limited, exchange signed documents of the agreement at the bank's corporate headquarters in Gulshan, Dhaka recently.**

PHOTO: NAGAD

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Nagad Limited, the mobile financial service (MFS) provider of the Bangladesh Postal Department, has entered into a strategic partnership agreement with ONE Bank PLC to expand digital financial services for customers.

Under the agreement, expatriates can send remittances through international exchange houses, money transfer operators or banks to Nagad wallets via ONE Bank.

Nagad customers, including those in rural and remote areas, can access the funds anytime, anywhere in the country.

Mohummed Shahin Sarwar Bhuiyan, chief commercial officer of the MFS provider, and Kazi Ziaul Islam, deputy managing director of the bank, signed the agreement at the bank's corporate headquarters in Gulshan, Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Speaking at the event, Shahin said, "This partnership with ONE Bank will further expand the reach of digital financial services delivered via Nagad."

"By delivering remittances sent through ONE Bank directly to customer wallets, people, particularly those in remote parts of the country, can receive and use these funds at any time."

"Furthermore, we hope that adding features to pay loan and DPS instalments will make daily financial transactions even easier for our customers," he added.

Ziaul said, "Nagad has an extensive and strong network across the country. Using this network, customers in remote areas where opening a bank branch is not feasible can receive remittances and pay loan and DPS instalments through Nagad.

"Simultaneously, by assessing the feasibility of offering ONE Bank's nano loan service through Nagad's digital platform, we aim to introduce innovative services tailored to customer needs," he added.

# Trust Bank savings schemes now available on bKash

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Trust Bank customers can now open monthly deposit pension schemes (DPS) through the bKash app, with fixed deposits, loans and pay-later services set to be introduced in phases.

The partnership aims to expand access to banking services, particularly for small entrepreneurs and people who have limited access to formal financial assistance, according to a press release yesterday.

Customers can open DPS accounts with monthly instalments ranging from Tk 500 to Tk 20,000, with different deposit amounts and tenures available. Fixed deposit receipts (FDRs) will be introduced soon.

The two organisations also plan to offer collateral-free loans to eligible bKash agents and customers.

A planned pay-later facility will allow eligible customers to make payments and recharge mobile phones within their approved credit limits. They can repay the amount in full without interest within seven days or through monthly instalments.

The partners also aim to make remittance services more accessible to expatriate Bangladeshis.

The services were announced at a recent event titled "Expanding Access, Empowering Possibilities" in Dhaka, attended by senior officials from Trust Bank, bKash and Bangladesh Bank.

Major General Mohd Hossain Al Morshed, vice-chairman of Trust Bank and adjutant general of the Bangladesh Army, attended as chief guest.

Speaking at the event, Morshed said technology had transformed financial transactions, but many people, especially small entrepreneurs and low-income groups, still struggled to obtain financial assistance when needed. Trust Bank's banking experience and bKash's digital platform could help bring essential services to more people, he added.

Md Sirajul Islam and Arief Hossain Khan, executive directors of the central bank, were present as special guests.

Ahsan Zaman Chowdhury, managing director and chief executive officer of Trust Bank, said the bank's experience in serving small and medium entrepreneurs, combined with bKash's nationwide digital platform and agent network, would widen access to banking services.

He added that bKash agents and small entrepreneurs would be able to apply for Trust Bank loans through the app once the service was launched.




**Senior officials of Trust Bank, bKash and Bangladesh Bank pose for a photograph at the launch of "Expanding Access, Empowering Possibilities" in Dhaka recently, marking a partnership to offer Trust Bank savings schemes through the bKash app.**

PHOTO: BKASH




**Soheil Zali, regional chief executive officer for Middle East and South Asia at Tradewind GmbH, and Shamim Ahmed, deputy managing director and CAMLCO of Mercantile Bank PLC, pose for a photograph after signing the memorandum of understanding at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently.**

PHOTO: MERCANTILE BANK

# Mercantile Bank signs MoU with Tradewind for trade finance services

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Mercantile Bank PLC has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Germany-based Tradewind GmbH to expand trade finance options for its export and import customers, including non-recourse export factoring, usance LC discounting and import factoring services.

Shamim Ahmed, deputy managing director and CAMLCO of Mercantile Bank, and Soheil Zali, regional chief executive officer for the Middle East and South Asia at Tradewind, signed the MoU at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the MoU, the bank's customers will have access to non-recourse export factoring against sales contracts, usance letter of credit (LC) discounting and import factoring services.

# BRAC Bank partners with Banglalink for digital cash management solutions

STAR BUSINESS DESK

BRAC Bank PLC has signed a partnership agreement with Banglalink Digital Communications Limited to enhance the efficiency, visibility and reliability of its collection and payment operations through advanced cash management solutions.

Under the agreement, BRAC Bank will provide its virtual account management (VAM) solution for efficient fund collection, automated reconciliation and better transaction visibility, alongside its CORPnet digital banking platform to streamline corporate payments.

Together, the solutions will improve Banglalink's collection tracking, transaction reconciliation, payment processing and treasury management.

Md Shaheen Iqbal, additional managing director and head of wholesale banking at the bank, and Abu Muhammed Saiful Islam, corporate finance and treasury director at Banglalink, signed the agreement at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Shaheen said, "Our partnership with Banglalink reflects our focus on integrating digital platforms, intelligent automation and reliable payment infrastructure to simplify complex financial operations."

"Our seamless and transparent cash management solutions help businesses optimise liquidity, enhance operational efficiency and focus on their core growth priorities," he added.

Saiful said, "Our partnership with BRAC Bank marks an important step in strengthening Banglalink's financial operations. By leveraging digital banking and automated cash management solutions, we aim to enhance collection efficiency, improve financial visibility and drive operational excellence."

Md Asif Bin Idrish, deputy managing director and head of corporate, commercial and institutional banking; AKM Faisal Halim, head of transaction banking; Touhid Sharwar, area head of Dhaka for corporate, commercial and institutional banking; Mahmood Kabir, head of corporate finance at Banglalink; and Golam Abbas, manager of collection management in corporate finance and treasury, were also present.




**Abu Muhammed Saiful Islam, corporate finance and treasury director of Banglalink Digital Communications Limited, and Md Shaheen Iqbal, additional managing director and head of wholesale banking at BRAC Bank PLC, pose for a photograph after signing the agreement at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently.**

PHOTO: BRAC BANK