



Bangladesh Newsflash

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Newsflash Bangladesh is a publication by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Dhaka. The newsflash provides an update in terms of economic developments, the most important tenders and a selection of other relevant business news related to Bangladesh. This newsflash is shared with a distinctive group of Dutch businesses with special interests in Bangladesh. It is put together on the basis of publicly available information from various sources such as news articles, press releases, and third party information. The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Dhaka is not responsible for the accuracy of the published information. If you do not wish to receive the Newsflash Bangladesh, or would like to add a person to the distribution list, or if you would like to

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Bangladesh to grab spotlight at the sourcing trend meeting in HK meeting in mid-March
- Bangladesh becoming a hub for technical and non-traditional garment products
- Benetton agreed to pay into the compensation fund for victims of the Rana Plaza
- Textile machinery exhibition gets \$200m-plus order
- RMG inspection, Labour Act rules to be completed by April according to Secretary of Commerce following “3+5” meeting with Ambassadors
- Government floats international tender to purchase 144 carriages for metro rail project
- Central bank to set aside \$500 million of low-cost funds for textile factories to adopt eco-friendly technologies
- International oil companies invited for hydrocarbon exploration in the Bay of Bengal in 2016
- Chittagong Port Authority sets up a desalination surface water treatment
- Govt rolls out landmark IT training programme - Bangladesh expects to earn over \$250 million through software exports
- Annual pharmaceutical sales are likely to hit \$2 billion by 2018

Political update

- Every working day of the past month has passed amid general strike called by the BNP led 20 party alliance. Uncertainty looms large as both the Awami League government and BNP led opposition are

adamant to not give in. Opposition leader Khaleda Zia's office (where she is currently living) cut off from cable, internet and mobile phone connections. Connections reestablished but power connections and access to food subsequently severed. Arrest warrants against Zia issued on 25 February for skipping court hearings on four consecutive dates in two graft cases

- The nationwide transportation (road, rail and waterway) blockade, in place since 5 January, persists with the objective of pushing the government for a fresh election under a non-partisan caretaker government
- Sporadic and random incidents of violence across the country, including Dhaka, continues
- The political crisis continues to detrimentally affect the Bangladeshi business community. Global RMG buyers, retailers worried over political turmoil. Government plans to revise down its economic growth target for the current fiscal year as the ongoing countrywide blockade
- Avijit Roy, a US blogger of Bangladeshi origin, murdered in a targeted attack in Dhaka on 26 February

Textile and Ready Made Garments (RMG)

Global RMG buyers, retailers worried over political turmoil (The Financial Express) Global garment buyers and retailers are concerned about sourcing of their apparel products from Bangladesh due to the political impasse and uncertainty that has already seriously affected the whole supply chain, industry insiders said. Some of them had postponed their scheduled visit to Dhaka while many others are choosing an alternative place outside the country like Bangkok, Hong Kong and New Delhi to negotiate their orders over security concern, they added. Though the manufacturers are going abroad for negotiating orders, the buyers may cut volume of orders and shift the orders to other countries, garment makers fear. Global buyers are frequently making queries and seeking to know when the situation will return to normal as they are worried over timely shipment of the items they ordered for, said Md Atiqul Islam, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). The political situation is taking its toll on the sector at a time when it has started overcoming the negative impact of industrial disasters with many safety and compliance programmes, he noted.

Bangladesh loses more ground in US apparel market - RMG exports plummet by 3.5pc in Jan-Nov (The New Age) The country's apparel exports to the US market in the 11 months of 2014 fell by 3.50 per cent to \$4.48 billion

against \$4.65 billion in the same period of 2013 due to sluggish demand for apparel in the market and compliance issue in Bangladesh. In the period, Vietnam and India — the main competitors of Bangladesh — gained more space in the US market. Export earnings of Vietnam from garments in the January-November period to the US market increased by 14.58 per cent to \$8.59 billion. India's textile and garment exports rose by 6.58 per cent to \$6.20 billion in the first 11 months of 2014 while the garment exports increased by 5.73 per cent to \$3.16 billion. Bangladesh's textile and garment exports to the US market in January-August period of 2014 witnessed a negative growth of 1.13 per cent to \$ 3.56 billion while export earnings from readymade garments in the period fell by 1.51 per cent to \$3.43 billion, according to US Commerce Department data.

Separate risk management guideline 'to be formulated for textile sector' (The Financial Express) The Bangladesh Bank (BB) will formulate a separate risk management guideline for the textile sector aiming to get most of the green outputs necessary to be competitive in the global market. "BB has already given an environment risk management guideline for financial sector. We would give a separate sector-specific risk management guideline for textile sector," according to BB Governor Atiur Rahman.

Bangladesh to grab spotlight at HK meeting on garment (The Daily Star) Global retailers will focus on safety standards and compliance in Bangladesh's garment sector at the sourcing trend meeting in Hong Kong in mid-March. Rick Darling, executive director of government and public affairs of Li & Fung, the world's largest supplier of clothes and toys to retailers, will present a keynote paper on these issues at the meeting on March 16, organisers said in a statement. SourceTrends is an annual event for apparel and footwear brands, manufacturers, retailers, agents and suppliers. This year, Bangladesh is on the radar for the Tazreen Fashions fire and Rana Plaza building collapse.

Italian fashion house to pay to victims' fund (AFP, Rome) Italian fashion retailer Benetton has agreed to pay into an international compensation fund for victims of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh in which 1,138 people died. The move follows pressure from campaigners who had accused the company of dragging its heels over financial aid to survivors and families of victims in the run up to the second anniversary of the disaster on April 23.

Bangladesh becoming a hub for non-traditional garment products (The Daily Star) Bangladesh has become a hub for technical and non-traditional garment products as international retailers are coming with an increasing number of work orders. Bangladesh is the second largest garment exporter after China in woven and knitwear segments. Not only that, Bangladesh also supplies military uniforms, travel bags, backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, outdoor jackets, jute slippers and other jute goods. Apart from non-traditional and technical garments, some factories in Chittagong EPZ produce computer accessories for renowned brands, wigs, spectacles, frames and lens of spectacles, and selection buttons of vending machines used in Western countries.

Labour inspectors should protect interest of workers, owners (The Daily Star) Labour inspectors should play their role in such a way that the interest of both workers and owners is protected, State Minister for Labour Mujibul

Hoque Chunnu said on February 22. Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) organized it at Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) auditorium in the capital. After the Tazreen blaze and the Rana Plaza collapse, the government took a move to appoint additional 200 inspectors. As part of the move 110 of them have so far joined DIFE. The minister said many owners are not aware of proper implementation of the labour law. During inspection of any factory, the inspectors should give them time to rectify, if there is any shortcoming regarding workplace safety.

Garment makers demand fair price from EU retailers (The Daily Star) Garment makers asked European retailers to pay prices which are proportionate with the rising costs of production at factory level. The exporters raised the issue of fair price at a meeting with the visiting European Union parliamentary delegation in Dhaka. The cost of production has been increasing by the year at the factories but the prices for per piece of garment remained the same for years or even declined in some cases, Atiqul Islam, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said after the meeting.

Garment exporters hit by euro slide (The Daily Star) The steep fall of the euro along with political crisis at home has dealt a twofold setback to garment exporters, who are losing money both ways. "It's a double whammy for us," said Atiqul Islam, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association. "On one hand, we are losing business for the ongoing political impasse inside the country and on the other hand, we are losing money due to currency devaluation in our main market." The eurozone is the largest export destination for Bangladesh, with 60 percent, or more than \$14 billion, of garment items being shipped to the region every year. The taka is getting stronger against the euro and the dollar, he said. The euro has been sliding in recent times for the financial crisis in Greece, a member of the EU.

Textile fair gets \$200m-plus order (The Financial Express) Exhibitors at the textiles machinery exhibition held in February got a delivery order of more than US\$ 200 million, an official of the co-organiser said. Although the exhibitors were worried about the success of the 12th Dhaka International Textile and Garment Machinery Exhibition owing to the political turmoil, the presence of visitors was satisfactory, said Md Monsoor Ahmed, of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association. He said more than 30,000 local and international visitors visited the exposition. At the expo, around 880 exhibitors from about 32 countries and regions showcased a wide array of state-of-the-art textile and garment technologies, machinery and parts. Some 1,060 booths showcased products of leading brands at the fair, he said.

RMG inspection, Labour Act rules to be completed by April - 'US, EU, Canada satisfied over BD's progress' (The Financial Express) Inspection of all ready-made garment (RMG) factories and the rules regarding Bangladesh Labour Act and export processing zone (EPZ) law will be completed by April, a high official said. "The inspection of RMG units and finalisation of the rules on Bangladesh Labour Act and export processing zone (EPZ) law will be completed by April," Ministry of Commerce (MoC) Senior Secretary Hedayetullah Al Mamoon told the FE. He said this after a "three plus five" informal group meeting on sustainability compact in RMG sector with the envoys of the US, the Netherlands, Canada and some countries of the European Union (EU) at the ministry conference room.

UNC-Chapel Hill announces "Bangladesh workers safety a *sine qua non*" (The Financial Express) UNC-Chapel Hill University announced on February 6 that it would require all companies that produce UNC apparel to sign the the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh instead of the separate Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety. The Alliance is supported by major companies such as Wal-

Mart, Gap, Target and Greensboro-based VF Corp., parent company of Wrangler.

BB to create \$500m green fund for textile (The Daily Star) The central bank will set aside \$500 million of low-cost funds for textile factories to help them adopt eco-friendly technologies and practices, Governor Atiur Rahman said on February 13.

The money will come in addition to the existing export development fund (EDF) of



\$1.5 billion and will be named Green EDF, he told a discussion at the office of Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh in Dhaka. At present, Bangladesh Bank is offering the EDF to exporters at a rate of LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) plus 2.5 percent for six months. An exporter can borrow a maximum of \$15 million in foreign currency.

Infrastructure

International tender floated for metro rail cars (The Daily Star) The government floated an international tender to purchase 144 carriages for the country's first-ever metro rail on January 31. Prospective bidders would first be selected and one of them would be chosen following scrutiny of its technical and financial proposals for the job worth an estimated Tk 2,750 crore. Tenders for the other components of the project, like constructing lines, viaducts and operation building, electrical and signalling systems, power substation, and operation building, were going to be floated in February and May.

Tk 2.79b loan deal signed with Kuwait Fund (The Financial Express) Kuwait will provide TK 2.79 billion (279.51 crore) for ensuring infrastructural development in four areas of capital Dhaka, reports UNB. The government signed a loan agreement with Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) on

February 23. The estimated cost of the project, titled 'The improvement of urban road in North Dhaka City Corporation' is TK 3.10 billion through which infrastructural development would be ensured in the city's Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Agargaon and Bhasantek. Of the total project cost, the Kuwait Fund will provide TK 2.79 billion while the rest of TK 307.5 million will come from the national exchequer.

Canada wants Dhaka-Toronto direct air link (Dhaka Tribune) Canada is eager to establish a Dhaka-Toronto direct air link, as it wants to be a partner in the development process of the Bangladesh civil aviation sector. Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Benoit Pierre Laramée, made the statement when he called on Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon at the latter's office on February 23. The High Commissioner also expressed his government's willingness to be a partner in the development of the country's air ports and other infrastructures, under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) in the civil aviation sector.

\$300m WB loan soon for export sector, market infrastructure (The New Age) The World Bank will lend US\$ 300 million soon to facilitate long-term financing for the country's export-oriented manufacturing sector and to strengthen financial market infrastructure, according to sources in the finance ministry and Bangladesh Bank.

Oil, Gas & Energy

BCMCL eyes 3 untapped coal fields (The Daily Star) Barapukuria Coal Mining Company (BCMCL), an affiliate of Petrobangla, has sought the government's permission to extract coal from three untapped coalfields in the country's northern region to bolster coal production in line with the national demands. The fields -- Phulbari of Dinajpur, Jamalganj of Joypurhat and Khalashpir of Rangpur -- have 2,225 million tonnes of coal reserves. Coal from the new mines could be used to generate 5,400MW

power, the BCMCL said in its proposal to the energy ministry in August last year. "We need less stress on gas," said Md Aminuzzaman, managing director of the BCMCL. A techno-economic feasibility study has already been conducted for Khalashpir and Phulbari coalfields, by Hosaf and Asia Energy respectively, but the other one need to be analysed for viability, the proposal said.

Myanmar's positive nod (The Daily Star) A high-powered Bangladesh delegation has put forward a proposal to Myanmar for importing gas from the Buddhist country for electricity generation here and then exporting the power to Myanmar. Responding positively to this proposal, Myanmar said it would send a technical team to assess the viability of exporting gas from its Chin State, which is adjacent to Bangladesh. As per the proposal, the gas would be delivered through a pipeline, crossing through the Naf river, to Chittagong where a power plant would be built. Power generated from the gas supply would be exported again to Myanmar.

Russian firm evaluates Rooppur nuke plant's cooling options (The Daily Star) Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom's sister concern Atomproekt has begun examining the technical and economic aspects of Natural Draft and Ventilation Cooling Towers to select an optimum option for the Rooppur nuclear power plant (NPP). A cooling tower is an important part of any NPP infrastructure; it is a hydro technical construction to cool the water in NPP water circulation systems. The modern natural draft cooling towers are up to 180 metres high and are able to cool up to 170,000 cubic metres of water an hour.

Generator assembling plant to be set up with US\$ 2.0m investment (The Financial Express) SH Power Pac Ltd, in partnership with the Dubai-based Jubaili Bros, will set up a generator assembling plant in Bangladesh to support the growing demand of the device in the local market, officials said. To establish the

assembling unit at Bhaluka in Mymensingh, they are initially investing US\$ 2.0 million with both local and foreign currencies.

BD to import 100MW from Tripura by Dec (The Financial Express) Bangladesh will start importing an additional 100 megawatt (MW) of electricity from the Palatana power plant in Indian state of Tripura by December this year aiming to meet the mounting local demand for electricity, said officials. The government is spending around Tk 2.0 billion to complete construction of the transmission line.

Conoco-Statoil JV yet to decide on signing PSC (The Financial Express) The ConocoPhillips (US) and Statoil (Norway) joint venture (JV) has not yet decided whether it would ink production sharing contract (PSC) or back out. The cabinet committee on economic affairs approved awarding of all the three deepwater blocks in the Bay of Bengal, a company insider said. The JV is yet to take any decision as to whether it would stick to its demand of executing 2.0 per cent annual hike in natural gas prices earlier than first gas production or ink the PSC straight way, he added. The US-Norwegian JV was seeking early execution of the PSC provision of annual 2.0 per cent hike in natural gas price.

IOCs to be invited next year to explore Bay hydrocarbon - 18 offshore blocks to be offered (The Financial Express) The government is set to invite international oil companies (IOCs) for hydrocarbon exploration in the Bay of Bengal next year, said officials. State-run Petrobangla has already placed a proposal to the Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) under the ministry of power, energy and mineral resources to launch the new bidding round in 2016, a senior Petrobangla official said.

Water/Maritime

Western Marine inks deal to build ferry for Uganda (The Financial Express) Western Marine Shipyard has secured another new order from the African market. This time the shipyard will build a 33m shallow draft Ro Ro ferry for the government of Uganda. Western

Marine Shipyard signed contract with JGH Marine A/S, Denmark to build and deliver the ferry to the Ugandan National Roads Authority (UNRA). This project will be marked as a great achievement for the shipbuilding industry of Bangladesh. The net value of this new building project is around Tk 240 million and the WMS expects to deliver the vessel within 12 months. Presently the WMS is building an offshore patrol vessel for the Kenyan department of fisheries.

Chittagong port sets up water treatment plant (The Daily Star)

Chittagong Port Authority has set up a desalination surface water treatment plant for Tk 24 crore, aiming to become self-dependent for water supply. The contractors,



Dhaka-based ABM Water Company and Italy's Oltremare, will start water purification at the plant today on a trial basis. CPA needs 6,000 tonnes of water a day, 40 percent of which is obtained from the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority.

Work on Payra Port remains suspended for a month (The Financial Express) The suspension of work on the Payra Port followed an alleged improper selection of a consultancy firm for conducting techno-feasibility study and devising conceptual master plan for the country's third seaport, officials said. Following the allegation of wrong financial evaluation by a participating bidder, the Cabinet Division issued a letter dated January 13, 2015 to the Ministry of Shipping (MoS) requesting the ministry not to go for awarding contract unless the issue is settled.

Agriculture/Fisheries

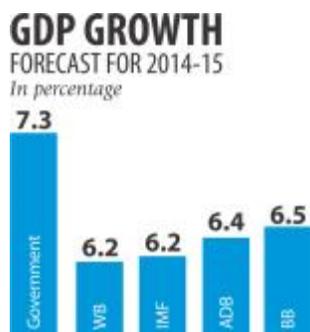
High-tech survey vessel arrives next month (The Financial Express) Bangladesh is going to procure a high-tech marine survey vessel to

conduct a stock assessment of its marine resources, especially to evaluate and promote exploration of fisheries resources of the Bay of Bengal. The multipurpose research vessel, equipped with the latest technology for fisheries and other oceanographic research, will be primarily used to carry out a survey to find out inhabitants of fish, distribution of fish species, and major fishing grounds in the Bay of Bengal.

Other news

Strict rules for large loan restructuring (The Daily Star) Bangladesh Bank has now followed through on its decision to allow restructuring of large loans until June 30 with a watertight guideline for banks to ensure no further defaults on the loans. Political turmoil for the best part of last fiscal year has damaged many large borrowers' business and their debt servicing capacities.

Govt plans to trim growth target as blockade bites (The Daily Star) The government plans to revise down its economic growth target for the current fiscal year as the ongoing nationwide blockade and the associated violence have continued to hit the economy hard. The government had earlier targeted 7.3 percent economic growth for the current fiscal year. The World Bank forecast that the economy would grow by 6.2 percent this fiscal year, while the Asian Development Bank said the growth would be 6.4 percent. The central bank last week also said the GDP growth would be in the region of 6.5-6.8 percent.



NBR to relax rules to import cars to be used as taxicabs (The Daily Star) The National Board of Revenue is going to relax the rules for importing cars that will be used for taxicabs. The tax authority aims to reduce the lower threshold of

engine capacity to 1,485cc (cylinder capacity) from 1,500cc for cars that will be used as taxicabs. However, the duty privilege and upper threshold for importing cars for cabs will remain the same, said a senior official of NBR, seeking anonymity. At present, taxicab operators get a reduced rate of 20 percent on import duty, including customs duty (CD), supplementary duty (SD) and regulatory duty (RD) to import cars up to an engine capacity of 2,000cc.

Govt rolls out landmark IT training programme (The Daily Star) The government rolled out a major programme to train 30,000 students in information technology and IT-enabled services over the next three years to further its Digital Bangladesh vision on February 3. The programme is supported by the 'Leveraging ICT for Growth, Employment and Governance project' (LICT) initiative of Bangladesh Computer Council launched in 2013. The World Bank is providing \$70 million as loans for the LICT project, which is the largest of its kind in the world.

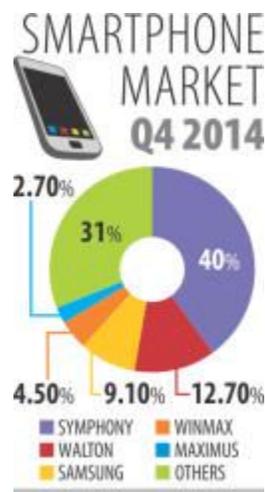
Target to double software exports (The Daily Star) Bangladesh expects to earn over \$250 million through software exports in the current fiscal year, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on February 9. Exports of IT and IT-enabled services stood at \$124.72 million last fiscal year, according to Export Promotion Bureau. Bangladesh exports software to over 50 countries, and the government has attached the highest priority to building a nation educated in IT, Hasina said.

Thai businesses keen to invest in Bangladesh (The Daily Star) Thai entrepreneurs are in dialogues with some Bangladeshi businessmen to invest in the country and exploit its immense business potential, senior Thai government officials said on February 1. As part of the efforts, they held a discussion with the leaders of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in Dhaka. The 17-member Thai business delegation that visited Bangladesh expressed their interest to invest in a number of sectors, including textiles and garments, agri-

machinery, pharmaceutical and cold storage, to grab local and global markets.

Local pharma sales may reach \$2b by 2018: study (The Daily Star) Annual pharmaceutical sales are likely to hit \$2 billion by 2018, riding on increasing demand for good-quality medicine, according to a study by IMS Health, a leading global information and technology service provider to healthcare and life sciences industries. Pharma exports rose 15.65 percent year-on-year to Tk 553.3 crore in fiscal 2013-14, boosted by the country's high-quality products at competitive prices against rising global demand.

Smartphone sales soar (The Daily Star) The smartphone market expanded 83 percent year-on-year in the last quarter of 2014, propelled by low-cost handsets and the enhanced 3G network coverage. More than a million units of smartphones were shipped into Bangladesh between October and December, according to Counterpoint Technology Market Research based in India. The rise in shipment signals that vendors have ample opportunity to target first-time smartphone users in the country, said the research firm. Local Symphony leads the market by a distance, owing to its strong distribution channels, aggressive pricing strategy and customised offerings for local needs, it said.



EU FTA with India, Vietnam not a threat to Bangladesh (The Financial Express) The proposed free trade agreement (FTA) of the European Union (EU) with India and Vietnam would not have any major impact on exports of locally-made products as Bangladesh's product base is not similar to those of India and Vietnam, speakers at a seminar said on February 12.

Shipment of golf shafts surfs ahead despite US benefit cut - Made in Bangladesh tag attracts global brands (The Financial Express) Abolition of trade benefits by the US, the major buyer of Bangladeshi shafts, has left little impact on the export of Bangladeshi golf shafts, with shipment rising by more than 35 per cent in six months to December, the government said.

Exports show a silver lining in gloom (The Daily Star) January's export figures delivered a ray of sunshine amid the doom and gloom brought about by the dragging political turmoil, registering positive growth in keeping with the uptick generated last quarter. Last month, exports grew about 5 percent to \$2.89 billion year-on-year, according to Export Promotion Bureau. The figure is also higher, albeit slightly, than in the previous month: in December last year, some \$2.84 billion was received. January's takings missed the export target for the month, which was \$2.97 billion. Garment products, which typically account for more than 80 percent of the export earnings, also saw an increase. In January, garment exports fetched \$2.42 billion, up about 8 percent year-on-year and 3.86 percent month-on-month.

Bangladesh a top choice for Japanese investors: survey (The Daily Star) Most Japanese firms operating in China choose Bangladesh as the second best investment destination after India due to lower production costs here, according to a survey by Japan External Trade Organisation (Jetro). Due to sluggish operations and struggle for expansion of business in China, firms are expanding their operations mainly in Bangladesh, India, Vietnam and Thailand. Some 71.7 percent Japanese-affiliated firms in China want to expand their operations in Bangladesh, with 78.2 percent favouring India, 66 percent Vietnam and 60.9 percent Thailand, according



to the official trade and investment promotion agency of Japan.

Expo spotlights potential of Canada-Bangladesh trade (The Daily Star) The Showcase Canada 2015 started in Dhaka on February 13, aiming to boost trade and investment between Bangladesh and Canada. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed inaugurated the two-day event, organised by Canada Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CanCham) in association with the High Commission of Canada, at Sonargaon Hotel. Some 32 companies, including local firms participated in the show. While addressing a seminar on the challenges and opportunities in trade between the two countries, organised on the sidelines of the show, Ahmed said businesses are being hampered by the ongoing violent activities.

Meghna Group teams up with Thai firm to form joint venture - New factory will produce polypropylene for packaging industries (The Daily Star) Meghna Group of Bangladesh and PM Group of Thailand have joined hands to set up a polypropylene factory that will support packaging industries at home and abroad. The factory will be the first of its kind in Bangladesh as polypropylene consumers, including garment exporters, now meet their demand by imports. PM Group will invest around \$150 million, equivalent to around Tk 1,170 crore, to set up the plant at Meghnaghat in Narayanganj. Both sides signed a deal in Bangkok in February. However, the shareholding issue has not been finalised yet.

Events

Enhancing Codex Capacity in Bangladesh, 5-6 January, Dhaka, FAO Food Safety Programme (EKN)



The Codex Alimentarius Commission develops harmonized international food standards that are recognized by the SPS/WTO Agreement, to protect public health and promote fair trade. At a workshop organized by the Netherlands-funded FAO Food Safety Programme, the focus was on enhancing meaningful participation of Bangladesh in the international food standards setting process. Experts from India, Japan and New Zealand facilitated the workshop

and discussed the identification of priority agenda items for Bangladesh at Codex Committee meetings, the process for national consultation and making interventions so that Bangladesh's contributions are recognized and incorporated. 40 Participants from the GoB, private and NGO sectors attended, despite the difficult conditions in the city. The second workshop, focusing on food additives, veterinary drugs and pesticides, was held on 20-21 January in Dhaka.

SaFaL is strengthening the rural market chain to link the Producer Groups with the national mainstream and niche markets (EKN)



Solidaridad, with support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands (EKN), is implementing the Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Linkages (SaFaL) project in the southwest Bangladesh. SaFaL is supporting 57,000 smallholder farm households, disadvantaged landless workers for adoption of sustainable value chain-based farming practices in three sub sectors (livestock, aquaculture and horticulture).

Solidaridad and ACI Agribusiness have come to a mutual understanding for developing the efficiency in agro-input and output market chain. The producer group members of SaFaL from Monirampur cluster of Jessore started supplying vegetables to the ACI Cropex sales Centre at Kawran Bazar, Dhaka from December 29, 2014. As of January 18, a total of 4,250 kilograms of vegetables has been supplied to ACI Cropex through 15 consignments. Basar Ago Limited, a supplier to the retail chains in Bangladesh also started sourcing fresh vegetables from the same SaFaL producer groups from 15 January 2015. Basar Ago sourced 4,620 kilograms of vegetables from the producers in two consignments.

PROOFS is using an innovative cognitive sensing methodology (EKN)

The project PROOFS, with support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands (EKN), is using an innovative cognitive sensing methodology, called Sensemaker. The Sensemaker study combined with a baseline study and the evaluation of the pilot, provided the project with both qualitative and quantitative data. To 'make sense' of the data, PROOFS ran workshops in Dhaka from September 29 until October 2. The participants were a multidisciplinary group of local nutrition and business development experts.

The workshops resulted in a common understanding of the key issues around food behaviour and led to an innovative nutrition strategy. The approach consists of 3 key interventions that complement each other and aim to trigger behavior change towards creating Nutrition Competent Communities. Firstly, a salesforce of Nutrition Sales Agents will provide educational messages and sell nutrition and hygiene

products both door-to-door and in group sessions. Secondly, Nutrition Fairs will be organized at regional level where a number of communities can participate in a fair, where separate interventions come together in one place to provide a boost to the Nutrition Competent Community. At the fair, Cooking Competitions will take place based on crowdsourcing principles where the intelligence of the village people, “the crowd”, is used to identify cooking behavior and recipes that work. Lastly, capacity building of FBG’s by Nutrition Officers will sustain activities over time and ensure that nutrition opportunities are included in the business plans of FBG’s.

Bangladesh Furniture and Interior Decor (BFID) Exposition: 24-26 March The 4th Bangladesh Furniture and Interior Decor Expo-2015 (BFID Expo-2015) will be held in the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh during the period of 24-26 March, 2015. It is aimed at showcasing country’s competitiveness in Furniture and Interior Decor Items. More information for the fair is available on their website: <http://www.bfidexpo.com>.

Tenders

Invitation for International Tender Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Authority (DTCA) under Ministry of Communication issued a tender for the procurement of Rolling Stock and Equipment of Uttara Depot for MRT Line-6. Tender was published on 03-Feb-2014 and closing on 30-Mar-2015 at 12:00 pm. For details, please contact: Md. Mofazzel Hossain, Project Director, DMRTDP, Probashi Kallyan Bhaban, 71-72 Old Elephant Road, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1000. Phone: 880-2-9359828 Fax: 88-02-9358589 Email: md.mofazzelh@yahoo.com

Invitation for International Tender Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Minerals Corporation under Power Division issued a tender for procurement of Plant Design, Supply and Installation of Package 8: 132kV Transmission Lines associated with Bhaluka, Baroiarhat and Ramganj Substations on Turnkey Basis. Tender was published on 18-Feb-2014 and closing on 02-Apr-2015 at 11:00 am. For details, please contact: Director, CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka; Phone: 8901791, 8901788 Fax: 8901411 Email: dcemsu@caab.gov.bd

Invitation for International Tender Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Minerals Corporation under Energy and Mineral Resources Division issued a tender for Supply, Installation, Commissioning & Testing of 01 (One) no. Air Colled Heat Exchanger in the existing 60 MMSCFD capacity gas process plant with engineering design and fabrication for present process parameters at location-E of Titas Gas Field, Bramonbaria, Bangladesh. Tender was published on 24-Feb-2014 and closing on 25-Mar-2015. For details, please contact: Engr. Md. Taufiqur Rahman Tipu, General Manager (Technical Services), Bangladesh Gas Fields Co. Ltd.(BGFCL), Birashar, Brahmanbaria-3400, Bangladesh. Phone: 85158141 Email: prbgfcl@gmail.com

Invitation for International Tender Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) under Energy and Mineral Resources Division issued a tender for procurement of 2D Field Planning/Designing/Quality Control Equipment, Software & Hardware. Tender was published on 24-Feb-2014 and closing on 30-Mar-2015 at 11:30 am. For details, please contact: A. M. Saifuzzaman, General Manager (Admin), BAPEX BHABAN (Level-12,4, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh. ***Please remain updated on these and future tenders at the following website:*** <http://www.cptu.gov.bd/Notices.aspx>

More information

The Embassy always welcomes your comments on, and suggestions for the Newsflash. We also encourage interested Dutch and Bangladeshi companies to place an article or message in our newsflash. For more information please contact our economic department at the Embassy in Dhaka through email dha-ea@minbuza.nl, or by phone (00882) 8822715-8.