

DCCI

REVIEW



LDC Graduation: Private-Sector Preparedness





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Contents

Editorial	01
Chamber News	02
Outcome Report	13
Article	22
National Economy	23
SAARC News	26
Asia-Pacific News	28
Middle East News	30
International News	32
সংবাদ বিচিত্রা	34
Trade Information	36
Share Market	37
Pictorial	38

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LDC graduation: private-sector preparedness

Bangladesh, which the United Nations included in the group of least developed countries in December 1975, is all set to leave the bloc to become a developing country on November 24, 2026 on a date that the Committee for Development Policy, a subsidiary body of the UN Economic and Social Council, put off after it had qualified the country, in the triennial review in November 2021, for the graduation on November 24, 2024 on having met the three defining criteria of per capita gross national income, economic and environmental vulnerability index and human assets index.

Despite the earlier timeline of 2024 with a three years' transition period from 2021 for Bangladesh to go up the developing nation status in 2024, in view of the impact of Covid pandemic and a request of the Bangladesh government, the UN committee deferred the graduation by two years until 2026.

The graduation comes with both challenges and opportunities. The challenges would include the loss of benefits meant for least developed countries and the need for adaptation to new economic realities. The graduation would lead to the waiving of a number of preferences and privileges on the export market, more to Europe and Canada. The gross export revenue of Bangladesh is estimated to decline by 8–10 percent as it would lose duty- and quota-free market access. This could result in the loss of an estimated \$2.5 billion a year. But for now, the European Union and the United Kingdom have agreed to continue with the benefits of the preferential treatment for three years after the graduation. Bangladesh, now in a dual transition as it earned the lower middle-income country status in 2015, would need to take out loans from international lenders based on a mixture of concessional and non-concessional interest rates.

The transition may lead to the loss of access to the LDC fund for climate change. Bangladesh's subsidy in the agriculture sector would need to be more transparent and limited. It would be difficult to financially incentivize infant industries. While the graduation remains a recognition of the growth and resilience of the Bangladesh economy from the international community, it would bolster the confidence of global financiers. The countries that

have graduated earlier have experienced a higher flow of foreign direct investment. An improved perception of market risks is expected to upgrade the international credit rating, which would lead to an increased generation of investible resources. The UN Committee for Development Policy has noted that the extended preparatory period of five years would enable Bangladesh to tackle global health and economic issues and the exposure to external shocks.

But the preparedness of the private sector is reported not adequate to face the challenges post the graduation. Businesspeople began expressing concern the middle of 2024 about the poor preparedness while the government appears firm on not delaying the graduation any further. Although the private sector has talked about a likely delay, which would better arm it to face the challenges, it is still not known if a further delay is an option any longer. Against this backdrop, the private sector wants that the government should ensure a business- and investment-friendly environment, increase credit flow to double digits, bring about good governance and transparency in the financial sector, reduce interest rates on loans, continue with policy support for local and foreign investment, curb public expenditure with more austerity measures, reduce non-performing loans, develop infrastructure, improve market management and work out a long-term supportive energy pricing policy. The government should, as the UN agency has highlighted, should preserve necessary policy space and negotiate possible bilateral and regional agreements.

As the graduation entails the need for Bangladesh to adapt to new economic realities, it should immediately develop a national transition strategy to attend to the challenges and opportunities, with a focus on economic diversification, technology adoption and labor productivity and standards. It should navigate the implications of the graduation in the World Trade Organization, focusing on changes in trade preferences and special and differential treatment. Bangladesh needs to prepare itself for the next stage of development and focus on sustainable growth and inclusive development to facilitate the private sector to adapt to the challenges **■**

DCCI business delegation visited UAE to explore trade and investment



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (10th from right), Senior Vice President Razeev H Chowdhury (ninth from right), Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (11th from left), former President Rizwan Rahman (13th from left), Director & former President Ashraf Ahmed (12th from right) along with the DCCI delegation members are seen in a group photograph taken in Abu Dhabi, UAE on February 25.

A 29-member business delegation of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by its president Taskeen Ahmed, left Dhaka for the United Arab Emirates on February 24 for a three-day visit with an aim to enhance bilateral trade, expand export products to Middle Eastern markets and attract investment to Bangladesh. The DCCI delegation will participate in bilateral business meetings and business-to-business sessions with the Abu Dhabi Chamber, the Dubai Chambers and the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Bangladesh delegation will get an opportunity to showcase its area

of interest, products lineup, export or import interest and the scope of joint ventures to entrepreneurs of the United Arab Emirates. Out of total non-resident Bangladeshis working abroad worldwide, more than 17 percent work in the United Arab Emirates, the second largest labor market for Bangladesh. The total trade volume between Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates reached nearly \$2 billion in the 2024 fiscal year and the scope of bilateral trade and investment continues to grow.

Competitive investment framework, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, conducive environment for foreign

investors, targeted tax concessions in various industries, 100 percent foreign ownership, bonded warehousing facility, effective intellectual property protection, investors' protection and double taxation treaty with more than 36 countries including the United Arab Emirates have made Bangladesh an attractive destination.

Dubai's strategic location can be considered a key gateway to Bangladeshi traders to access the growing halal market in the Middle East. Besides, the United Arab Emirates can be one of the best sources of Bangladesh's LNG import under a long-term cooperation **r**

Skills development essential to attract FDI to Bangladesh

Business forum between Abu Dhabi Chamber and DCCI delegation held

The Abu Dhabi Chamber of the United Arab Emirates organized a business forum on "strengthening economic ties between Abu Dhabi and Bangladesh" at the Abu Dhabi School of Management on February 25. The members of the visiting business delegation of the

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by its president Taskeen Ahmed participated in the business forum. Taskeen Ahmed is leading a 29-member delegation to the Emirates to explore business opportunities.

Taskeen Ahmed said that being one of the largest trade organizations in

Bangladesh representing the SME sector, the Dhaka Chamber had been working for more than six decades to develop a favorable business environment for local and foreign trade and investment. He said that in 2024, Bangladesh's import from the United Arab Emirates amounted

\$1,352.9 million and the export to the United Arab Emirates was \$402.63 million. He said that UAE entrepreneurs had already invested \$321.67 million in Bangladesh. He invited UAE investors to invest in the renewable energy, infrastructure, logistics, information technology, tourism and healthcare sector of Bangladesh.

The DCCI president requested UAE businesspeople to hire human resources from Bangladesh who are skilled in information technology, textile and engineering industries. He requested them to import agricultural products, apparels, jute products and medicines from Bangladesh. Taskeen Ahmed recommended that for skills development initiatives, both the DCCI Business Institute and the Abu Dhabi School of Business should work together.

Shamis Ali Al Dhaheri, the second vice-chairman and managing director of the Abu Dhabi Chamber, said the United Arab Emirates had showed successes in expanding its investment as well as attracting foreign investment through the development of skilled human resources. Bangladesh should also focus on its large pool of young people to make



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (centre) seen receiving a memento from Shamis Ali Al Dhaheri (right), the second Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of the Abu Dhabi Chamber and Dr. Tayeb A Kamali (left), Chairman, Board of Trustees, Abu Dhabi School of Management after a bilateral meeting between DCCI and Abu Dhabi Chamber, UAE held on February 25.

them skilled enough so that foreign investors could confidently invest in Bangladesh using this young and energetic demographic dividend. He assured the United Arab Emirates of all possible support and cooperation for the skills development of Bangladeshi human resources.

Rizwan Rahman, former president of the Dhaka Chamber, made another presentation on trade and

investment potential of Bangladesh. Omar Al Hosani, the head of investor engagement of the Abu Dhabi Investment Office, read out the keynote paper on Abu Dhabi's trade and investment potential. Rizwan Rahman said that despite potential for enhancing bilateral trade and investment, it had not yet reached the desired level, adding that more engagements




DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (left) seen speaking at the business forum on "Strengthening economic ties between Abu Dhabi and Bangladesh" organized by Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce, UAE held at the auditorium of Abu Dhabi School of Management (ADSM) on February 25.

among the entrepreneurs of the two countries was necessary to expand trade and investment. He invited the entrepreneurs of Abu Dhabi to invest in Bangladesh's infrastructure, logistics, land port, sea port services development and sustainable energy sector. Omar Al Hosani said that the United Arab Emirates was focusing on manufacturing, export and creating

a knowledge-based economic ecosystem.

He said the government of the United Arab Emirates was providing 100 percent ownership and duty-free facilities to the foreign investors on their investments. By exploiting the investment eco-system there, Bangladeshis could invest in the

United Arab Emirates.

A business-to-business networking session was also held in the presence of representatives of about 35 UAE companies. The Dhaka Chamber's senior vice-president Razeev H Chowdhury, vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman and members of the business delegation attended 

DCCI and Dubai Chambers ink co-op memorandum

Dubai Chambers holds 'Dubai-Bangladesh Business Briefing'

With a view to further expanding bilateral trade and investment, The Dubai Chambers in the United Arab Emirates organized 'Dubai-Bangladesh Business Briefing' aimed an expansion of bilateral trade and investment in the Dubai Chambers' auditorium on February 26. The visiting Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry delegation participated in this meeting. The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed led the 29-member delegation.

The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed said that Bangladeshis constituted one of the largest expatriate communities in the United Arab Emirate, accounting

for 17 percent of Bangladesh's total overseas employment, making the United Arab Emirate the second-largest destination after Saudi Arabia. Bangladesh's competitive investment framework, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, a favorable regulatory environment for foreign investors, 100 percent foreign ownership, bonded warehouse facilities, strong intellectual property protection etc make Bangladesh an attractive destination for UAE investment, he said.

There is an opportunity for UAE entrepreneurs to invest in the logistics services sector in the proposed economic zones, especially, to

improve the infrastructure of business and investment in Bangladesh. He urged the entrepreneurs of Dubai to set up skills development training centers in Bangladesh and invest in the renewable energy, financial technology, financial, healthcare, information technology and tourism sectors.

Mohammed Lootah, president and chief executive officer of the Dubai Chambers, in his welcome speech, expressed commitment to strengthening cooperation between business communities of Dubai and Bangladesh to foster partnership and contribute to achieving shared developmental



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (third from left) seen speaking at a bilateral meeting between Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Dubai Chambers held on February 26 at Dubai Chambers, UAE. Dubai Chambers President and Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah (second from right), DCCI Senior Vice President Razeev H Chowdhury (second from left), Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (left) and Former President Rizwan Rahman (fourth from left) among others are also seen in the picture.

goals. He also gave an assurance of extending comprehensive support for Bangladeshi businesspeople and investors to help them grow their operations in Dubai. He said that the number of Bangladeshi companies registered as active members of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce had reached 8,686 by 2024, reflecting Dubai's growing attractiveness among Bangladeshi investors.

He also requested the Bangladeshi companies to establish their local offices in the United Arab Emirates that could play an important role in helping Bangladeshi exporters to grab the Middle Eastern as well as African market. He urged Bangladeshi IT companies to invest in the United Arab Emirate. He said that establishing an effective data center in Bangladesh was crucial for the development of the information technology sector.

Rizwan Rahman, former president of the Dhaka Chamber, made a presentation on trade and investment potentials of Bangladesh. He emphasized on the signing of a free trade agreement between Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates to expand the scope of trade and investment.



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (left) and Dubai Chambers President Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah (right) are seen exchanging greetings after signing a MoU between Dhaka Chamber and Dubai Chambers on February 26 at Dubai Chambers headquarters in the UAE.

Omar Khan, head of research and data at the Dubai Chambers, presented another paper on trade relations between Dubai and Bangladesh. He said that the business-to-business relation between the private sector representatives of the two countries was important for the expansion of bilateral trade. He said that there was a lot of potential for Bangladeshis to invest in processed food, data centers, healthcare, logistics, fashion design and e-commerce sectors.

Meanwhile a memorandum was, signed between the Dhaka Chamber and the Dubai Chambers. The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed

and the Dubai Chambers president Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah signed the memorandum. The agreement was signed to enhance bilateral cooperation and promote mutual trade and investment diversification.

After the business discussion, a business-to-business session was held with the representatives of 50 Dubai Chambers' member companies and members of the DCCI delegation. The entrepreneurs of the two countries participated in a detailed discussion on trade and investment. The Dhaka Chamber's senior vice-president Razeev H Chowdhury, vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman and delegation members attended **r**



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (left) seen speaking at the business forum titled "Dubai- Bangladesh Business Briefing & B2B Match-making" organized by Dubai Chambers at its premises on February 26. Dubai Chambers President Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah (sixth from right), DCCI former President Rizwan Rahman (seated fifth from left) DCCI Senior Vice President Razeev H Chowdhury (right) and Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (seated second from left) among others are also seen in the picture.

DCCI invites Sharjah investors to invest in IT and Jute sectors

Dhaka Chamber, Sharjah Chamber sign memorandum



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (fifth from right) seen exchanging views with the business leaders of Sharjah Chamber on February 27 at Sharjah Chamber's office. Chairman of Sharjah Chamber Abdallah Sultan Al Owais (third from left), DCCI Director & former President Ashraf Ahmed (third from right), Senior Vice President Razeev H Chowdhury (second from right) and Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (right) were also present during the meeting.

The Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a memorandum of understanding at the Sharjah Chamber on February 27, with an aim to expand the export of Bangladeshi products to Sharjah and increase bilateral investment. The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed and the Sharjah Chamber chairman Abdallah Sultan Al Owais signed the memorandum.

Taskeen Ahmed urged investors of Sharjah to invest in the infrastructure sector in Bangladesh. He said that it would help to boost bilateral trade and commerce as well as attract other foreign investors. He also called on entrepreneurs of Sharjah to invest in Bangladesh's IT sector, leveraging the potential of the large youth population. There is a lot of potential to invest in the environmentally-friendly jute products, he added.

A UAE-based bank now operates in Bangladesh. He invited other banks of the United Arab Emirates,

including Sharjah Islami Bank, to start offshore banking in Bangladesh that would expand bilateral trade and investment, Taskeen Ahmed said. He suggested that the Bangladesh government should offer incentives to foreign investors.

Entrepreneurs of Sharjah can invest in leather and leather goods, electronics,

home appliances, footwear and food processing industries in the economic zones. Taskeen Ahmed said that Bangladesh can be a gateway to the export of United Arab Emirates to various markets in South and Southeast Asia.

Abdallah Sultan Al Owais, chairman of the Sharjah Chamber, said that



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (left) and Sharjah Chamber Chairman Abdallah Sultan Al Owais (right) are seen exchanging the MoU document after signing between the Dhaka Chamber and Sharjah Chamber on February 27.

in the past decades, Bangladesh's products, including apparel, have been exported to countries of America, Europe and the Middle East. The export rate is increasing, which is promising.

But East and West African countries are also potential destinations for

Bangladesh's export and in that case, the United Arab Emirates could be considered a gateway to that market. He said more than one million Bangladeshi work in the United Arab Emirates, but to create more employment opportunities there, it is necessary to pay more attention to skills development.

A business-to-business match-making session was held between the Sharjah Chamber and the Dhaka Chamber.

The Dhaka Chamber's senior vice-president Razeed H Chowdhury and vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman attended **r**

DCCI calls for more private sector credit flow

It is essential to increase credit flow to double digits to ensure a business and investment-friendly environment, said Taskeen Ahmed, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a seminar that the Dhaka Chamber organized on February 22.

It is also essential to bring about good governance and transparency in the financial sector, reduced interest rates on loans, policy supports for local and foreign investment, an integrated development in the infrastructure sector, improved market management, reduced value-added tax on essential commodities and a long-term supportive energy pricing policy for the industrial sector, he said at the seminar on "Biannual Economic State and Future Outlook of Bangladesh Economy: Private

Sector Perspective, July-December, 2024."

The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed read out the keynote paper on the economy during the July–December in the 2024 fiscal year. He highlighted the global economic situation, monetary policy, inflation, private investment, foreign direct investment, agriculture, industry and services sector, CMSME, energy and power, logistics infrastructure, skills development and financial sector. He also suggested curbing public expenditure through austerity measures as the revenue generation is a concern.

He suggested an increase in credit flow to double digits, strong vigilance against non-performing loans,

good governance and transparency, and reduced interest rate on loans to restore the confidence of entrepreneurs. He proposed that market monitoring should be improved to reduce inflation, strict enforcement of law and order to break cartels.

He also emphasized the continuation of policy support for local and foreign investment and integrated development of the infrastructure sector. He said that African and Latin American markets were potential export destinations for Bangladeshi products.

For the development of the SME sector, it is necessary to simplify the policies for loans, introduce alternative low-cost financing and



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (third from left) seen speaking at a seminar on "Bi-annual Economic State & Future Outlook of Bangladesh Economy: Private Sector Perspective (July-December, 2024)" held on February 22. Additional Secretary (Export), (Routine Charge of Secretary), Ministry of Commerce Md. Abdur Rahim Khan (third from right), Chairman, Policy Exchange of Bangladesh, Dr. M Masrur Reaz (left), Executive Director of RAPID Dr. M. Abu Eusuf (right), Research Director, BIDS Dr. Mohammad Yunus (second from right) and Executive Director (Research), Bangladesh Bank Dr. Sayera Younus (second from left) are also seen in the picture.

expand digital financing, Taskeen Ahmed said. He stressed the need for long-term planning in the energy sector as well as the development of network management and setting affordable energy prices for the industry and general consumers.

Speaking as Chief Guest, Md Abdur Rahim Khan, Additional Secretary (Export) to the Commerce Ministry, said that \$40 billion revenue in an economy of \$500 billion is nothing but a mismatch and unacceptable. He said, "We do not see full automation of all government services and proper implementation of the single national window which is a concern for all of us."

He said that it was possible to reduce the cost of trade by 10–15 percent if the logistics policy and trade facilitation agreement of the World Trade Organization are fully implemented. He said that the commerce ministry had taken an initiative to set up a "technology center" in Gazipur to build capacity and support entrepreneurs in the light engineering sector.

He said that an increased revenue generation and attracting export-oriented foreign direct investment could reduce the investment gap. He stressed the need for improving export competitiveness to face the challenges of the LDC graduation.

Dr M Masrur Reaz, chairman of the Policy Exchange of Bangladesh, said that because of the central bank's delay in taking necessary measures and printing money coupled with several other national and international

factors back in 2022, inflation had gone high, but the central bank had taken several positive initiatives by 2024, leading to a positive impact on the economy and as a result, inflation slightly came down.

He said that because of reserve crisis and import restrictions on raw materials and capital machinery, "we saw a shortage on the supply side that affected the economy and it helped to fuel inflation. But once the reserve will increase up to \$25–27 billion in the current fiscal year, we will be able to see improvement in import in the industrial sector and the supply side.

He said that it was necessary to strengthen the capacity of the Competition Commission and other agencies concerned for a strong market oversight. He hoped, "We can ensure uninterrupted energy supply to industries and control industrial unrest. Our export will increase by \$5-7 billion this year. It will have a positive impact on the reserve."

Dr M Abu Eusuf, Executive Director, RAPID said that the government should not go for a traditional budget with a huge deficit in the next fiscal year. He said that the coordination of budget, monetary policy and market mechanism is very important to control inflation. He said that there was no alternative to automation of the value-added tax system to increase revenue collection. He added that despite a decline in poverty, inequality was increasing. He stressed the need for an increase in the tax-GDP ratio.

BIDS Research Director Dr Mohammad Yunus said, "We need to increase compliance and enhance public-private coordination based on extensive research to meet post-LDC challenges." He suggested an increase in the tax and value-added tax net. He emphasized foreign direct investment and joint ventures, especially in the leather and pharmaceutical sectors.

The Bangladesh Bank Executive Director (Research) Dr Sayera Younus said that because of supply side factors, inflation increased but the central bank intervened in the right time to address the problems through its monetary policy, by increasing policy rates and other mechanism.

Inflation has not come down to the desired level as the cost of importing goods has increased because of the high exchange rate, she said. She hoped that inflation would fall below 7 percent by 2026 and credit flow would increase to double digits by the year.

Additional secretary to the Economic Relations division AHM Jahangir said that Bangladesh was fully prepared for the graduation from the LDC status, but the final call should come from the government on consultation with stakeholders.

He said that a committee had already been formed to sit with stakeholders, including the private sector, on a regular basis. The committee would prepare a position paper with a final recommendation.

The Dhaka Chamber's vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman and board members attended 

DCCI exchanges views with small traders

Small traders expressed dissatisfaction about the delay in letters of credit adjustment, unstable value of the dollar, the high interest rate on bank loans, harassment in the payment of value-added tax, an increase of VAT and taxes on products, the complexity of trade license renewal process and

high fees, declining law and order and unbearable traffic congestion. They hoped that the government would look into the matters so that small traders or shopkeepers could do their businesses smoothly. They said this at a view exchange meeting that the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce

and Industry organized in its Gulshan office on February 06.

Office bearers and members of market associations of Gulshan, Mohakhali, Banani and Badda attended the meeting. The discussion dealt with issues such as the recent



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (centre) moderating a view exchanging meeting titled “Income Tax, VAT, Customs, Traffic Congestion and recent Law & Order Situation” with the small traders of Gulshan, Mohakhali, Banani and Badda area held on February 06 at DCCI Gulshan Centre. Deputy Commissioner of DMP (Gulshan Zone) Md. Tarek Mahmud (second from left), Additional Director (Foreign Exchange Policy Department), Bangladesh Bank Md. Sayedul Islam (left), First secretary (VAT Implementation) of National Board of Revenue Mohammad Ariful Islam (second from right) and DCCI Senior Vice President Razeed H Chowdhury (right) are also seen in the picture.

increase in value-added and other taxes, law and order, customs, traffic congestion, a high price of the dollar, trade license renewal fees, etc.

Md Sayedul Islam, Additional Director (Foreign Exchange Policy department), First Secretary of the National Board of Revenue (VAT Implementation) Mohammad Ariful Islam and Deputy Commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Md Tarek Mahmud attended.

The Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed said that because of challenges of the global trade, “our entrepreneurs face an increasingly difficult situation to survive. The complexity of value-added and other tax systems have become a major challenge. Because of regular changes in taxes and VAT structure, additional burden of advance income tax adjustment issue and regulatory duty and obstacles to import and export create an additional economic pressure on the private sector.”

The Dhaka Chamber president said that because of the recent volatile law and order and deteriorating traffic situation, a conducive environment

for trade and investment is hampered. Taskeen Ahmed said that limited access of credit for SME entrepreneurs, the high rate of interest on loans and unstable dollar rates hamper the local industrialization. It is essential to take coordinated initiatives and implement them for the development of the economy.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Md Tarek Mahmud said that after the recent political changeover, reforms in the police are going on. The police are a hard-working force and this force is committed to improving law and order. “We have zero tolerance towards any miscreants,” he added. He, however, appealed to people to help the police in ending extortion, harassment and encroachment on footpath.

Md Sayedul Islam, Additional Director (Foreign Exchange Policy Department) of the Bangladesh Bank, said that the fixing of letters of credit margin depends on the relationship between the bank and the customer. The issue of LC margin is not the same for all products. “Our traders have suffered a lot because of the unusual fluctuation in the value of

the US dollar that happened because of a global unrest caused by the Covid pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, but the central bank is working to keep the value of the dollar stable,” he said.

First Secretary (VAT Implementation) of the National Board of Revenue, Mohammad Ariful Islam said that the board had been given a large revenue target which was challenging. He sought cooperation from all to achieve this target. He said that an initiative had recently been taken to register gold traders and the revenue board was working to expand the scope of the tax net. He said that the board was working towards implementing an integrated revenue management system that would be automated and transparent.

Md Abu Taher, vice-president of Gulshan 1 DNCC South Paka Market Traders’ Association, said that it took him about three months to complete the opening of letters of credit.

Firoz Alam Swapan, president of the Mohakhali Bazar Traders’ Association, spoke about an increased VAT rate and high fees of

trade license renewal and the delay.

Mohammad Al Amin, Partner in the Amin Hossain & Co, said that under Section 163 of the Income tax law, the delayed adjustment of advance income tax was a challenge.

Mahfizul Haque, Proprietor of Hasan Hardware, said that the arrival of consumers to shops decreased significantly because of unbearable traffic congestion and deteriorating law and order.

Md Alamgir Hossain, General Secretary of the Metropolitan Shopping Plaza Market Association, said that a number of shop-owners were attacked by miscreants recently but the police did not show the level of earnestness expected. He stressed the need for a strong rule of law.

Md Anwar Hossain, Chairman of Mowla Traders, said that high interest rates on loans, declining law and order, difficulties in LC payment,

harassment in paying VAT, etc hampered trade and commerce of small traders.

The Dhaka Chamber's senior vice-president Razeev H Chowdhury, vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman attended.

Twenty-five business entities became members of the Dhaka Chamber and the chamber president Taskeen Ahmed handed over the certificates **r**

Old Dhaka business people urge package VAT

DCCI exchanges views with Old Dhaka businessmen

Traders, especially small entrepreneurs of Old Dhaka, one of the oldest and largest business hubs, face challenges in recent times because of unbearable traffic congestion, water stagnation, poor infrastructure, inadequate access to finance for SMEs, declining law and order, increased dollar prices, delay in import and export, the high rate of interest on loans, increased value-added and other tax rates and complex revenue structure.

Businesspeople of Old Dhaka identified the problems at an exchange of views that Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized with small and medium entrepreneurs in Old Dhaka on February 08. Business leaders of specialized associations of Old Dhaka and representatives of several other business organizations participated in the event.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Md Jashim Uddin,

Director (Research), Chief Economist's Unit Dr Md Selim Al Mamun and Additional Commissioner, Customs, Excise and VAT Commissionerate (South, Dhaka) of the National Board of Revenue Manash Kumar Barman attended as special guests.

The Dhaka Chamber President Taskeen Ahmed stressed the need for simplifying the tax and VAT system according to the size, nature and capacity of businesses, removing complexity and bottlenecks in



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (centre) moderating a view-exchange meeting titled "Income Tax, VAT, Customs, Traffic Congestion and recent Law & Order Situation" with the small traders of Old Dhaka on February 08. Deputy Commissioner of DMP (Lalbagh Zone) Md. Jashim Uddin (second from left), Director (Research), Chief Economist's Unit, Bangladesh Bank Dr. Md. Selim Al Mamun (right), Additional Commissioner, Customs, Excise and VAT Commissionerate (South Dhaka) of National Board of Revenue Manash Kumar Barman (second from right) and DCCI Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (left) were also present during the meeting.

import-export procedures and fixing a realistic VAT rate.

He said that despite being a business hub for several hundred years, the entrepreneurs of Old Dhaka were facing problems because of traffic congestion, lack of infrastructure, and tax and VAT issues. Joint initiatives are needed to solve these problems, he said, adding that for a business-friendly environment, improved law and order is a must.

Dr Md Selim Al Mamun, Director (Research), Chief Economist's Unit of Bangladesh Bank, said that in 2022–2024, the dollar rate was depreciated by 35 percent on the local market and it caused instability in currency management, but the central bank was working to bring stability of exchange rate. He said that import and export had increased by 3.5 percent and 10.9 percent respectively in six months and remittances reached \$16 billion in seven months. He said that the Bangladesh Bank had already formed a task force to bring back the laundered money.

Additional Commissioner of Customs, Excise and VAT Commissionerate (South, Dhaka) Manash Kumar Barman said that the government had already taken initiatives to automate

the VAT system to ease the return system and reduce harassment. He urged entrepreneurs not to pay VAT to anyone without receipts. He said that there was a misconception about VAT, noting that for traders, VAT is always calculated based on product's value addition, not on the manufacturing price.

Md Jashim Uddin, Deputy Commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said that traffic police would be deployed at eight important spots to ease congestion in Old Dhaka. But, he urged businesspeople to recruit volunteers as well. He urged the traders to take police help in carrying cash during Ramadan. He said that a number of roads in Old Dhaka would be made one-way to ease traffic congestion soon.

Matiur Rahman, former Dhaka Chamber president, said that considering the economic situation, it was necessary to reduce the LC margin irrespective of bank-client relationship. He discouraged changing tariff rates by issuing SROs in the middle of the year.

Manwar Hossain, Chairman of the Anwar Group of Industries and former director of the Dhaka Chamber,

stressed the need for increasing the tax network and reducing the tax rate.

Alhaj Abdus Salam, former senior vice-president of the Dhaka Chamber, said that because of unbearable traffic congestion, sales in Old Dhaka continuously decreased while faced increasing losses because of the high rate of value-added and other taxes.

The representatives of the sectoral trade associations of Old Dhaka emphasized the introduction of package VAT system on essential goods to contain inflation, simplification of the tax-VAT system, easing traffic congestion, improvement in law and order, the imposition of duty on tariff value of imported products, reduction in VAT rate, stopping the misuse of import under bond license facility, reduction in the government's expenditure and the automation and simplification of processes at ports.

The Dhaka Chamber's vice-president Md Salem Sulaiman and board members attended.

After the event, the Dhaka Chamber president Taskeen Ahmed handed over the chamber's membership certificates to 33 newly enrolled members **r**

DCCI condoles death of ATM Waziullah



ATM Waziullah, a former President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, (DCCI) passed away at the United Hospital, Dhaka on February 12 (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Rajeeun). He was 87. The Dhaka Chamber President Taskeen Ahmed and Members of the Board

expressed their deepest condolence at his death and extended profound sympathy to the bereaved family members. ATM Waziullah was the President of the

Chamber in 1993. He left behind a son, two daughters and many well-wishers.

AM Waziullah was the Chairman of the Kobeda Group of Companies engaged in manufacturing and indenting business for a long time. He was also the President of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) for the term 2010–2012. As the Dhaka Chamber President, he played a remarkable role in the overall development of trade and investment ecosystem. His namaz-e-janazah was held at the Uttara Sector 4 Jame Mosque on February 14 and later was buried at the Banani graveyard.

DCCI calls for improved law & order for business expansion

Members of the board of directors of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by its president Taskeen Ahmed, met the home affairs Adviser Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (retd.) on February 16.

DCCI president Taskeen Ahmed said that the private sector had recently been running business activities amid various challenges, including instability in business environment, investor distrust, high inflation, disruption in the supply chain and declining law and order situation. He stressed the need for an improvement in the overall law and order, including end to extortion and politically motivated harassment, especially in business establishments, to gain the trust of local and foreign investors.


The Home Affairs Adviser said that it was necessary to change the mindset of the people from all walks of life to keep prices of goods affordable



DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed (fifth from left) seen presenting a DCCI publication to the Adviser for Home Affairs, Government of Bangladesh Lt. Gen. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (Retd.) (sixth from left) after a courtesy meeting held on February 16 at the Bangladesh Secretariat. DCCI Senior Vice President Razeev H Chowdhury (third from right), Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (fourth from left) and members of the Board of Directors are also seen in the picture.

in the market. He said that mobile courts would be operated to keep law and order and keep goods prices tolerable. He said that the government had already taken initiatives to build small-scale cold

storages in different places to store seeds of agricultural products.

Dhaka Chamber's senior vice-president Razeev H Chowdhury and vice-president Md. Salem Solaiman also attended the meeting 

Contractionary monetary policy for long to harm credit flow: DCCI


The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry has expressed concern about the Bangladesh Bank's decision to maintain a contractionary monetary policy in the half of the 2024–25 fiscal year, keeping the policy rate at 10 percent.

Aimed at curbing inflation, this rigid stand would harm private sector credit flow and economic expansion. The private sector relies heavily on banks for investments and high interest rates increases production cost, fueling inflation. Despite inflation having eased to 9.94 percent in January from 10.89 percent in December 2024, it still remains above the warranted level.

The Dhaka Chamber is also concerned about the decision to maintain the private sector credit growth target at 9.8 percent for January–June of the 2025 fiscal year while actual growth fell to 7.3 percent in the first half, the lowest in 12 years. Meanwhile, public sector credit flow surged from the 14.2 percent target to 18.1 percent in December 2024, requiring curbs through austerity measures. To restore private sector confidence

and business operation, credit growth must reach double digits.

The Dhaka Chamber has urged the Bangladesh Bank to introduce sector-specific funds and entrepreneurial support programs to boost credit flow as restrictive monetary policies risk further economic stagnation. Although the central bank implemented market-based exchange rate, traders had to buy the US dollar for higher prices. This discrepancy must be addressed to ensure consistency, benefiting all stakeholders, including traders and remitters.

The Dhaka Chamber has criticized the Bangladesh Bank for not taking adequate steps to strengthen banking governance amid the liquidity crisis and rising non-performing loans. While the adoption of the ECL methodology under IFRS 9 from 2027 has been a positive move, there is a limited focus on implementing governance. Without a strong governance and fast legal resolutions, the banking sector would remain vulnerable, hindering private sector growth and economic resilience 

Seminar on “Bi-annual Economic State & Future Outlook of Bangladesh Economy; Private Sector Perspective (June-December, FY2024-25)”

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) organized a seminar titled “Biannual Economic State & Future Outlook of Bangladesh Economy: Private Sector Perspective” on Saturday, 22nd February, 2025, at the DCCI Auditorium. The event was attended by distinguished academics, expert researchers, high-ranking government officials, business leaders, civil society members, media representatives, and Board of Directors members of DCCI.

Taskeen Ahmed, President of DCCI, delivered Welcome Address and Keynote presentation. After the presentation, he also moderated the seminar. The esteemed panelists included Dr. Sayera Yunus, Executive Director (Research) at Bangladesh Bank; Dr. Mohammad Yunus, Research Director at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS); Dr. M. Abu Eusuf, Executive Director at RAPID and Professor and Former Chairman of the Department of Development Studies at the University of Dhaka; and Dr. M. Masrur Reaz, CEO of Policy Exchange Bangladesh. Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Additional Secretary (Export) (with Routine Charge of Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, GoB graced the seminar as the Chief Guest.

The formulation of the Biannual Economic State of Bangladesh is a cornerstone of DCCI's activities. This comprehensive analysis, produced every six months, provides an inclusive analysis of the country's economic performance, focusing on private sector development. It outlines key economic priorities, identifies challenges, and offers actionable insights that guide both government and industry stakeholders.

Keynote Presentation by Taskeen Ahmed, President, DCCI

- The global economy is projected to grow at 3.3% in 2025 and 2026, slightly below the 3.7% historical average (IMF). However, inflation remains the biggest risk for Bangladesh in 2025 (WEF).
- Bangladesh's imports surged to \$27.69 billion, marking an increase of \$2.38 billion compared to H2FY24.
- Inflation witnessed a sharp rise, climbing from 9.72% in June 2024 to 10.89% in December 2024, indicating heightened cost pressures in the economy.
- Private sector credit growth experienced a significant decline, dropping from 9.8% in H2FY24 to 7.3% in H1FY25 representing a 25.51% decrease highlighting a slowdown in investment and business expansion.
- Bangladesh Bank maintained a cautiously tight stance, keeping the policy rate at 10%, the SDF rate at 8.5%, and the SLF rate at 11.5%.
- Public sector credit growth surged to 18.1% in December 2024, surpassing the 14.2% target and affecting liquidity.
- Outstanding liquidity reached BDT 1,17,533 crore at the end of H1 FY25, up from BDT 91,806 crore in H2 FY24.
- NBR revenue collection declined by 0.98% in July–December FY25, totaling BDT 156,442 crore falling BDT 58,000 crore short of the revised target.
- The budget deficit of BDT 2,56,000 crore (5.46% of GDP) will be financed through BDT 95,100 crore from foreign sources and BDT 1,60,900 crore from domestic sources.
- The tax-to-GDP ratio declined to 8% in FY24 from 9.6% in FY23, remaining one of the lowest globally (compared to India (16.98%), Indonesia (11.59%), Vietnam (14.03%), and Thailand (15.57%)).
- Recent VAT and duty hikes, along with increased tax rates on motorcycles and select electronics (from 10% to 20%), negatively impacted businesses.
- Private investment stagnated at around 24% in recent years, hindered by rising exchange rates, weakening consumer demand, high interest rates, political uncertainty, and the energy crisis.
- Forex Reserve shortages and import restrictions since 2022 further depressed the investment climate, with net FDI hitting a six-year low, plummeting 245.58% year-on-year in early FY25.
- Bangladesh's trade volume grew over six months, with export rising 7.91% and import increasing 9.40%, while 88% of total exports remained concentrated in North America and Europe, making them vulnerable to external shocks.
- The country contributes 14% of the global freelance workforce, earning nearly USD 1 billion in a USD 6.26 trillion market.

- Challenges persist, including unequal incentive structures, inefficient logistics, limited global value chain integration, inadequate international payment gateway access (e.g., PayPal), slow progress in FTA/PTA/EPA negotiations, and regulatory barriers for companies establishing liaison offices abroad.

Chief Guest's Speech;

Md. Abdur Rahim Khan, Additional Secretary (Head of Export Wing), Ministry of Commerce, GoB

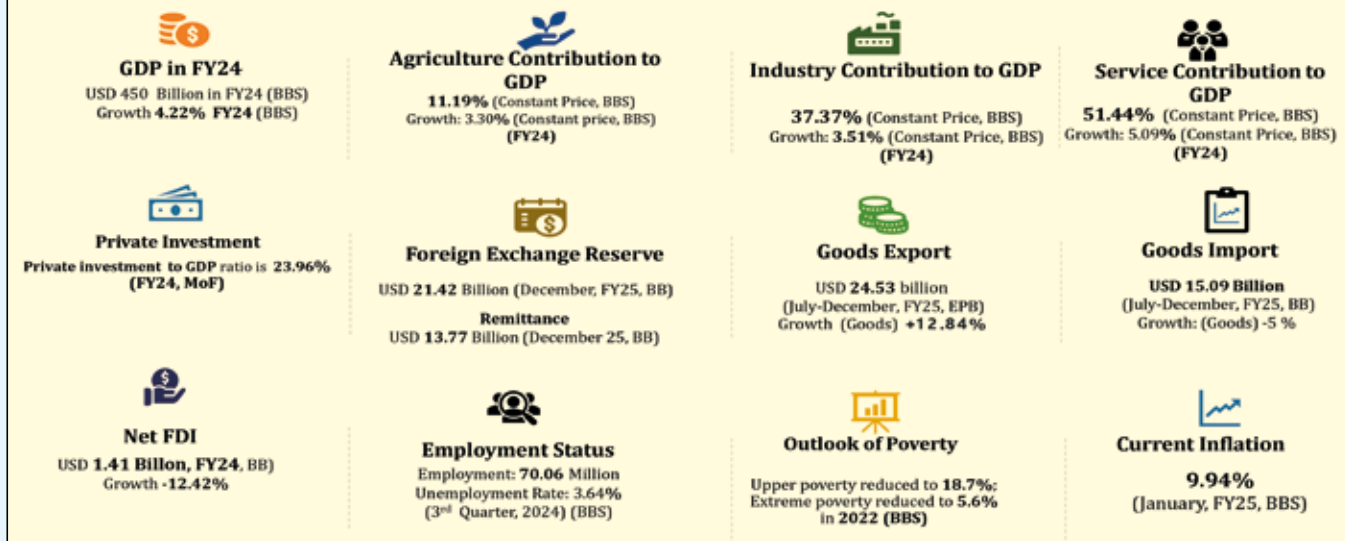
- \$40 billion in revenue collection for a \$450 billion economy is completely unacceptable.
- Highlighted difficulties in accessing SME loans, as many entrepreneurs struggle to secure financing.
- Noted that full implementation of the logistics policy could significantly reduce export costs.
- Identified the light engineering industry as a potential economic game-changer, with a planned Technology Centre in Gazipur to support entrepreneurs.
- Stressed the need to boost revenue generation and attract export-oriented FDI to bridge the investment gap.
- Emphasized improving export competitiveness to tackle challenges arising from LDC graduation.

Summary of Recommendations

- There is a need to strengthen the Competition Commission and effectively utilize existing market monitoring tools to ensure market stability and enhance oversight.
- There is a need for evidence-based analysis in decision-making, and without it, no incentives should be provided.
- The investment segment within social protection initiatives should be reduced to focus more on direct support and targeted assistance programs.
- There is a need to prioritize concessional foreign loans, expand the tax base, cut operational expenditures, and enhance tax collection through automation.
- Full automation and seamless digital filing for corporate tax should be implemented in collaboration with the private sector to reduce errors and detect evasion.
- Tax Return Preparer (TRP) recruitment needs to be expedited to register unreported businesses and increase compliance.
- The tax revenue disparity between Dhaka and Chattogram should be addressed by expanding the tax base nationwide.

- Credit growth must reach double digits to restore private sector confidence and facilitate smooth business operations.
- Sector-specific funds like those for agriculture, freelancing, and tech startups should be introduced to boost credit flow.
- Public expenditure should be curbed through austerity measures to help manage fiscal challenges.
- Bond and equity markets need to be developed to reduce reliance on bank loans and to build strategic reserves that can subsidize critical imports.
- Strong governance and faster legal resolutions are necessary within the banking sector to foster private sector growth and economic resilience.
- Inflation should be managed by strengthening market monitoring and deploying law enforcement to break syndicates.
- VAT rationalization should be undertaken to reduce the burden on essential goods while increasing revenue from luxury non-essential items.
- Stabilizing the currency is essential to prevent imported inflation and reduce the cost of essential imports.
- Supply-side interventions, in combination with stricter monetary policies, should be adopted to stabilize prices and control inflation.
- Infrastructure improvements should be made to reduce bottlenecks, and targeted subsidies for key inputs like fertilizer, seed, and energy should be implemented to stabilize prices.
- The business environment should be improved by aligning investment policies, introducing a clear FDI policy, and ensuring smooth industrial operation.
- Exports to potential markets like Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East should be prioritized, and FTAs and PTAs should be negotiated and implemented quickly.
- Credit ratings and policy consistency must be maintained to attract foreign investment and ensure sustained economic growth.
- Industrial diversification should be encouraged, with particular emphasis on agro-processing, halal products, shipbuilding, light engineering, and other sectors.
- Supply chain linkages with international manufacturers and investors must be strengthened through improved compliance with global standards and certifications.

CURRENT SNAPSHOT OF BANGLADESH ECONOMY



- Trade agreements like FTAs, PTAs, and EPAs should be expedited by setting clear objectives. Alignment with regional trade blocs such as RCEP and ASEAN is essential to gaining preferential access and reducing non-tariff barriers.
- Affiliation with international payment gateways like PayPal and Payoneer should be pursued to facilitate seamless money transfers.
- Energy supply to industries must be uninterrupted to maintain productive capacity for smooth operations and to ensure effective supply chain management.
- Loan facilities for small tanners should be eased before Eid ul-Adha to curb raw-hide smuggling, and implementation of the Leather Goods Development Policy should be monitored.
- The off-patent status for existing medicines needs to be secured before LDC graduation, along with negotiations for a WTO waiver extension until 2030.
- API parks should be fully functional to reduce import dependence, positioning Bangladesh as a hub for generic medicines. Multiple API parks should be developed under a PPP model with incentives.
- IP protection should be strengthened, global partnerships for technology sharing should be fostered, and the role of DGDA in price regulation and monitoring should be enhanced.
- Investment in infrastructure like Prototype Labs and Original Brand Manufacturer (OBM) branding should be made to foster innovation.
- Energy prices should follow a phased approach with predictable pricing to minimize impacts on industries and consumers.
- Energy networks should be upgraded, smart grids invested in, and underground gas storage developed for a reliable supply during peak demand.
- The Bay terminal project needs to be expedited, with enhanced road infrastructure and multimodal transport to improve logistics and reduce costs.
- CMSMEs should be integrated with digital financial solutions to expand their market reach both domestically and internationally.
- Long-term regional energy trade should be strengthened by sourcing fuel from GCC countries and accelerating offshore exploration in allocated energy blocs.
- The banking sector must be strengthened by promoting risk-based lending, improving corporate governance, and adhering to global standards like Basel III for capital adequacy and accountability.
- Transition mechanisms should be created for good borrowers in troubled banks, similar to deposit insurance for depositors.
- Skill development and training programs for the labor force should be targeted to enhance competitiveness, enabling better local employment opportunities and migration options.
- A diversified skill development program for freelancers and migrant workers, along with a targeted TVET program, should be implemented to address the needs of the labor market.
- Tax incentives should be provided to establish local industries and reduce import dependence, with a focus on manufacturing sectors like electronics and semiconductors.

DCCI Business Delegation to UAE 2025

To further strengthen economic relations and bilateral trade between Bangladesh and the UAE, a 29-member business delegation from Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) recently visited UAE during 25-27 February, 2025. The delegation was led by Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President, DCCI. The delegation represented 27 companies from different 18 sectors.

During the visit, the Abu Dhabi Chamber hosted a business networking forum titled “Strengthening Economic Ties between Abu Dhabi & Bangladesh” at the Abu Dhabi School of Management on 25 February, 2025. The Dubai Chambers also organized a business forum titled “Dubai-Bangladesh Business Briefing and B2B Matchmaking” on 26 February, 2025. And later, the Sharjah Chamber organized a business meeting titled “Bangladesh-UAE (Sharjah) Business Networking Forum” on 27 February, 2025. The delegation members have had productive business interactions with the business representatives from Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah respectively.

It is worth mentioning that Professor Lutfey Siddiqi, Special Envoy on International Affairs to the Honourable Chief Adviser, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, joined the DCCI business delegation and enlightened the visit with his presence and insightful remarks at the events organized by the Abu Dhabi Chamber and the Dubai Chambers. Tareq Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UAE was also present at these meetings hosted by both Chambers.

Leader of the delegation and DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed had also several private meetings with Shamis Ali Al Dhaheri Second Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Abu Dhabi Chamber, Mohammad Lootah, President and CEO, Dubai Chambers, Abdallah Sultan Al Owais, Chairman, Sharjah Chamber, Dr. Tayeb Kamali, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi School of Management’s Board of Trustees and Omar Al Hosani, Head of Investor Engagement, Abu Dhabi Investment Office.

Key Outcomes: Discussions during the Business Forum and Private Meetings

- The UAE investors showed interest to make investment in Bangladesh particularly in the fields of technology, healthcare, hospitality, tourism, infrastructure, logistics, skill development and renewable energy. The UAE’s investors lack information about investment ecosystem of Bangladesh particularly for technology sector (data center).
- Tech talent shortage in the UAE offers promising opportunity for Bangladeshi tech-savvy workforce to

cater the growing digital transformation services in the UAE which is valued more than US\$20 billion per year. This also offers opportunity for Bangladeshi tech-based startups to collaborate with the UAE companies.

- Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and the UAE recorded about USD 2 billion in FY 2024. Bangladesh’s exports to the UAE amounted to USD 402.63 million, while import stood at USD 1,352.9 million. The UAE imports only 0.10 % from Bangladesh out of its total global import volume. This trade relationship presents significantly untapped opportunities for further expansion. Moreover, Bangladesh can use the UAE as a gateway and distribution center to conduct international trade with greater African region and GCC region.
- Indian and Pakistani businesses have strong presence in the UAE market. In order to grab the opportunity, it is required to allow Bangladeshi businesses to open their branch office in the UAE.
- The UAE is considered as global leader due its extensive well-established free zone. The UAE can extend technical support and expertise to Bangladesh in developing economic zones.
- In order to increase trade and investment connectivity, activation of Bangladesh-UAE business council with sector-based approach is essential.
- Strengthening cooperation in the fields of trade finance, private equity and financial sector. The UAE may share its experience and knowledge to further expand Islamic securities including Sukuk bond in Bangladesh.
- The Bangladeshi expatriate community forms one of the largest foreign workforces in the UAE, accounting 17% of Bangladesh’s total overseas employment. Most of the Bangladeshi migrants in the UAE engaged in low skilled and low-paying jobs. Under G2G support, the private sector of both countries may focus on broadening collaboration to cater the UAE job market by providing trained workforce and professionals from Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh needs to focus on up-skilling its youth to enhance investors’ confidence and capitalize its demographic dividend. UAE can to set up skill development training centers in Bangladesh.
- Dr. Tayeb Kamali, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi School of Management’s (ADSM) Board of Trustees expressed interest to participate in the Bangladesh Investment Summit 2025, organized by Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and sign a MoU with DCCI Business Institute (DBI) during any suitable timeslot of Bangladesh Investment Summit.

- Dubai Chambers also showed interest to inaugurate their representative office in Dhaka during the upcoming Bangladesh Investment Summit, following an invitation from BIDA.
- Demonstrated doing business reform initiatives in Bangladesh including introduction of authorized economic operator model, operationalization of national single window system, digital connectivity, optimization of port operations and ready economic zones.
- DCCI signed MoU with Dubai Chambers and Sharjah Chamber respectively. Under the MoU both Chambers set priority for broadening chamber-to-chamber collaboration to support interested member companies to facilitate their business matchmaking activities, promoting and facilitating economic cooperation, exchanging trade delegations, encouraging exports and economic discussion and exchanging trade information.

BUSINESS FORUM ON “STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN ABU DHABI & BANGLADESH”

Organized by Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce

Date: 25th February 2025, Venue: Abu Dhabi School of Management

Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce hosted the business forum titled “Strengthening Economic Ties between Abu Dhabi and Bangladesh” on 25th February 2025 at Abu Dhabi School of Management. After the forum, a B2B networking session was also held, with participation from 27 DCCI member companies and around 30 Abu Dhabi based companies. Professor Lutfey Siddiqi, Special Envoy on International Affairs to the Honourable Chief Adviser, Government of Bangladesh joined the forum and also spoke on the occasion.

Dr. Tayeb A Kamali, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Abu Dhabi School of Management delivered the welcome remarks. Taskeen Ahmed, President of DCCI, delivered inaugural remarks as the head of the delegation. Tareq Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the UAE also delivered special remarks. Furthermore, Omar Al Hosani, Head of Investor Engagement at the Abu Dhabi Investment Office, delivered a key note presentation focusing on investment and business ecosystem of Abu Dhabi. On the other hand, Rizwan Rahman, Former President of DCCI delivered another key note presentation focusing on Investment and Business Opportunities in Bangladesh. Shamis Ali Al Dhaheri, Second Vice Chairman & Managing Director of the Abu Dhabi Chamber was also present during the program.

WELCOME REMARKS DELIVERED BY DR. TAYEB A KAMALI, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ABU DHABI SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT:

- Emphasized the longstanding and special bond between Bangladesh and the UAE, rooted in historical ties, mutual respect, and expanding economic cooperation.
- Showcased key initiatives and opportunities for collaboration, focusing on strengthening trade, investment, and cultural exchange.
- Highlighted priority sectors with significant potential for partnership, including energy transition, water resource management, training, logistics, and other emerging industries.
- Encouraged meaningful dialogue and productive engagements to foster deeper bilateral cooperation.
- Underscored success stories of the UAE in expanding its investment as well as attracting foreign investment through the development of skilled human resources. Bangladesh should also focus on its large pool of young generation to make them skilled enough so that foreign investors can get confidence to invest in Bangladesh utilizing this young and energetic demographic dividend.

INAUGURAL REMARKS DELIVERED BY TASKEEN AHMED, PRESIDENT, DCCI

- Emphasized the enduring partnership between Bangladesh and the UAE, with a total trade volume nearing USD 2 billion, including USD 402.63 million in exports from Bangladesh and USD 1,352.9 million in imports from the UAE.
- Highlighted the UAE as a key source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bangladesh, particularly in textiles, banking, power, trading, and construction, with an FDI stock of USD 321.67 million. In FY2024, the UAE contributed USD 26.65 million in FDI, ranking as the second-largest investor in Bangladesh after India.
- Underscored Bangladesh’s competitive and investor-friendly environment in South Asia, offering fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, a favorable regulatory framework, and targeted tax exemptions, creating substantial investment opportunities for UAE businesses, particularly in non-oil sectors.
- Invited the UAE investors to invest in renewable energy, infrastructure, logistics, information technology, tourism, hospitality, skill development and healthcare sector of Bangladesh. He also requested the UAE businessmen to hire manpower from Bangladesh who are skilled in information technology, textile and engineering industries.

SPEECH DELIVERED BY OMAR AL HOSANI, HEAD OF INVESTOR ENGAGEMENT, ABU DHABI INVESTMENT OFFICE (ADIO):

- Over the years, Abu Dhabi's economy has evolved through different phases, starting with infrastructure development in the early 2000s and advancing towards a focus on economic diversification, agility, and competitiveness today.
- The UAE's Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA) and bilateral agreements with neighboring countries play a key role in facilitating this process.
- Abu Dhabi offers foreign investors 100% ownership and zero income tax, fostering an environment where businesses can thrive. The city is recognized for its livability, offering a high quality of life, which is considered a key pillar of the economy. With over 200 nationalities living and working in harmony, Abu Dhabi promotes a strong, inclusive, and diverse community.
- Furthermore, Abu Dhabi is focused on developing economic clusters, with a particular emphasis on sustainable energy, advanced technology, and innovation. The city is positioning itself as a leader in these sectors, aiming to drive international exports of advanced technology and data. Livability continues to be a critical factor, with sectors such as life sciences, food, and water being prioritized for future growth. The economic strategy is built on agility, ensuring that the city can adapt to ongoing transformation while remaining competitive on the global stage.

KEY POINTS HIGHLIGHTED BY RIZWAN RAHMAN, FORMER PRESIDENT, DCCI:

- Demonstrated the strong growth of Bangladesh's economy in FY24 with a GDP of USD 459 billion and a 5.82% growth rate.
- The country maintained a robust trade performance, with exports reaching USD 45.64 billion and imports totaling USD 63.11 billion. Employment levels remained high, with 67.51 million people employed.
- Private investment contributed 23.51% to GDP, while per capita income stood at USD 2784. The labor force was recorded at 70.06 million, with one-third belonging to the youth demographic (ages 15-29).
- Bangladesh and the UAE maintain strong trade and investment relations, with the UAE ranking as Bangladesh's 18th largest trading partner. Bangladesh received US\$ 321.67 million FDI stock from the UAE. Moreover, the UAE remains a key remittance source for Bangladesh.

- A Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) or Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the UAE and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) needs to be discussed at the G2G level to enhance market access and trade benefits for both nations.
- UAE investments in Bangladesh are concentrated in key sectors such as banking (22.19%), trading (14.73%), and power (9.72%). Additional areas of investment include fertilizer, leather, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, construction, and machinery.

Day-2

MOU SIGNED BETWEEN DCCI AND DUBAI CHAMBERS

Date: 26th February 2025, Venue: Dubai Chambers

A MoU was signed between DCCI and Dubai Chambers. Dhaka Chamber President Taskeen Ahmed and Dubai Chambers President and CEO Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. The MoU underscored to collaborate for exploring the opportunities of strengthening bilateral economic and commercial relation; share information in the field of investment, business matching and networking activities; improve and expand international business relations between the UAE and Bangladesh; and foster the development and the diversification of commercial exchanges and economic cooperation on a mutually advantageous basis between the Parties respective members.

DUBAI- BANGLADESH BUSINESS BRIEFING

Organized by Dubai Chambers

Date: 26th February 2025, Venue: Conference Hall, Dubai Chambers

Dubai Chambers warmly welcomed the delegation by organizing a business forum titled "Dubai- Bangladesh Business Briefing and B2B Matchmaking Session". Approximately 120 member companies from Dubai Chambers and 27 companies from DCCI delegation participated in the event. Professor Lutfey Siddiqi, Special Envoy on International Affairs to the Hon'ble Chief Adviser, Chief Adviser's Office, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh joined the forum and delivered special remarks.

Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers delivered welcome remarks during the business briefing session. Taskeen Ahmed, President, DCCI delivered inaugural remarks. Subsequently, H.E. Tareq Ahmed, Ambassador of the Embassy of Bangladesh in the UAE gave



A snapshot of B2B networking at the Dubai Chambers held on February 26.

his special speech. Omar Khan, Head of Research and Data at Dubai Chambers delivered key note presentation from Dubai side focusing on role of Dubai as investment destination. Rizwan Rahman, Former President, DCCI delivered key note presentation from DCCI side highlighting investment and business opportunities in Bangladesh. Summary of their speeches are noted down below.

WELCOME REMARKS DELIVERED BY MOHAMMAD ALI RASHED LOOTAH, PRESIDENT AND CEO, DUBAI CHAMBERS:

- Appreciated partnership with the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the anticipation for the exciting opportunities ahead. By collaborating, trade and investment levels between both markets can be further enhanced, contributing to a prosperous future.
- Underscored to strengthen cooperation between the business communities in Dubai and Bangladesh to foster partnerships and contribute to achieving shared developmental goals. He also assured of extending comprehensive support to Bangladeshi businesses and investors to help them grow their operations in Dubai.
- He also requested the Bangladeshi companies to establish their local offices in the UAE that would play an important role in helping Bangladeshi exporters to grab the Middle Eastern as well as African market.
- Urged Bangladeshi IT companies to invest in the UAE. He opined that establishing an effective data center in Bangladesh is crucial for the development of the information technology sector.

REMARKS DELIVERED BY TASKEEN AHMED, PRESIDENT, DCCI:

- Collaboration with the public sector and development organizations has been actively pursued to advance shared development agendas, strengthening private sector engagement and the overall business environment.
- The private sector, as the key driver of economic growth, has played a crucial role in fostering investment and employment generation. With a swift recovery, Bangladesh achieved significant GDP growth in 2024, marking notable progress across all sectors. The country is now set to transition into a developing economy.
- Dubai's strategic location serves as a vital gateway for Bangladeshi businesses to access the growing halal market, projected to reach \$9.7 trillion by 2025, further enhancing opportunities for trade and collaboration.
- Recognizing the significant impact that united efforts by chambers of commerce can bring, investors and traders from the UAE, especially esteemed members of the Dubai Chambers, are warmly invited to explore Bangladesh's promising investment opportunities across diverse sectors.
- Bangladesh's competitive investment framework, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, favorable regulatory environment for foreign investors, 100% foreign ownership, bonded warehouse facilities, strong intellectual property protection etc. make Bangladesh an attractive destination for UAE investment.
- Urged the entrepreneurs of Dubai to set up skill development training centers in Bangladesh and invest in the renewable energy, FINTECH, financial sector, healthcare, logistics, information technology and tourism sector.

PRESENTATION DELIVERED BY OMAR KHAN, HEAD OF RESEARCH AND DATA, DUBAI CHAMBERS:

- Emphasized Dubai's role as a global trade hub and investment destination offering immense opportunities for collaboration with Bangladesh.
- With Bangladesh's private sector contributing 80% to GDP, the country is poised for rapid economic growth. Dubai's strategic position as an investment hub allows it to act as a catalyst in supporting Bangladesh's economic resilience and connectivity. Investors from Dubai, familiar with both markets, can bridge gaps and unlock potential opportunities.
- Dubai provides 100% foreign ownership in 27 economic zones and benefits from multiple free trade agreements, including CEPA, to attract green fuel investment and manufacturing expansion. The government offers numerous incentives to promote industrial and service sector growth, reinforcing Dubai's role as a gateway for global trade.
- As a top-ranked FDI destination, Dubai continues to attract high-value investments, particularly in IT, textiles, consumer goods, and food security. The logistics and re-export sector further strengthening its global position, connecting over 200 destinations via Emirates Airlines and handling significant cargo movements.

PRESENTATION DELIVERED BY RIZWAN RAHMAN, FORMER PRESIDENT, DCCI:

- Bangladesh and the UAE share strong trade and investment ties, with growing bilateral trade and investment volume.

- UAE investments in Bangladesh span banking (22.19%), trading (14.73%), and power (9.72%), alongside sectors like fertilizer, leather, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, construction, and machinery. Bangladesh offers attractive investment opportunities with its strategic location, a consumer market of 170+ million, and developed infrastructure, including ports, airports, and regional road networks.
- Underscored the growing interest of flagship UAE based companies to expand their footprint in Bangladesh in the area of Port, logistics, healthcare and renewable energy.
- Mapped the possible areas of collaboration focusing in energy, establishing direct shipping line, exploring Dubai as re-exporting hub, facilitating movement of skilled workforce and expediting the process of signing PTA or FTA.

Day-3

MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDNET, DCCI AND CHAIRMAN, SHARJAH CHAMBER

Date: 27th February 2025, Venue: Sharjah Chamber

On 27th February 2025 another high-level meeting between Taskeen Ahmed, President, DCCI and Abdallah Sultan Al Owais, Chairman, Sharjah Chamber was held at the Sharjah Chamber. The summary of the meeting discussion is noted below:

- The growing commercial linkage between Sharjah and Bangladesh present substantial opportunities for bilateral collaboration, with Sharjah benefiting from Bangladesh's skilled workforce, competitive manufacturing sector, and expanding export industries.



A snapshot of B2B networking at the Sharjah Chamber held on February 27.

- The UAE can explore investment opportunities in Bangladesh, leveraging its lower export costs and strategic geographic location to facilitate market entry into South Asian and Southeast Asian countries.
- Urged entrepreneurs of Sharjah to explore investment opportunities in Bangladesh’s infrastructure sector and collaborate in the logistics sector by exchanging expertise, experience, and knowledge to enhance bilateral trade and commerce.
- Investors were also encouraged to consider Bangladesh’s IT sector, capitalizing on the country’s large and dynamic youth population. The ongoing growth in Bangladesh’s youth population, skilled workforce, and technological advancements presents ample opportunities for deeper economic connections in this sector.
- Additionally, jute products, leather and leather goods, home appliances, footwear, food processing, and the establishment of offshore banking services by UAE banks, including Sharjah Islamic Bank, were highlighted as promising sectors for investment.
- The global halal market is projected to reach USD 9.71 trillion by 2025, driven by increasing demand for halal-certified products and services across industries such as food, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals. Bangladesh’s emerging potential in the halal sector offers Sharjah-based businesses a strategic opportunity to tap into this growing market.

- Sharjah Chamber emphasized the UAE’s strategic location as a gateway for Bangladeshi businesses to expand into East and West African markets.
- Emphasized on skill development of Bangladeshi workers to enhance employment opportunities in the UAE, where the Bangladeshi workforce currently exceeds one million across various professions.

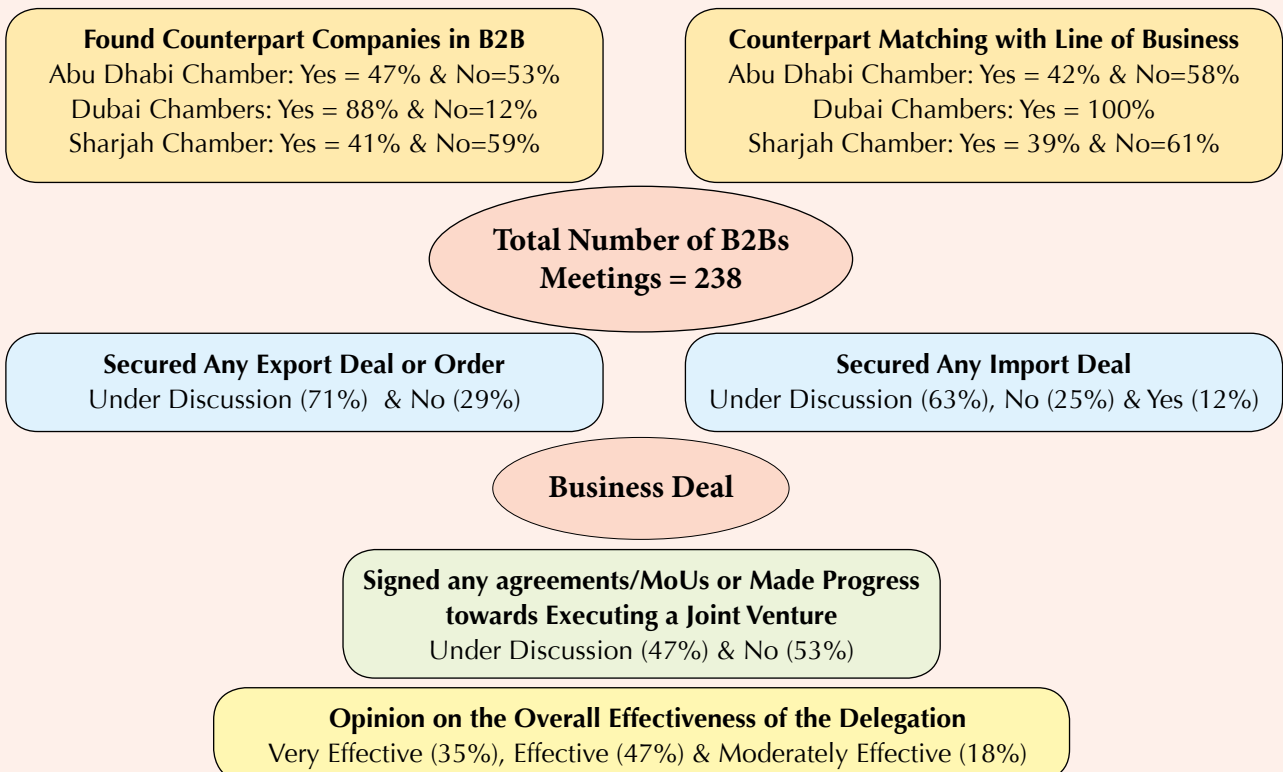
MOU SIGNED BETWEEN DCCI AND SHARJAH CHAMBER

Date: 27th February 2025, Venue: Sharjah Chamber

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry was signed on February 27, 2025. President of Dhaka Chamber Taskeen Ahmed and Chairman of Sharjah Chamber Abdallah Sultan Al Owais signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. Under the framework of the MoU, both chambers focus on promoting and facilitating economic cooperation among their business communities to the mutual interests of both sides including exchanging trade delegations, encouraging exports and economic discussion, expanding business network and exchanging trade information.

Outcome of the B2B Matchmaking Meetings

To assess the outcome of the B2B meetings, DCCI conducted a post delegation evaluation survey. The findings of the survey are depicted below:



Making East Dhaka to be Pudong of Bangladesh

M. S. Siddiqui

Former Non-Government Adviser, Bangladesh

Competition Commission, Legal Economist &

CEO, Bangla Chemical

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Dhaka is the biggest city of the country and hub of economic activities and contributes 30% of the GDP. The current jurisdictions of the Dhaka South and North city corporations are surrounded by the Tongi Khal (canal) to the north, the Turag River to the west, the Buriganga River to the south, and the Balu-Shitalakshya River system to the east. Dhaka's urban population is more than 2.3 crore with a growth rate of about 3.5%. Dhaka's Population Density is more than 30,000 per Kilometer and is the highest in the world. Over 200 registered motor vehicles enter the city streets every day. Dhaka faces seemingly impossible challenges. Despite unrelenting efforts to upgrade the city's infrastructure, congestion is increasing, and travel speeds are declining.

More than a fourth of its inhabitants live in slums, pollution is increasing, and the city sits at the bottom of global livability rankings. If these challenges are not addressed, it will be difficult for Dhaka to become a prosperous global city, and therefore difficult for Bangladesh to join the ranks of upper-middle-income countries. Things couldn't be more intense and crowded.

Urbanization is a crucial component in economic development. Most efforts and resources have focused on trying to fix Dhaka by building flyovers, developing mass transport, improving drainage and providing sanitation in the western part of the city. There are some projects that has been designed to cover some part of Eastern Dhaka. The Dhaka City Corporation has been divided into North and South City Corporation but so far the development and infrastructure is concern, the city has been divided by the Pragati Sarani in East and West Dhaka City. The urbanization of the city originated along the northern corridor of the central region, and then expanded westward. Its Eastern half is mostly rural but has the potential to develop rapidly. Accounting for 40 percent of the city's surface, East Dhaka has the advantage of being within 5 kms of prosperous areas like Gulshan, which can help support its growth through capital and human resource investments.

The story of Dhaka city is not different from other cities of the world. Disparity over different part of cities is very common. East Dhaka, an area with a surface like that of a major European city, could be developed with the right urban infrastructure from the start, decongesting the current city and becoming a modern economic pole for the country. The time to act is now. East Dhaka is already being developed in an unplanned way and this opportunity may soon pass. Due to unplanned development cities like Dhaka become waterlogged, often coming to a standstill during the heavy rains of the monsoon season. And service delivery is uneven.

Bangladesh have solution in hand as revealed in World Bank study and experience of other cities. One of the remarkable examples of transforming under-used lands of some part of the cities is Pudong, the East Shanghai. It's eastbound growth in Pudong from a marshy rice field in 1980s to a powerful modern

global financial centre in less than three decades. World Bank study reportedly found many similarities between present day Dhaka and Shanghai of the early 1990s and therefore, asserted that Dhaka could learn from the Shanghai-Pudong experience to transform itself into a modern global city. There has never been any urbanisation of the Shanghai-Pudong scale within such a short time in the history of the world. Shanghai has turned into a massive economic powerhouse and a world class city after decades of planning and development.

Shanghai took a very ambitious plan for the impending growth of developing Pudong across the Huangpu river. It created a massive urban relief valve with a completely new planned business and financial city centre. There were two important considerations behind this: first, to establish Shanghai as the premier business centre with state-of-the-art infrastructures and facilities, and second, to relieve the pressure of redevelopment on the older city and heritage areas. The new tall towers in Pudong, the business/commercial district in downtown, and the brand new Pudong international airport have helped transform Shanghai into a modern global city.

Dhaka city is well on its way to becoming a South Asian hub. Experts see it as akin to pre-developed Shanghai. Like Shanghai, and its former rural area of Pudong, Dhaka has a lot of lands on the east that can be reformed for urbanisation and infrastructural development. Pudong was mostly composed of low-quality housing before the 90's. But an all-out effort turned that area into a vibrant nexus for finance, trade and high-tech industries. The east side of Dhaka has the same potential, and like Pudong, adopting a national-level strategy can quickly propel the city to new heights.

Much of this success was due to China's strategic approach to the development of East Shanghai (Pudong) and to its integration with the rest of the city. The "Pudong miracle" transformed Shanghai into the connecting point between its hinterland and the rest of the world, and that in just about 25 years. But this success required a clear vision—one that was embraced by government agencies, private investors and citizens supported by careful planning and tight implementation.

The interventions proposed in the WB report could enable Dhaka to comfortably host an extra 5 million inhabitants, and to create 1.8 million additional jobs, compared to a continuation of business as usual. The interventions would cost about \$15 billion, but they could lead to \$53 billion in increased economic activity per year by 2035. They would also result in an improved quality of life for Dhaka's inhabitants and alleviate many of the challenges the city currently faces. Dhaka has no choice but to transform and develop as a world class city. Currently, there are many ideas such as eastbound expansion of the city across the Balu and Sitalakshya rivers.

Other cities in the world have gone through such transformations. For example, only 25 years ago the now vibrant East Shanghai (Pudong) area was roughly as rural as East Dhaka is today. The experience of Shanghai and other cities shows that success requires a clear strategy. One that is embraced by government agencies, private investors and development organizations, and supported by careful planning and tight implementation.

Govt working to lift economy: Dr Salehuddin

Finance adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed has said that it is the main duty of the interim government to lift the economy from the edge of a ditch. “After taking charge last year, we gave due attention on recovering the economy which was on the edge of a ditch. The devastation of the economy was so deep that none can perceive its intensity unless delving into it,” he said. He said that for ensuring a recovery from that situation, directives were given immediately to the Bangladesh Bank, all the banks especially the troubled banks, and other financial institutions to make proper scrutiny before giving further approval for giving loans. Elaborating the strategy for recovering the economy, Dr Salehuddin said that soon after assumption of office, they asked the central bank governor to address the misgovernance at the concerned banks through exercising authority.

In continuation of this, he said the Bangladesh Bank had brought changes into the boards and managements of many banks including in the posts of Managing Directors and Chairmen. “Such efforts are still going on while it will



take some more time to accomplish the task.”

Besides, he said some restrictions were imposed on disbursing new loans and opening up of LCs in order to keep intact the state on the balance of payment. Apart from these, Dr Salehuddin, also the former central bank Governor, said that changes were brought into the management of the Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd, BASIC Bank, Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission and Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation. He said that auditors have already been appointed at six banks and they would determine the updated figures on the non-performing loans. Apart

from these, they would determine the quality of loans of each bank, asset quality, and liabilities. Then they will take steps on distressed loans.

“Due to such measures, the banking sector on the whole is currently performing better while the capital market is also faring better. On the other hand, the NBR is being digitized as well as the income tax and customs procedures are also being simplified,” He said. The finance adviser also said that due to such efforts, income tax collection through online has increased side by side income tax collection in big cities like Dhaka and Chattogram is also increasing. He said that the public servants and other stakeholders have given a very good response to such initiatives **r**

Per capita income drops to \$2738

Bangladesh’s per capita income decreased by 46 US dollars and stood at \$2738 in the fiscal year 2023–24, according to the final calculation by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. BBS data showed that the country’s per capita income has been declining for last three consecutive years, according to media reports. In 2021–22, it reached its highest at \$2,793, before dropping to \$2,749 in 2022–23. The downward trend continued

in the latest fiscal year, with income falling further. The primary reason for this decline is the rising exchange rate of US dollar. The BBS calculation for 2023–24 was based on an average exchange rate of Tk 111.06 per dollar reflecting the ongoing depreciation of Bangladeshi taka over the past two years.

Despite the decline in dollar terms, per capita income has increased in Bangladeshi taka. It has now

surpassed Tk 0.30 million, reaching Tk 3,04,102 in 2023–24, compared to Tk 2,73,360 in the previous fiscal year. The decreasing per capita income highlights the pressing need for comprehensive economic reforms to reverse this trend. However, the country’s economy grew at its slowest pace in four years, with gross domestic product expanding just 4.22 percent in the 2024 fiscal year.

NBR launches online import-export hub to streamline int'l businesses

The National Board of Revenue on February 23, 2025 launched an online import-export hub to provide customs and tariff-related information from a single platform for streamlining international businesses. Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun attended the launching event as the chief guest while President of the Foreign Investors' Chamber Of Commerce and Industry Javed Akhtar attended the event as special guest.

Through online import-export hub, businesses and individuals can access essential trade-related details, including general information, compliance requirements, product-specific documentation, tariff rates, duty and tax benefits, approximate tax calculator, and preferential tax benefits, through the website hub. bangladeshcustoms.gov.bd.

NBR introduced this system along with the Customs Strategic Plan 2024–2028 and the Authorized Economic Operator module within Automated System for Customs Data World, designed to facilitate faster consignment clearance at ports. In his speech, Ashik Mahmud said that automation in the revenue system is essential to facilitate business and investment.

“A new chapter in trade facilitation has begun in Bangladesh with the issuance and implementation of the AEO certificate,” he added. He expressed his hope that importers and exporters will benefit greatly from the reduction of time and cost through proper implementation of AEO and



thanked the NBR for fulfilling the long-standing demands of traders by introducing AEO in Bangladesh.

Under the AEO system, Abdur Rahman Khan said, compliant taxpayers will no longer face interventions from Customs authorities. “The imported goods will be directly delivered to their premises from vessels under the self-assessment system,” he said. He also mentioned that tax payments will be made through bank-to-bank fund transfers.

Zaved Akhtar said this move will encourage foreign direct investment and strengthen investor confidence in Bangladesh. Zaved, also the chairman of Unilever Bangladesh Limited, assured that he would highlight this progress in Bangladesh’s digital transformation to global investors. NBR First Secretary (customs) Amimul Ehsan Khan delivered a presentation.

During the presentation, he said exporters and importers can now easily access all necessary documents and tariff-related information, including legal explanations, through the online import-export hub system. They no longer need to visit multiple offices to understand the process, he added. Initially, he said, NBR launched this system for agricultural products. “However, we are working to expand it to cover all products,” he added.

July-Dec current account balance sees surplus

Bangladesh now sees its current-account balance turn surplus, after months, mainly as significant growth in remittance and export helps out, official statistics show. This means the country is a net creditor to the rest of the world. The data with the central bank of Bangladesh show that the current-account balance stood at \$33-million surplus during July-December period by overcoming a deficit of over \$3.47 billion during the same period a year earlier.

However, market analysts say the improvement in the current account results from persisting economic slowdown that lowers the growth of imports. The trade deficit stood at \$9.76 billion during the period under review. It was \$10.88 billion during the same period a year before. According to the latest balance-of-payments statistics released by the Bangladesh Bank the country saw 26.70-percent growth in remittance inflow while exports grew by 11 percent in the first six months of this fiscal year.

On the other hand, the import orders increased only 3.5 percent, showing a positive indication in bolstering the country’s foreign-exchange reserves. As per the data, the country bagged \$13.78 billion of remittance during the July-December period in an

increase by almost \$3.0 billion from its corresponding period's \$10.80 billion.

During the same period of time, the country exported goods amounting to \$22.32 billion, 11.0 percent higher from July-December's count in 2024 when the figure was \$20.19 billion. The imports rose to \$32.09 billion in the first half of the ongoing 2025 fiscal year from \$30.99 billion recorded a year ago, according to the BoP data.

Simultaneously, the country's financial account also shows an improvement with the surplus rising to \$1.40 billion in the H1 of 2025 fiscal year from previous H1's count in 2024 fiscal year of \$604 million. Capital account, another component of the balance of payments, also turned surplus at \$217 million, up by more than 35 percent from the same period a year earlier. As a matter of fact, the deficit in the country's overall balance got reduced to \$384 million now from \$3.45 billion registered a year ago **r**

January remittance down 17pc

Remittances sent by expatriate Bangladeshis in January of the current fiscal year dropped by more than 17 percent to \$2.19 billion compared to December 2024. However, year-on-year, the figure increased by 3.4

percent, according to data released by the Bangladesh Bank on February 03, 2025. Despite the monthly decline, remittance inflows during the first seven months of 2025 fiscal year surged by more than 23 percent compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year.

The Bangladesh Bank's analysis highlighted that remittance inflows typically rise at the end of a fiscal year (June) and the end of a calendar year (December). Remittances see a significant boost during major religious festivals and special occasions. A senior central bank official said that remittances grow at the end of both fiscal and calendar years as expatriates send more money home during these periods.

He also said the depreciation of the local currency has incentivized expatriates to send more funds so that their families receive a higher amount. Moreover, the government's 2.5 percent cash incentive on remittances has further encouraged inflows. The rise in remittances is helping stabilize the exchange rate and maintain a balance between foreign currency supply and demand.

Six state-owned banks collectively received \$511 million in remittances last month. Sonali Bank received \$179 million, the highest among state-run banks, while it was \$116 million for Bangladesh Krishi Bank. On the other hand, private commercial banks

attracted a total of \$1.55 billion, with Islami Bank Bangladesh leading at \$282 million, followed by Trust Bank at \$161 million.

Macroeconomic indicators show signs of recovery

The key macroeconomic indicators such as inflation, exchange rate, and interest rate except the GDP growth are showing signs of recovery after hitting their lowest points in recent times, according to the latest report by CAL Bangladesh, a Sri Lanka-based financial institution and research organization. For the fiscal year 2024–2025, GDP growth is projected to range between 2.0 percent and 3.0 percent, a significant drop from the 4.22 percent growth reported for the previous fiscal year by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). The report also notes that the economy grew by just 1.8 percent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year-marking the lowest quarterly growth in the past 15 quarters.

Raihan Shamsi, director of CAL Securities, and Ahmed Omar Siddique, vice-president of the host agency, presented a keynote paper at the event while Deshan Pushparajah, a director of the CAL Securities, spoke at the event. The organization has projected inflation to stabilize between 8.5 percent and 9.5 percent by June, which will fall further to 6 to 7 percent by December this year.

The report forecasts GDP growth for 2025 fiscal year between 2 percent and 3 percent due to a significant slowdown in investment, private sector credit and high interest rate. This decline is linked to persistent macroeconomic challenges, which have continued to weigh on the country's economic prospects. A slowdown in consumption has further dampened growth, as rising inflation and economic uncertainty have strained household incomes **r**



India's economy picks up on rising govt, consumer spending

India's economy expanded by 6.2 percent in October-December, picking up on increased government and consumer spending, official data showed on February 28, 2025, and the government said it expected a further acceleration in the current quarter. A stronger rural economy also bolstered the world's fifth-largest economy in the final quarter of 2024, but manufacturing growth remained subdued and the overall rise in GDP was well below peak quarterly growth rates seen in the three years after the pandemic. "GDP figures show that India's economy remained fairly soft by its own standards at the end of last year. But with policy now decisively turning more supportive, economic growth should pick up further over the coming quarters," Capital Economics' Harry Chambers said.

India is still the world's fastest growing major economy, but it also faces uncertainties over its trade with the United States and the Trump administration's plans to impose reciprocal tariffs. Growth in gross domestic product, opens new tab in October-December was slightly



lower than the 6.3 percent expansion projected by analysts in a Reuters poll, and the central bank's estimate of 6.8 percent. The economy grew 5.6 percent in the previous quarter. The gross value added, a measure of economic activity that is seen as a more stable measure of growth, grew 6.2 percent in October-December, compared to a revised 5.8 percent expansion in the previous quarter.

For the full year, the government now pegs GDP growth at 6.5 percent, marginally higher than its initial estimate of 6.4 percent, but below the revised growth rate of 9.2 percent for 2023-24. To meet the

growth estimate of 6.5 percent for the full financial year, India needs to grow at 7.6 percent in the January-March period. India's chief economic adviser, V Anantha Nageswaran, sees this as achievable. Resilient rural demand will support India's growth while urban consumption is recovering, Nageswaran said at a press conference. Urban consumption has weakened due to weak job and income growth while retail inflation remained high through much of last year. Inflation eased to 4.3 percent in January and the central bank expects it to average 4.2 percent in the financial year starting April 1 **r**

Pakistan faces big external financing risks despite growth

Pakistan's external financing needs will remain significant in the coming year, despite progress in rebuilding its foreign exchange reserves, Fitch Ratings said on February 07, 2025. The South Asian nation needs to repay over \$22 billion in external debt in the fiscal year 2025, including nearly \$13 billion in bilateral deposits, Fitch said. "Securing sufficient external financing remains a challenge, considering large maturities and lenders' existing exposures," said the credit ratings agency. Last month, the country agreed on a \$1 billion loan with two Middle Eastern banks at a

6-7 percent interest rate, its finance minister said in an interview on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum, Pakistan's central bank chief earlier said the country aims to raise up to \$4 billion from Middle Eastern commercial banks by the next fiscal year.

To address its external financing needs from the International Monetary Fund and other multilateral and bilateral lenders, Fitch said Pakistan needs to continue implementing structural reforms, including those related to fiscal consolidation and improving

its business environment. Pakistan is undergoing reforms under a \$7 billion IMF program, which is up for its first review later this month.

The program aims to help Pakistan address deep-rooted economic issues such as its large fiscal and current account deficits. "Deteriorating external liquidity, for example linked to delays in IMF reviews, could lead to negative action," the rating agency said. Still, Fitch noted that Pakistan has made progress in rebuilding its foreign exchange reserves, outperforming targets set by

the IMF. Fitch also said that Pakistan's economic activity is now benefiting from stability and falling interest rates, expecting "real value added to expand by 3.0 percent in 2025 fiscal year."

Pakistan's finance minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb, expressed hopes for an upgrade in the country's credit rating, currently at CCC+ by Fitch and Caa2 by Moody's, both considered "junk" territory. "Ideally, I would like to think that some action in this direction can take place before our fiscal year is over, which is this June," Aurangzeb said.

Nepali rupee weakens further

The Nepali rupee continues to depreciate against the US dollar. The Nepal Rastra Bank on February 7, 2025 fixed the exchange rate of one US dollar at Rs. 140.25. The exchange rate of the US dollar against the Nepali currency has been rising for the past few months, and, the Nepali currency plunged to a record low at Rs. 140.25 for one dollar. Under the current system, the exchange rates quoted by different commercial banks may differ, the NRB said. Nepali currency has come under pressure owing to the devaluation of the Indian rupee with which it is pegged. The Nepali rupee has a fixed exchange rate of Rs. 160 for INR. 100.

"Due to high demand for US dollars in India, the Indian currency has become weak against the US dollar, which has led to a decline in the value of INR. This has had an impact on the Nepali rupees as well," said Economist Chandra Mani Adhikari. He said that the exports of India have also decreased which led to a decline in the foreign currency reserves at the Reserve Bank of India which also resulted in the depreciation of INR against the US dollar.

The devaluation of INR against the US dollar will affect Nepal's economy,

he said. The devaluation of Nepali rupees will directly hit inflation and foreign currency reserves as the government has to spend more Nepali rupees to pay foreign loans and interests, he said. Economists argue that the depreciation of the Nepali currency against the dollar will directly trigger inflation as the import cost of goods will be higher.

The weakening of the domestic currency could prove to be a boon for remittances, tourism and exports, among other sectors, where the earnings are made in the US dollar. The improvement in the exchange rate of the dollar may, however, result in the swelling of the remittance inflows.

World Bank delegation reaffirms Bhutan support

A nine-member delegation of World Bank Group Executive Directors concluded a five-day visit to Bhutan today, reaffirming the World Bank Group's continued support for Bhutan's development priorities. The delegation was accompanied by Mercy Tembon, World Bank Vice President and Corporate Secretary.

During the visit, the Executive Directors had an audience with His Majesty the King of Bhutan and also met with the Prime Minister, Finance minister, senior government officials, development partners, ambassadors, and private sector representatives.

They visited World Bank-supported ongoing and planned projects in Thimphu and Gelephu.

"Bhutan is globally known for its pristine nature and unique development philosophy. This is the world's first carbon negative country, and it has made notable progress in reducing poverty and advancing human development," said Robert Bruce Nicholl, Spokesperson of the Delegation and the Executive Director for Australia. "As the World Bank Group is in the process of developing its new partnership framework for Bhutan through a consultative process, we remain committed to help Bhutan achieve its development aspirations."

The delegation visited the National Center for Organic Agriculture and the Cottage and Small Industries Market that promotes and sells Bhutanese products domestically and in foreign markets. In Gelephu, they visited a site for a planned project, which aims to improve regional trade and connectivity.

"Bhutan and World Bank's long partnership spans over four decades. The World Bank remains committed to help Bhutan achieve resilient and inclusive growth as envisioned in the kingdom's 13th Five Year Plan while preserving its unique cultural values, natural assets and Gross National Happiness philosophy," said Mercy Tembon, World Bank Vice President and Corporate Secretary **r**



Clean energy bolsters China's GDP growth in 2024

China's global dominance of clean-energy technologies has raised the hackles of some nations and led to tariffs and trade spats, but the industry has proved a boon for the world's second-largest economy, which has struggled to boost sluggish growth. While some economic sectors in China, such as the property market, have slumped on falling demand, clean-energy technologies are on a roll, contributing to a record 10 percent of the nation's gross domestic product in 2024 and this could rise further in 2025, an analysis released on February 19, 2025 shows.

Electric vehicles, batteries and solar continued to dominate the economic contribution of clean energy in China, attracting more than half of all investment in clean-energy technologies, according to an analysis by the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air for Carbon Brief, a British climate and energy policy news site. In 2023, clean energy accounted for 9 percent of China's GDP; the figure was 7.2 percent in 2022, Crea said. Overall, clean-energy technology sectors, which also include nuclear, wind, hydropower and railways, accounted for 26 percent of overall China GDP growth in 2024, the analysis found.

"The finding is significant because it shows that clean-energy investment can be a major driver of economic growth and investment," said co-author Lauri Myllyvirta, lead analyst at Crea and a senior fellow at Asia Society Policy Institute. And it stands in stark contrast to the Trump administration's efforts to roll back support for renewable energy and EVs as well as slash funding for climate research.

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its related corporations and affiliates as well as their agents and authorized service providers. "It also matters for the world and for the global climate effort that clean energy is so central to China's economic growth, because it provides a strong motivation for the country's leadership to sustain the rapid growth of the sector," Myllyvirta said. This would help China peak and then decline its carbon dioxide emissions, which are the largest of any nation, he added. CO2 is the main greenhouse gas driving climate change.

China's economy grew 5 percent in 2024. Without the contribution from the clean-energy sectors, growth would have been 3.6 percent, according to the analysis. Clean-energy sectors contributed 13.6 trillion yuan (\$2.5 trillion) to China's economy, or just above 10 percent of total GDP. The authors included the value of production of green goods, investment in new manufacturing plants, clean-energy power generation and the value of export in their calculations.

But there are risks ahead, including whether the current levels of production and investment will continue when the current 14th five-year plan for 2021 to 2025 ends. Another is the low profitability

and overcapacity of clean-energy manufacturing in China.

China dominates the global clean-energy technology arena and is by far the world's largest investor in renewable energy, as well as the top EV and battery maker. The nation produces about 80 percent of all solar panels made globally, 70 percent of wind turbines and more than 60 percent of EVs sold.

This huge level of production, both for domestic consumption and export, has dramatically cut the price of green technology, with the clear climate benefit of poorer nations being able to afford them. But it has also triggered trade tensions with the US and European Union **r**

Japan's economy grows faster than expected in Q4

Japan's economy expanded an annualized 2.8 percent in the October-December quarter, government data showed, backed by strong business spending and beating analyst forecasts. Strong domestic demand is helping support a recovery in the world's fourth-largest economy, even as US president Donald Trump's tariff threats fuel concerns about the export outlook.

The positive figures will also likely support the Bank of Japan's plan to keep hiking interest rates and normalize monetary policy. The increase in gross domestic product compared with a median market estimate of a 1.0 percent gain in a Reuters poll, and followed a revised 1.7 percent growth in the previous quarter. The reading translates into a quarterly rise of 0.7 percent, better than the median estimate for a 0.3 percent uptick.

Private consumption, which accounts for more than half of economic output, rose 0.1 percent, compared with a market estimate of a 0.3 percent fall. It cooled down from the 0.7 percent rise of the previous quarter, indicating the rising costs of food have kept households reluctant to spend. Consumption and wage trends are key factors the BOJ is watching to gauge economic strength and determine the need for additional rate hikes. While the latest wage and household spending indicators showed encouraging signs, analysts have been wary of price pressures hindering a full-fledged recovery in personal consumption.

Capital spending, a key driver of private demand-led growth, rose 0.5 percent in the fourth quarter, versus a market estimate of a rise of 1.0 percent in the Reuters poll. Net external demand, or exports minus imports, contributed 0.7 of a point to growth, reversing a negative contribution in the July-September period **r**

Singapore factory output grows 9.1pc in January

Factory production in Singapore rose for a seventh straight month in January, with local manufacturers expressing positive business sentiment for the first half of 2025 despite global uncertainty. Total



output expanded 9.1 percent year on year, after a revised 5.2 percent increase in December and a 10.8 percent rise in the month before that. Excluding the more volatile biomedical industry, output increased 7.3 percent, according to data from the Economic Development Board on February 26, 2025. On a seasonally adjusted month-on-month basis, manufacturing output increased 4.5 percent. Excluding biomedical manufacturing, output increased 4.2 percent.

Biomedical manufacturing output grew the most, rising by 19.3 percent year on year. Output in the pharmaceuticals segment rose 33.6 percent, on account of a different mix of active pharmaceutical ingredients being produced and higher production of biological products compared with a year ago.

Conversely, the output of the medical technology segment declined 3.5 percent owing to lower export demand for medical devices. The electronics industry, which accounts for nearly half of Singapore's manufacturing output, saw an increase of 18.9 percent in January year on year, after the revised 3.1 percent rise in December. Within the cluster, infocomms and consumer electronics surged 47.8 percent,

while semiconductor production grew 17.9 percent. Other electronic modules and components fell 15.9 percent, due in part to weakness in the global automotive industry, but computer peripherals and data storage expanded 15.4 percent.

Output in the transport engineering sector climbed 3.8 percent in January year on year, with all segments recording output growth. The aerospace segment led the charge, growing 5.2 percent on account of increased maintenance, repair and overhaul jobs from commercial airlines.

The land segment rose 1.4 percent, while the marine and offshore engineering segment grew 0.6 percent.

General manufacturing output fell 1.7 percent in January compared with the same month in 2024. The food, beverages and tobacco segment expanded 7.5 percent, led by higher production of beverage concentrates and milk powder.

Conversely, the printing segment fell by 8.8 percent, while the miscellaneous industries segment declined by 13.8 percent, recording lower production of structural metal products, apparel, and paperboard containers and boxes **r**

Saudi Arabia's economic diversification to drive robust growth

Saudi Arabia's economic diversification efforts and the robust expansion of the non-oil sector, in line with its Vision 2030, are set to drive significant economic growth in 2025, according to a recent analysis. First Abu Dhabi Bank, in its latest report, predicts that Saudi Arabia's non-energy gross domestic product will grow by 4.4 percent in 2025, up from 3.5 percent in the previous year. This forecast aligns with a similar projection from PwC, which also expects the non-oil economy to grow by 4.4 percent this year.

In January, the International Monetary Fund projected Saudi Arabia's overall economy would expand by 3.3 percent in 2025, with further growth expected at 4.1 percent in 2026. FAB's analysis is also consistent with a recent report from Riyadh Bank, which forecasts a 4.8 percent growth in Saudi Arabia's economy in 2025. "Our constructive outlook on the GCC macroeconomic landscape in 2025 was bolstered and corroborated by Moody's upgrade of Saudi Arabia's



sovereign credit rating. Saudi Arabia's diversification momentum will be sustained going forward," said FAB.

In November 2024, the global credit rating agency upgraded Saudi Arabia's credit rating and that of related government entities to Aa3 from A1, maintaining a stable outlook. According to Moody's, an Aa3 rating is assigned to countries and entities with high quality, low credit risk, and strong ability to repay short-term debts. Moody's explained that the upgrade reflects the success of Saudi

Arabia's economic diversification efforts and its reduced exposure to fluctuations in the oil market and long-term challenges related to carbon transition.

Further affirming Saudi Arabia's steady economic progress, Jihad Azour, director of the Middle East and Central Asia Department at the IMF, said in February that the Kingdom's growing role in the international financial system is solidifying its position as an emerging economic "powerhouse" **r**

Saudi Arabia's non-oil private sector grows at decade-high pace

Saudi Arabia's non-oil business sector expanded at its strongest pace in just over a decade in January, driven by a surge in new orders and robust business activity, a survey showed on February 04, 2025. The seasonally adjusted Riyadh Bank Saudi Arabia Purchasing Managers' Index rose to 60.5 last month from 58.4 in December, marking its highest level since September 2014. Readings above 50 denote growth.

The rapid growth was largely attributed to the fastest rise in new orders since June 2011, with the New Orders Index accelerating to a reading of 71.1 in January from

65.5 the previous month. This surge in demand was supported by favorable economic conditions and new infrastructure projects, boosting customer orders and export sales, the survey said.

"The rise in export orders further complemented domestic demand, particularly from GCC countries, reflecting effective marketing and competitive pricing strategies," Naif Al Ghaith, Riyadh Bank's chief economist said. "This expansion highlights the country's continued economic diversification efforts." Non-oil growth surged to 4.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2024, government

estimates showed, outperforming overall GDP growth during the period as the government presses on with investments and initiatives to meet Vision 2030 economic objectives. Employment levels continued to rise in January, but cost pressures remained a concern, with rising input price inflation contributing to firms increasing output prices at the fastest pace in about a year.

However, business expectations for the year ahead improved to the strongest since March 2024 with firms still optimistic about future output **r**

UAE leads economy, reshapes global investment landscape

Amid rapidly evolving global trends, the UAE has emerged as one of the world's most innovative and future-ready nations, positioning itself to lead the future economy. The country is building an unprecedented economic model that blends innovation with global competitiveness, driven by a strategic vision based on advanced technology, sustainability, and economic diversification. The UAE's vision for the future economy marks a dramatic departure from traditional economic models. It rests on three main pillars:

Economic Diversification: Reducing reliance on oil while boosting non-oil sectors such as tourism, manufacturing, and financial services. **Technological Innovation:** Leveraging artificial intelligence, blockchain, and robotics to enhance productivity and efficiency.

Sustainability: Balancing economic growth with environmental protection through clean energy projects and a transition to carbon neutrality. Through its ambitious projects and forward-thinking policies, the UAE is positioning itself at the epicenter of global economic transformation.

The nation aims to serve as a model for sustainable development and economic competitiveness. In line

with this vision, Abu Dhabi is set to host the 'Investopia 2025' summit from 26th to 27th February. This strategic platform will explore the future of the national economy and boost its competitiveness on the global stage, as the country shifts toward a knowledge- and innovation-based economy focused on cutting-edge technologies and emerging sectors.

The 'We the UAE 2031' vision is a cornerstone of the nation's road map for the next decade that targets raising the nation's GDP to AED3 trillion, non-oil exports reaching AED800 billion and Foreign trade valued at AED4 trillion. These goals are supported by a suite of strategic initiatives, including the UAE Centennial 2071, The Principles of the 50, the Emirates Blockchain Strategy, the UAE's Fourth Industrial Revolution Strategy, and the UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031.

In statements to the Emirates News Agency, economic experts said that the UAE is laying a solid foundation for the growth of knowledge-based sectors, aiming to become a global hub for innovation, artificial intelligence, and entrepreneurship. Proactive policies—ranging from flexible regulations and tax incentives to international partnerships and support for startups—are central to these efforts.

Nthathi Moorosi, Minister of Information, Communications, Science, Technology and Innovation of Lesotho, highlighted the UAE's leadership in shaping future economies. She noted that the nation's pioneering initiatives are setting the stage for a new kind of economy, one that even emerging and developing countries can emulate. Moorosi stressed that the UAE's focus on innovation makes it a magnet for foreign investment, with her country keen to strengthen economic ties to benefit from its advanced practices.

Eric Jarvis, Manager IT Software Management at L3Harris Technologies also remarked on the UAE's impressive capabilities. He also confirmed that his company is expanding its industrial footprint in the country, attracted by the UAE's strong potential to convert technological innovations into tangible, sustainable solutions **r**

Qatar's non-oil business growth steady in December

Qatar's real gross domestic product is projected to grow by 2 percent in 2024–25, supported by public investment, liquefied natural gas spillovers, and a strong tourism sector, the International Monetary Fund said. The IMF expects the Gulf nation's medium-term growth to average 4.75 percent, driven by a substantial increase in LNG production and early benefits from reforms under the Third National Development Strategy.

The fund also said that Qatar's inflation is expected to ease to an average annual rate of 1 percent in 2024 before stabilizing at around 2 percent over the medium term, reflecting broader economic trends rather than short-term price fluctuations. The country's annual inflation rate slowed to 0.24 percent in December from 0.95 percent in November, according to Consumer Price Index data released in early February **r**



Trump unveils sweeping US tariffs on Canada, Mexico, China

President Donald Trump announced broad tariffs on major US trading partners Canada, Mexico and China, claiming a “major threat” from illegal immigration and drugs — a move that sparked promises of retaliation. Canadian and Mexican exports to the United States will face a 25 percent tariff starting from February 04, 2025, although energy resources from Canada will have a lower 10 percent levy.



Goods from China, which already face various rates of duties, will see an additional 10 percent tariff. Trump’s orders also suspended exemptions allowing low-value imports from the three countries to enter the US duty-free. The announcement threatens upheaval across supply chains, from energy to automobiles to food. Trump invoked the International Emergency Economic Powers Act in imposing the tariffs, with the White House saying “the extraordinary threat posed by illegal aliens and drugs, including deadly fentanyl, constitutes a national emergency.”

The aim is to hold all three countries “accountable to their promises of halting illegal immigration and stopping poisonous fentanyl and other drugs from flowing into our country,” the White House added. China’s commerce ministry said in a statement it would take “corresponding countermeasures” and file a claim against Washington at the World Trade Organization. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum announced that her country would impose retaliatory tariffs.

Sheinbaum said that she had told her economy minister “to implement Plan B that we have been working on, which includes tariff and non-tariff measures in defense of

Mexico’s interests.” Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau who spoke with Sheinbaum separately said his country would hit back with 25 percent levies of its own on select American goods worth Can\$155 billion (\$106.6 billion), with a first round followed by a second one in three weeks.

“We’re certainly not looking to escalate. But we will stand up for Canada, for Canadians, for Canadian jobs,” he said, as he warned of a fracture in longstanding Canada-US ties. British Columbia Premier David Eby announced that his province would specifically retaliate against “red” US states led by members of Trump’s Republican Party.

Trump has repeatedly expressed his approval of tariffs as a policy measure, and has signaled that the action could be the first volley in further trade conflicts to come. This week, he also pledged to impose future duties on the European Union. He has also promised tariffs on semiconductors, steel, aluminum, oil and gas. “Tariffs are a powerful, proven source of leverage for protecting the national interest,” the White House said.

“The tariff action announced on February 02, 2025 makes clear that our friends, neighbors and Free Trade Agreement partners are in

the line of fire,” said Wendy Cutler, vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute and a former US trade negotiator. “The move today is an opening salvo on the tariff front,” she said.

Economic integration between the United States, Mexico and Canada who share a trade pact means stiff tariffs will have “a strong and immediate impact” in all three countries, she said. Imposing sweeping tariffs on the three biggest US trading partners in goods carries risks for Trump, who won November’s election partly due to public dissatisfaction over the economy.

Higher import costs would likely “dampen consumer spending and business investment,” said EY chief economist Gregory Daco. He expects inflation would rise by 0.7 percentage points in the first quarter this year with the tariffs in place, before gradually easing. “Rising trade policy uncertainty will heighten financial market volatility and strain the private sector, despite the administration’s pro-business rhetoric,” he said. Economists also expect growth to take a hit. Trump’s supporters have downplayed fears that tariffs would fuel inflation, with some suggesting his planned tax cuts and deregulation measures could boost growth instead.

Doug Ford, premier of Canada's economic engine Ontario, warned of potential job losses and a slowdown in business with tariffs. He said "We're going to stand up for what's right." US Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer has warned new tariffs could "further drive up costs for American consumers." Canada and Mexico are major suppliers of US agricultural products. The tariffs are also expected to hit the auto industry hard, since automakers and suppliers produce components throughout the region.

Analysts have warned that hiking import taxes on crude oil from countries like Canada and Mexico threaten US energy prices too. Nearly 60 percent of US crude oil imports are from Canada, according to a Congressional Research Service report **r**

US employers add 143,000 jobs in January, jobless rate falls to 4pc

US employers added just 143,000 jobs last month, but the unemployment rate fell to 4 percent to start 2025. The first monthly jobs report of Donald Trump's second presidency suggested he's inherited a solid but unspectacular US labor market. January job creation was down from the 261,000 added in November, and the 307,000 created in December. Economists had expected about 170,000 new jobs in January.

Most Americans still enjoy unusual job security. But for those looking for work, the job hunt has been getting harder as the labor market cools from the red-hot hiring days of 2021–2023. Average hourly wages rose by 0.5 percent from December and 4.1 percent from January 2024, coming in a bit hotter than forecasters had expected – news that might be

disappointing to the inflation fighters at the Federal Reserve. Still, some of the inflationary pressure from wage gains is being offset by healthy US productivity growth, which allows companies to pay more and earn fatter profits without raising prices.

"Employers are really maintaining their workforce, but they are not hiring significantly, nor are they laying off," said Gregory Daco, chief economist at the tax and consulting firm EY Parthenon. Daco expects average job growth to slow to between 100,000 and 150,000 a month this year (down slightly from the 2024 average of 166,000 new jobs a month). "Any hiring decision is going to be judicious," he said, "because the cost of talent is still elevated."

The Labor Department also revised payrolls for November and December up by a combined 100,000. Citing the strong upward revisions from late 2024, Carl Weinberg and Mary Chen of High Frequency Economics wrote that "There is no cause for concern about the strength of the economy in today's employment report." But they added that the decent hiring over the past three months suggested the Fed will be in no hurry to cut interest rates again after cutting three times in 2024.

Healthcare companies added 44,000 jobs, down from a 2024 average of 57,000. Retailers hired 34,000 workers. And government at all levels added 32,000 jobs. Mining companies shed 8,000 jobs. The Labor Department said the Los Angeles wildfires and a cold snap in the Northeast and Midwest had "no discernible" impact on the January jobs numbers.

A federal judge on February 06, 2025 temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's plan to push out federal workers by offering them financial

incentives, yet a federal hiring freeze that Trump imposed Jan. 20 is a "negative for employment growth," Bradley Saunders, an economist at Capital Economics, wrote in a commentary last week. The freeze came after the Labor Department collected the January jobs numbers, so any impact would be revealed in upcoming employment data **r**

EU trade chief says bloc to respond swiftly to US tariffs

The European Union will respond "firmly and swiftly" to protect its interests if Washington imposes tariffs on the bloc's goods, its trade chief said February 19, 2025, rejecting President Donald Trump's claim that US-EU trade ties are unfair. "It is the very definition of a win-win partnership, and there is nothing unfair about it," Maros Sefcovic added in Washington, as Europe girds for heightened tariff tensions with the United States.

But he signaled the EU's willingness for deal-making, such as the possibility of reducing or eliminating tariffs on autos and other products. "If we are going to talk about lowering the tariffs, even eliminating the tariffs, let's say for industrial products, this would be something which we are ready to discuss," he said at the American Enterprise Institute. "We are ready to go for it," he said ahead of talks with his US counterparts. He was due to meet with partners including US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative nominee Jamieson Greer. He added that he was keen on discussing US concerns and working towards a "solid package."

Sefcovic said the EU sees "no justification for sudden, unilateral tariff increases" by the United States, adding that businesses rely on economic stability and predictability **r**

নতুন মুদ্রানীতি ঘোষণা

মূল্যস্ফীতি নিয়ন্ত্রণে অগ্রাধিকার

দেশের বর্তমান পরিস্থিতিতে মোট দেশজ উৎপাদন বা জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি নয়। উচ্চ মূল্যস্ফীতি নিয়ন্ত্রণেই জোর দিতে চায় বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক। এ জন্য বিনিময় হারের ওপর চাপ কমিয়ে রিজার্ভ ধরে রাখতে চায় কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংক। উচ্চ মূল্যস্ফীতি নিয়ন্ত্রণে কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংকের পদক্ষেপে সরকারও সমর্থন দিচ্ছে। এ কারণে সরকারের পক্ষ থেকে ব্যাংক খাত থেকে ঋণ গ্রহণের লক্ষ্যমাত্রা কমিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। ব্যাংক খাত থেকে চলতি অর্থবছরে সরকারে ঋণের লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ছিল ১ লাখ ৩৭ হাজার কোটি টাকা। সেটি কমিয়ে ৯৯ হাজার কোটি টাকা করা হয়েছে। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক আগামী জুনের মধ্যে মূল্যস্ফীতি ৭৮ শতাংশে নামিয়ে আনতে চায়। সেই লক্ষ্য নির্ধারণ করে সম্প্রতি চলতি ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থবছরের দ্বিতীয়ার্ধের (জানুয়ারি-জুন) জন্য নতুন মুদ্রানীতি ঘোষণা করেছে। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক বলছে, আপাতত তাদের প্রধান লক্ষ্য মূল্যস্ফীতির কমিয়ে আনা। তাই এ মুহূর্তে জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধিকে খুব বেশি অগ্রাধিকার দেওয়া হচ্ছে না।

এ উপলক্ষে অনুষ্ঠিত সংবাদ সম্মেলনে মুদ্রানীতির বিভিন্ন কৌশল তুলে ধরেন ডেপুটি গভর্নর হাবিবুর রহমান। নতুন মুদ্রানীতিতে সরকারি খাতে ঋণ প্রবৃদ্ধি কমানোর পাশাপাশি বেসরকারি খাতে ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধি কিছুটা বাড়ানো হয়েছে। নীতি সুদহারে কোনো পরিবর্তন আনা হয়নি। আগের মতোই ১০ শতাংশে রাখা হয়েছে। সংবাদ সম্মেলনে ডেপুটি গভর্নর হাবিবুর রহমান বলেন, অনেক দিন ধরে দেশে উচ্চ মূল্যস্ফীতি বিরাজ করলেও তা নিয়ন্ত্রণে যে নীতি গ্রহণ করা হয়েছিল, তা ছিল অপ্রতুল। অনেক ক্ষেত্রে নীতি গ্রহণও বিলম্বিত হয়েছে। এ জন্য মূল্যস্ফীতি কমে। হাবিবুর রহমান আরও বলেন, 'এখন জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি আমাদের অগ্রাধিকারে নেই। সরকার চলতি অর্থবছরে ৫ দশমিক ২৫ শতাংশ জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যমাত্রা নির্ধারণ করেছে। আমরাও মনে করছি, অর্থবছর শেষে তা ৫ শতাংশের ওপরেই থাকবে। এরই মধ্যে দেশের চলতি ও আর্থিক হিসাব ইতিবাচক হয়েছে। আগামী দিনে লেনদেন ভারসাম্যও ইতিবাচক ধারায় ফিরবে, যা ডলারের ওপর চাপ কমিয়ে বৈদেশিক মুদ্রার মজুত বা রিজার্ভ বাড়াতে ভূমিকা রাখবে।'



বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক বলছে, এ মুহূর্তে তাদের সামনে প্রধান চারটি চ্যালেঞ্জ রয়েছে। সেগুলো হলো উচ্চ মূল্যস্ফীতি নিয়ন্ত্রণে আনা, বিনিময় হারের স্থিতিশীলতা, রিজার্ভ বাড়ানো ও ব্যাংকের প্রতি আমানতকারীদের আস্থা বৃদ্ধি।

মুদ্রানীতি ঘোষণা অনুষ্ঠানে গভর্নর আহসান এইচ মনসুর বলেন, নতুন মুদ্রানীতিতে নীতি সুদহার বাড়ানোর কোনো সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়া হয়নি। ফলে সব ধরনের নীতি সুদহার আগের মতোই থাকবে। এবারের মুদ্রানীতির ভঙ্গি হবে প্রকৃত সংকোচনমূলক। নতুন মুদ্রানীতিতে বলা হয়েছে, আগামী জুন পর্যন্ত নীতি সুদহার বা রেপো রেট ১০ শতাংশে অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে, অর্থাৎ কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংক থেকে ব্যাংকগুলোর নেওয়া ঋণের সুদ নতুন করে বাড়বে না। গত দুই মাসে মূল্যস্ফীতি কিছুটা কমে আসায় এ সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়া হয়েছে বলে জানায় বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক।

এ ছাড়া ব্যাংকগুলোর জন্য চালু করা বিশেষ ধরনের ধার বা স্ট্যান্ডিং ল্যাণ্ডিং ফ্যাসিলিটির (এসএলএফ) সুদহারের উর্ধ্বসীমা আগের মতো সাড়ে ১১ শতাংশ এবং স্ট্যান্ডিং ডিপোজিট ফ্যাসিলিটির (এসডিএফ) সুদহার ৮ দশমিক ৫০ শতাংশে বহাল রাখা হয়েছে। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক মনে করছে, কঠোর নীতির ধারাবাহিকতা ও অংশীজনদের সহযোগিতায় নিকট ভবিষ্যতে মূল্যস্ফীতি ৭-৮ শতাংশে নেমে আসবে। সর্বশেষ গত জানুয়ারিতে সার্বিক মূল্যস্ফীতি কমে ৯ দশমিক ৯৪ শতাংশে নেমেছে। এ ছাড়া ব্যাংক ও আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠানের খেলাপি ঋণ কমিয়ে আনাকেও

অন্যতম প্রধান লক্ষ্য হিসেবে বিবেচনায় নেওয়া হয়েছে নতুন মুদ্রানীতিতে।

মুদ্রানীতিতে বেসরকারি খাতে ঋণ প্রবৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ধরা হয়েছে ৯ দশমিক ৮ শতাংশ। আগের মুদ্রানীতিতেও একই লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ছিল। তবে গত ডিসেম্বর শেষে বেসরকারি খাতে ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে ৭ দশমিক ৩ শতাংশ। কমানো হয়েছে সরকারি খাতে ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যমাত্রা। চলতি অর্থবছরের শেষ ছয় মাসের জন্য সরকারি খাতে ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ঠিক করা হয়েছে সাড়ে ১৭ শতাংশ। গত ডিসেম্বর যা ছিল ১৮ দশমিক ১ শতাংশ। সরকারি-বেসরকারি ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধির নতুন এ লক্ষ্যমাত্রার ফলে আগামী জুনে অর্থবছর শেষে সার্বিকভাবে অভ্যন্তরীণ ঋণের প্রবৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যমাত্রা ধরা হয়েছে সাড়ে ১১ শতাংশ। গত ডিসেম্বর শেষে এ খাতে প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ৯ দশমিক ৪ শতাংশ।

মুদ্রানীতিতে বলা হয়, দেশে খেলাপি ঋণের হার ৩০ শতাংশ অতিক্রম করতে পারে বলে মনে করছে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক। এতে দেশের আর্থিক খাতের স্থিতিশীলতা বিনষ্ট হতে পারে। তাই খেলাপি ঋণের এ চাপ মোকাবিলায় বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক মুদ্রানীতিতে বেশ কিছু ব্যবস্থার কথা জানিয়েছে। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক বলছে, নিয়ন্ত্রণমূলক ব্যবস্থা জোরদার, ব্যাংকিং খাতের সুশাসন নিশ্চিত ও যথাযথভাবে সংস্কার কার্যক্রম বাস্তবায়নের মাধ্যমে খেলাপি ঋণ পরিস্থিতি মোকাবিলা করা হবে। এসব নীতি বাস্তবায়ন করা গেলে মানুষের আস্থা ফিরে আসবে।

কমলো জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি ও মাথাপিছু আয়

দীর্ঘদিন বাড়িয়ে দেখানোর পর দেশের পণ্য রপ্তানি আয় সংশোধন করা হয় গত বছরের এপ্রিলে। সংশোধনীতে গত ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থবছরে রপ্তানি আয় কমেছে ১৪ বিলিয়ন বা ১ হাজার ৪০০ কোটি ডলার। দেশীয় মুদ্রায় যা ১ লাখ ৬৫ হাজার কোটি টাকার মতো। এত বড় অঙ্কের অর্থ কমে যাওয়ার প্রভাব মোট দেশজ উৎপাদন (জিডিপি) প্রবৃদ্ধি এবং মাথাপিছু আয়ে পড়েছে বলে জানিয়েছে বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো (বিবিএস)। বিবিএসের চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে, গত অর্থবছরে জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি কমে ৪ দশমিক ২২ শতাংশে নেমে এসেছে। মাথাপিছু আয় কমে হয়েছে ২ হাজার ৭৩৮ ডলার। সম্প্রতি সাময়িক অর্থনীতির গুরুত্বপূর্ণ এ নির্দেশকগুলোর চূড়ান্ত হিসাব প্রকাশ করা হয়। তাতে দেখা যায়, বিবিএসের সাময়িক হিসাব এবং চূড়ান্ত হিসাবের মধ্যে ব্যবধানটা বেশ বড়। যেমন: চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধির সাময়িক হিসাবের চেয়ে ১ দশমিক ৬০ শতাংশীয় পয়েন্ট কম। গত বছরের মে মাসে বিবিএস জানায়, সাময়িক হিসাবে গত অর্থবছরে ৫ দশমিক ৮২ শতাংশ জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে।

এদিকে চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে গত অর্থবছরে যে জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে, তা গত তিন অর্থবছরের মধ্যে সবচেয়ে কম। ২০২১-২২ অর্থবছরে জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয় ৭ দশমিক ১০ শতাংশ। ২০২২-২৩ অর্থবছরে ছিল ৫ দশমিক ৭৮ শতাংশ। বিবিএসের তথ্যে দেখা যায়, গত অর্থবছর সাময়িক হিসাবের চেয়ে চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে রপ্তানির পরিমাণ কম এসেছে ২১ দশমিক শূন্য ৭ শতাংশ। আগের অর্থবছর অর্থাৎ ২০২২-২৩ অর্থবছরও চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে রপ্তানি সাময়িক হিসাবের চেয়ে ১৫ দশমিক ২৯ শতাংশ কম হয়।

জিডিপি ও রপ্তানির সম্পর্কের বিষয়টি ব্যাখ্যায় বিবিএস বলেছে, জিডিপির হিসাব প্রাক্কলনের ক্ষেত্রে রপ্তানি আয়ের তথ্য বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক থেকে সংগ্রহ করা হয়। ২০২২-২৩ অর্থবছরের প্রথম ছয় মাসের তুলনায় ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থবছরের একই সময়ের রপ্তানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ১২ দশমিক ২১ শতাংশ। এ বিবেচনা থেকে গত অর্থবছরের সাময়িক হিসাব প্রাক্কলন

করা হয়। তবে ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থবছরের রপ্তানির সংশোধিত হিসাব সাময়িক প্রাক্কলিত হিসাবের তুলনায় ২১ দশমিক শূন্য ৭ শতাংশ কম হয়েছে।

রপ্তানিতে সাময়িক ও চূড়ান্ত হিসাবের মধ্যে বড় ব্যবধান থাকলেও কৃষিতে প্রবৃদ্ধির হার বেড়েছে। সাময়িক হিসাবে কৃষির প্রবৃদ্ধি ধরা হয় ৩ দশমিক ২১ শতাংশ, যা চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে বেড়ে হয়েছে ৩ দশমিক ৩০ শতাংশ। সেবা খাতের প্রবৃদ্ধি কাছাকাছিই রয়েছে। এ খাতে সাময়িক হিসাবে প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ৫ দশমিক ৮০ শতাংশ। চূড়ান্ত হিসাবে যা দাঁড়িয়েছে ৫ দশমিক শূন্য ৯ শতাংশ। অবশ্য শিল্পের প্রবৃদ্ধি ৬ দশমিক ৬৬ থেকে কমে ৩ দশমিক ৫১ শতাংশে নেমে এসেছে। শিল্প খাতে দুই হিসাবের মধ্যে বড় ব্যবধানের কারণও রপ্তানি খাত। বিবিএসের প্রতিবেদন বলছে, গত অর্থবছরে চলতি মূল্যে জিডিপির আকার দাঁড়িয়েছে ৫০ লাখ ২ হাজার ৬৫৪ কোটি টাকা, যা সাময়িক হিসাবে ছিল ৫০ লাখ ৪৮ হাজার ২৭ কোটি টাকা।

মধ্যম আয় ও ঋণের ফাঁদে বাংলাদেশ মাথাপিছু আয় ২ হাজার ৭৩৮ ডলার

বাংলাদেশ ইতোমধ্যে মধ্যম আয়ের ফাঁদে পড়েছে। একসঙ্গে আটকে গেছে ঋণের ফাঁদেও। বিগত সরকারের সময় অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধির যে প্রচার ছিল, তা ফাঁপা বুলি ছাড়া আর কিছু নয়। কোনো ক্ষেত্রেই পরিসংখ্যানের যথার্থতা প্রমাণ করা যায়নি। উচ্চ বেকারত্বই তার বড় প্রমাণ। ঢাকায় বেসরকারি গবেষণা সংস্থা সাউথ এশিয়ান নেটওয়ার্ক অন ইকোনমিক মডেলিংয়ের (সানেম) বার্ষিক অর্থনীতিবিদ সম্মেলনের সমাপনী দিনে অনুষ্ঠিত ‘বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতিতে স্থিতিশীলতা ফেরানো: সংস্কার এজেন্ডা’ শিরোনামে এক অধিবেশনে এসব কথা বলেন অর্থনীতিবিদরা। রাজধানীর ব্র্যাক সেন্টার ইনে অধিবেশনটির সঞ্চালনা করেন সংস্থার নির্বাহী পরিচালক ও ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অর্থনীতি বিভাগের অধ্যাপক ড. সেলিম রায়হান।

তিন দিনের সম্মেলনে সব মিলে ছিল মোট ২৪টি কর্মঅধিবেশন। দেশ-বিদেশের অর্থনীতিবিদ, গবেষক, উন্নয়নকর্মী এবং শিক্ষার্থীরা গবেষণাপত্র উপস্থাপন করেন

এতে। সম্প্রতি সম্মেলনের উদ্বোধন করা হয়। অর্থনীতিতে স্থিতিশীলতা ফেরানো-সংক্রান্ত এ কর্মঅধিবেশনে প্যানেল আলোচনায় বাংলাদেশে বিশ্বব্যাংকের সাবেক লিড ইকোনমিস্ট ড. জাহিদ হোসেন বলেন, ইতোমধ্যে বাংলাদেশ মধ্যম আয়ের ফাঁদে পড়ে গেছে। বিনিয়োগ থমকে আছে। রপ্তানির অবস্থাও যে খুব ভালো, সে কথা বলা যাচ্ছে না। মূল্যস্ফীতি উর্ধ্বমুখী। বৈদেশিক মুদ্রা আয়ের চেয়ে ঋণ পরিশোধে বেশি ব্যয় হচ্ছে। রাজস্ব আয়ের তুলনায় স্থানীয় ঋণও বাড়ছে।

তিনি বলেন, পরিস্থিতি থেকে উত্তরণে অর্থনৈতিক কৌশল পুনর্নির্ধারণ ও প্রয়োজনীয় সম্পদ আহরণে গঠিত টাস্কফোর্সের প্রতিবেদনে বেশ কিছু সুপারিশ করা হয়েছে। তবে এসব সুপারিশের আলোকে সংস্কার পদক্ষেপ নেওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে রাজনৈতিক সদিচ্ছা ও ঐকমত্য তৈরি হবে কিনা সেটাই এখন বড় প্রশ্ন হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। বিগত সময়ে অর্থনীতির বিভিন্ন সূচকে যে প্রবৃদ্ধির কথা বলা হয়েছে, সেগুলো প্রশ্নবিদ্ধ ছিল। বাস্তবে তার প্রতিফলন ছিল না। প্রবৃদ্ধি হলে কর্মসংস্থান বাড়ত। কিন্তু কর্মসংস্থান বাড়েনি। কিছু ক্ষেত্রে বরং কমেছে।

আলোচনায় গবেষণা সংস্থা সেন্টার ফল পলিসি ডায়ালগের (সিপিডি) সম্মাননীয় ফেলো অধ্যাপক মোস্তাফিজুর রহমান বলেন, দেশ মধ্যমে আয়ের দেশের পাশাপাশি ঋণের ফাঁদেও আটকে পড়েছে। বড় বড় প্রকল্পের রেয়াতকাল শেষ হচ্ছে। এখন সুদাসল পরিশোধের সময় এসেছে। স্বল্পোন্নত দেশের (এলডিসি) কাতার থেকে উত্তরণ পিছিয়ে দেওয়ার ব্যবসায়ীদের দাবি প্রসঙ্গে তিনি বলেন, এটা বাস্তবসম্মত হতে পারে না। নেপাল ও ভুটানের মতো দেশও এলডিসি থেকে বেরিয়ে এসেছে। ভর্তুকি থেকে উৎপাদন সক্ষমতার দিকে যেতে হবে।

অর্থনৈতিক কৌশল পুনর্নির্ধারণ ও প্রয়োজনীয় সম্পদ আহরণে গঠিত টাস্কফোর্সের সভাপতি বিআইডিএস সাবেক মহাপরিচালক ড. কেএএস মুর্শিদ বলেন, কৃষিকে বাঁচাতে হবে। স্বল্পমূল্যে কৃষি প্রযুক্তি কৃষকের হাতে পৌঁছে দিতে হবে। নতুন জাত উদ্ভাবনে নজর দিতে হবে। ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অর্থনীতি বিভাগের অধ্যাপক ড. রুমানা হক বলেন, স্বাস্থ্য খাত বরাবরের মতোই অবহেলিত। স্বাস্থ্যে বরাদ্দ জাতীয় বাজেটের মাত্র ৫ শতাংশ।

TRADE INFORMATION

February 2025

The following **Trade Inquiries** have been received and collected from different sources abroad. Interested member-firms may like to contact them directly without any obligation on the part of DCCI.

FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS

Australia Tools & Grinding Expo 2025

Date: 29 Apr - 01 May 2025
 Venue: Brisbane Showgrounds, Brisbane, Australia
 Organizer: Abrasivestocks Pty Ltd
 Tel: 1300060902
 E-mail: info@atge.com.au
 Website: <https://atge.com.au/>

The International Conference on Food Science and Bio-medicine 2025

Date: 16 - 18 May 2025
 Venue: Guangzhou, China
 Organizer: Guangzhou University
 Contact Person: Ms. Zhan (Conference Secretary)
 Tel: +86-18122478740 (WeChat)
 Website: <https://www.icfsb.com/>

Digital Healthcare Innovation Summit East 2025

Date: 19 - 20 May 2025
 Venue: Seaport Hotel & World Trade Center, Boston, USA
 Organizer: Cambridge Innovation Institute
 Tel: 781.972.5400
 E-mail: vip@cambridgevip.com
 Website: <https://dhis.net/east>

Home Textiles Exhibition 2025

Date: 20 - 23 May 2025
 Venue: Istanbul Expo Center (Istanbul Fuar Merkezi), Bakırköy/Istanbul, Turkey
 Organizer: KFA FUARCILIK INC
 Tel: +90 549 458 01 30
 E-mail: hometex@kfa.com.tr
 Website: <https://hometex.com.tr/en/>

AI World Congress 2025

Date: 18 - 19 Jun 2025
 Venue: Kensington Conference and Events Centre W8 7NX, London, UK.
 Tel: +442037735519
 E-mail: info@aiconference.london
 Website: <https://atge.com.au/>

Shanghai International Chemical Equipment Fair 2025

Date: 05 - 07 Jun 2025
 Venue: Shanghai New International Expo Centre(SNIEC), Shanghai, China
 Organizer: Guangzhou Zhenwei Exhibition Co.,Ltd.
 Tel: 18922132681 (WeChat)
 E-mail: CTEF@zhenweexpo.com
 Website: <https://www.ctef.net/>

Beauty Eurasia 2025

Date: 18 - 20 Jun 2025
 Venue: Istanbul Expo Center (Istanbul Fuar Merkezi), Bakırköy/Istanbul, Turkey
 Organizer: ICA Events
 Tel: +90 212 266 7010
 E-mail: info.turkey@icaevents.com.tr
 Website: <https://beautyeurasia.com/Home>

Advanced Automotive Battery Conference Europe 2025

Date: 23 - 26 Jun 2025
 Venue: Rheingoldhalle, Mainz, Germany
 Organizer: Cambridge Innovation Institute
 Tel: 781.972.5400
 E-mail: ce@cambridgeenergetech.com
 Website: <https://www.advancedautobat.com/europe>

ALUMINIUM CHINA 2025

Date: 09 - 11 Jul 2025
 Venue: Shanghai New International Expo Centre(SNIEC), Shanghai, China
 Organizer: RX China
 Tel: +86 10 5933 9325
 E-mail: aluchina@rxglobal.com
 Website: <https://www.aluminiumchina.com/en-gb>

Annual Immuno-Oncology Summit 2025

Date: 11 - 13 Aug 2025
 Venue: Hilton Philadelphia at Penns Landing, Philadelphia, USA
 Organizer: Cambridge Innovation Institute
 Tel: 781.972.5400
 E-mail: chi@healthtech.com
 Website: <https://www.immuno-oncologysummit.com/>

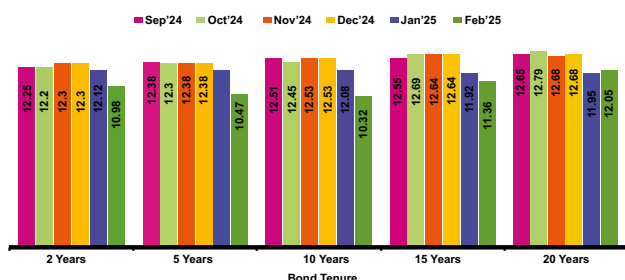
Shanghai International Automotive Innovation Technology Week 2025

Date: 13 - 15 Aug 2025
 Venue: Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC), Shanghai, China
 Organizer: Info Convention and Exhibition (Shanghai) Co. Ltd
 Tel: +86 183 1102 9887
 Fax: +86 021 5106 2285
 WeChat : 183 1102 9887
 Email: therese.tong@info-shanghai.com
 Website: <https://www.aluminiumchina.com/en-gb>

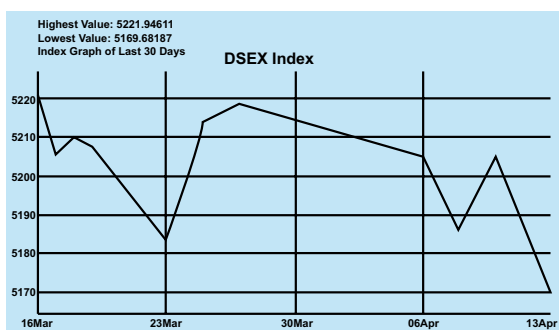
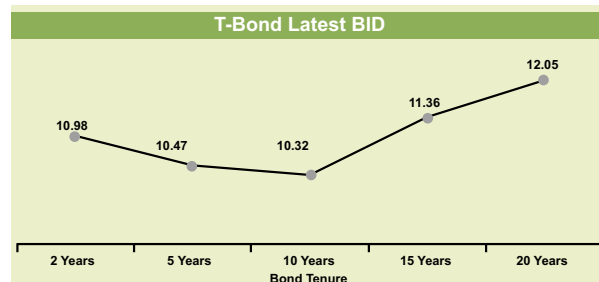
Note: Information about trade fairs and events may change. To get more information, please contact the organizers.

Share Market (As of February 27, 2025)

T-BOND YIELDS OVER LAST 6 MONTHS



T-Bond Latest BID



Regional Markets

Country	Index	PE	Yield	Interest
Bangladesh	DSE 30 Index	11.89	3.90	10.00
	DSEX	11.83	3.75	
India	SENSEX	22.66		6.50
	BSE 100			
Sri Lanka	CSE All Share Index	8.89		8.00
Thailand	SET	19.33		2.25
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	11.75		4.75
China	Composite	14.23		3.10

Trading Code	LTP	High	Low	YCP	CloseEP	Trade	Value (mn)	Volume
BSC	101.1	102.7	97.8	98.2	101.1	5624	285.0280	2842028
BXPHERMA	1.1.9	107.3	100	105.3	101.9	2750	100.6550	969741
UTTARABANK	25.4	25.5	25.2	25.3	25.4	775	100.4900	3965009
EASTRNBANK	2461.5	2461.5	2340	2344.3	2461.5	1366	93.4320	38472
SPCERAMICS	23.7	26.3	23.4	25.8	23.7	3628	92.3450	3762617
BEACHHATCH	96.6	97.4	92.3	95.6	96.6	3360	91.7670	956579
MALEKSPIN	26.3	26.4	25.2	25	26.3	2223	86.4160	3335381
OLYMPIC	161.5	164.7	153.1	154.6	161.5	1719	86.0770	539114
ORIONINFU	388.4	399.5	387	396	388.4	2416	78.6040	199993
ABB1STMF	5.3	5.5	5.2	5.4	5.3	588	65.0990	12307610

Top 10 Gainer Considering Close Price and YCP on April 13, 2025

Trading Code	CloseEP	High	Low	YCP	% Change
ECABLES	131.6	131.6	123.1	119.7	9.9415
WATACHEM	134.3	134.4	123.0	122.2	9.9018
HEIDELCEM	297.0	297.5	286.0	273.6	8.5526
AMBEEPHA	914.1	914.7	850.0	850.9	7.4274
MONNOAGML	342.1	344.3	318.1	320.0	6.9063
ARAMIT	178.1	183.5	170.9	168.7	5.572
MALEKSPIN	26.3	26.4	25.2	25.0	5.2
PREMIERCEM	58.0	58.5	55.1	55.2	5.0725
EASTRNLUB	2461.5	2461.5	2340.0	2344.3	4.9994
ANWARGALV	72	72.5	69.1	68.7	4.8035

Top 10 Loser Considering Close Price and YCP on Apr 13, 2025

Trading Code	CLOSEP	HIGH	LOW	YCP	%CHANGE
AL-HAJTEX	128.6	144.0	128.6	142.8	-9.944
PRIMEBANK	21.7	22.0	21.6	24.6	-9.5833
SPCERAMICS	23.7	26.3	23.4	25.8	-8.1395
PHOENIXFIN	3.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	-7.5
SALAMCRST	23.9	25.8	23.7	25.4	-5.9055
FAREASTFIN	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.4	-5.8824
PRIME1ICBA	4.9	5.3	4.9	5.2	-5.7692
KBPPWBIL	134.5	143.2	133.7	142.3	-5.4814
PHPMF1	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.7	-5.4054
POPULAR1MF	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.8	-5.2632



Coordinating Director of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agro based Sector of DCCI Enamul Haque Patwary (fifth from right) seen speaking at the 1st meeting of this committee held on February 10. Convenors, Joint Convenors and members of the committee are also seen in the picture.

Coordinating Director of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure of DCCI Engineer M.A Wahab (third from right) seen speaking at its 1st meeting held on February 11. Convenors, Joint Convenors and members of the committee are also seen in the picture.



Coordinating Director of the Standing Committee on SME Development of DCCI Minhaj Ahmed (fourth from left) seen speaking at the 1st meeting of this committee held on February 11. Convenors, Joint Convenors and members of the committee are also seen in the picture.



DCCI former President and Coordinating Director of the Financial Sector Standing Committee of DCCI along with the Convenor, Joint Convenors and members of the committee are seen in a group picture after the 1st meeting held on February 12.

Coordinating Director of the Standing Committee on Industrial & Trade Policies of DCCI Md. Nayeemur Rahman, (fourth from right), Convenor, Joint Convenors and members of the committee are seen in its 1st meeting held on February 12.



Coordinating Director of Country Competitiveness and Emerging Economic Opportunities Standing Committee of DCCI Rasheed Mymunul Islam (fourth from right) seen speaking at the 1st meeting of the committee held on February 13. Convenor, Joint Convenors and members of the committee were also present at the meeting.



Convenor of Energy Standing Committee of DCCI Engineer Nurul Akter (second from right) seen moderating the 1st meeting of the committee held on February 18. Joint Convenors and members of the committee are also seen in the picture.

Coordinating Director of Customs, VAT, Taxation & NBR related Issues of DCCI M Mosharraf Hossain (eighth from right), Convenor of the Committee M. Lutful Hadee (seventh from right), Joint Convenors and members are seen at the 1st meeting of the committee held on February 19.



DCCI Senior Vice President Razeef H Chowdhury (back row, third from right), Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman (back row, fourth from right), former Director Data Magfur (back row, second from right), Secretary General (Acting) Dr. AKM Asaduzzaman Patwary (back row, sixth from right) along with the Acting Principal of DBI College and HSC passed students are seen in a reception programme held on February 18.



Day-Long Training on

Workshop on 'Total Quality Management for 21st Century'

Date : May 16, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Training on 'Purchasing Chessboard-A Dynamic Tools for Procurement Strategies'

Date : May 16, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Training on 'Managing Banks, C&F, Customs, Freight Forwarding & Shipping Agents for Export & Import'

Date : May 17-19, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Training on 'Effective Communication and Presentation Skills'

Date : May 23, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Workshop on 'Effective Office Management & Secretarial Skill Development'

Date : May 23, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Training on 'Implementation of Budgetary Control: A Great Way to Remain Competitive'

Date : May 24, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Training on 'Human Resource Management and Transformational Skills'

Date : May 30, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

Day-Long Training on

Workshop on 'How to Start Your Own Export Business: A to Z Export Guideline'

Date : May 30, 2025 | **Time:** 10:00 am –5:30 pm

**COURSE FEE (EACH COURSE): TK. 3,000/- FOR ONE-DAYLONG
& TK. 8,000/- FOR THREE-DAYLONG COURSE.**

CERTIFICATE WILL BE AWARDED



01913745062



09-666319653

RENTAL FOR CONFERENCE AND MEETING ROOM AVAILABLE IN GULSHAN



Rental Chart for the Office Board Room & Executive Lounge of DCCI Gulshan Centre:

SL No.	Event Room	Room Dimension (L X W)	Rent (Per Day-8 Hours) in BDT	Rent (Half Day-4 Hours) in BDT	Remarks
Option : 1	Single Meeting Room (12 Persons)	19'-6" x 14'	15,000/-	10,000/-	20% Service Charge Included
Option : 2	Conference Room (20 Persons)	29' x 19'-6"	25,000/-	15,000/-	
Option : 3	Class Room (30 Persons)	29' x 19'-6"	25,000/-	15,000/-	
Option : 4	Workshop (30 Persons)	56' x 19'-6"	25,000/-	15,000/-	
Option : 5	Executive Lounge (8 Persons)	17'9" x 26'-8"	10,000/-	6,000/-	

1. Service:

- AC - Lighting.
- Bottle Water, Tissue Box etc.
- Toiletries.
- Supporting Staff: 2 Persons and
- Wi-Fi.

2. Premium Service: (Available upon request with extra payment)

- High Speed Internet – Tk. 2,000/- per MBPS
- Printing Service
- Lunch - Selected Vendor from DCCI (Rate to be fixed according to prescribed menu) and
- Refreshment - Selected Vendor from DCCI (Rate to be fixed according to prescribed menu).

DCCI Gulshan Centre

BTI Landmark (level-11), Plot- 16, Block- CWS(A), Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

☎ +88-02222264246, 01914733559 | ✉ habib.rahman@dhakachamber.com