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# DCCI REVIEW

**A Dawn to Prosperity**





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## Research & Innovation: the enabler of future Apparel Industry

The apparel sector export hits the \$34.13 billion earnings in the 2018–2019 financial years exceeding previous export trend while registering a growth of 11.49 percent. The economic lifeline of Bangladesh, Apparel sector, which employs about four million workers, is reported to have accounted for 84.21 per cent of Bangladesh's total export earnings of \$40.53 billion.

The sector has, thus, continued to be the mainstay of the national economy. Despite the growth, the apparel sector now faces multiple challenges like lack of product diversification low end production, tariff and non-tariff related problem.. Besides, the fierce competition arose from the recent Free Trade Agreement and the EU-Vietnam Investment Protection Agreement by the European Parliament may increase the trade volume and deepen the trade relationship of Vietnam with Europe.

Apparel manufacturers and exporters wanted more facilities and supports to implement the new wage structure at a meeting with the policymakers in February. They further explored that receiving only a 4 per cent cash incentive on exports to new markets was inadequate. The RMG industry association urged for some facilities, even for a while, so that the manufacturers and exporters could implement the new wage structure, which the industry has termed as a new pressure on the growth of this industry.

The government can sit with apparel manufacturers and exporters and listen to their rational demands to sustain the industry. Furthermore, the government can also encourage the manufacturers to go for product diversification, higher value added productions to explore new markets for Bangladeshi apparels so that local apparel production could fetch a higher value.

In competition with Vietnam, Bangladesh finds itself at a disadvantageous position because of the EU Vietnam Free Trade Agreement, as Vietnamese apparel manufacturers and exporters would not need to pay extra duties on their products to enter the European market. The agreement, signed on June 30, 2019 in Hanoi and ratified by the European Parliament on February 2, is set to be ratified


by the National Assembly of Vietnam in May 2020. The agreement is signed to eliminate almost 99 per cent of customs duties between the European Union and Vietnam, paving the way for an increased export of Vietnamese apparels to the European Union.

This is likely to put Bangladesh apparel export at risk while Vietnam, with its 6.2 per cent of the global market share in 2018, has almost caught up Bangladesh as we have a global market share of 6.4 per cent. Vietnam is reported to have earned \$32.64 billion from apparel export in 2019 while Bangladesh earned \$34.13 billion.

The research led innovation is an important dimension that needs to be recognised and incorporated in almost all avenues of Apparel industry of Bangladesh. To cope with the changing and challenging global trade and economic dynamism, research is second to none. The apparel industry often faces stiff challenges from different stakeholders like buyers, retailers and foreign brands on price, quality, production and labour compliance, market competitiveness and supply chain process.

To address the growing local and external challenges of RMG and to stand at a competitive state, the research backed innovative solutions and way forward are critical. Almost all leading global apparel brands spend a large share of their capital expenditure in research and innovation works that help to sustain their reputation and market share across unstructured global challenge.

In such a situation, the government and the apparel manufacturers and exporters are required to find result-oriented and timely solutions. Moreover, in the ahead of economic graduation related challenges, having not Special & Differential Treatment after graduation and for having EU GSP plus after graduation, export and market diversification related initiatives need to enhanced.

We believe, with the priority of research and innovation in the industry through shared endeavour of Government and Industry insiders, the RMG industry can sustain its glowing legacy and overcome challenges in the days to come 

## BUSINESS KALEIDOSCOPE



### New skills towards a high-productivity economy

Bangladesh has remarkably managed its macro-economic stability and achieved robust economic growth in the backdrop of lackluster global economic growth. Widespread economic growth has propelled Bangladesh to achieve the lower middle-income country status. Bangladesh is on the way to graduate into a developing country by the year 2024. Furthermore, Bangladesh envisions to be a developed country spurring its current 8% plus GDP growth to a double digit trajectory within the next 20 years.

In order to attain economic visions and sustain desired accelerated economic growth, Bangladesh requires a transition into a high-productivity economy from the traditional economy. Currently, of the total 63.5 million workforce, a substantial number of workforce is engaged in the low-end, low-skilled and low-productive jobs. About 32.36% people are employed in skilled agricultural, forestry and fisheries jobs, 16.48% people are in service and sales jobs and 17.05% people are craft and related trade workers. On the contrary, only 1.64% is managers, 1.86% is technicians and 4.82% is professionals. Moreover, of the total workforce, 20.1 million are youth indicating that one in every three of the total workforce is youth. Productive and decent job creation for youth is challenging and that is evident from staggering 12.3% youth unemployment rate and 4.2% national unemployment rate.

In the manufacturing sector, large-scale job creation is driven by the Ready Made Garment (RMG). RMG industry employs directly 32.52% of the total employed population which is 6.58% of total employed population of the country. Despite significant employment, lower labor productivity and skills gaps are major roadblocks for the industry. According to APO Productivity Report, per hour labor productivity in Bangladesh is US\$3.4 whereas labor productivity in Sri Lanka is US\$15.9, Indonesia US\$12.3, Philippines US\$8.7, India US\$7.5, Vietnam US\$4.7 and Myanmar US\$4.1. Lower labor productivity due to lack of adequate skills heightens the risk of downgrading the benefit of competitive workforce of Bangladesh. The supply of quality and skilled workforce gap is also a major concern for other growing manufacturing industries in the country. The shortage of domestic skilled workforce has increased reliance on imported skilled workforce in RMG, textiles, power, telecommunication, and information and communication sectors.

Unavailability of the local skills hampers the private sector growth, casting long-term economic consequences. Due to reliance on imported skills, substantial amount of remittance from Bangladesh is draining-out. This is also corroborated by a report published by Transparency International Bangladesh that at least 2.5 lakh foreigners are working more than 20 trades in Bangladesh and remit out about \$3.1 billion yearly from Bangladesh.

## BUSINESS KALEIDOSCOPE

The aforementioned scenario validated that we are not ready for transitioning into a high-productivity economy and transform demographic dividend into the economic dividend. In this connection, the skills gap has become a real problem in the country's workforce as the education system has failed to produce the workforce with the skills needed by industry.

Amid this background, Bangladesh envisions to create 15 million jobs in the next five years which is also articulated in the draft 8th Five Year Plan. It is expected that growth will continue in the high potential industries and service sectors though expected expansion of RMG, footwear, light engineering, shipbuilding, agribusiness, information and communication technology (ICT) and pharmaceutical sectors will require skilled workforce in operational, managerial, technical, and leadership positions. Hence, the target of creating 15 million jobs would not be a mammoth task if we can equip local workforce with the right set of industrial skills.

Due to Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and automation, structural changes started shaping industrial production processes. Introduction of automation and new technology is changing the job market and up scaling demand for the highly-skilled workforce to adopt the technology. It is estimated that due to technological innovation, automation of the production process and induction of the robots in different industrial activities, around 40% of all employment of Bangladesh from RMG and textile, agro food, furniture, tourism & hospitality and leather & footwear sector will disappear gradually.

To sustain in the future high-tech oriented job market, equipping workforce with soft skills like complex problem solving, critical thinking, negotiations, decision making, technical orientation and cognitive flexibility are essential. However, major concern is aired as formal education system does not provide suitable skills to make candidates employable considering the dynamics of the job market and industrial demand. To create more productive employment opportunities, supply-side problems, the education system of the country especially needs to be overhauled. Information gap exists among university and industry that result in education institutions lagging behind in providing skill-oriented education in line with industrial demand. Industry and academia tie on skill development affairs that need deeper collaboration to bridge the information gap. In order to forge stronger collaboration between industry and academia for addressing real industrial skill along with other prior economic, investment and industry affairs, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) is in the process

of constituting an independent entity-'Research & Innovation Bangladesh (RnI Bangladesh) Foundation'. This will be the pioneer platform in Bangladesh, engaging business leaders, academia, sector experts and policy makers to unveil improved ways of thinking to transform Bangladesh into the high-productivity economy in line with the economic visions of the Government.

Emphasis is needed for promoting technical and vocation education to develop productive workforce. It is encouraging that due to focused initiatives of the government, the outreach of technical education is expanding in the country with 17% enrollment rate. The enrolment rate will further improve with the implementation of the government's plan to establish 329 technical schools and colleges across the Upazilas. The groundbreaking initiative of DCCI '(RnI Bangladesh) Foundation' will also work closely with National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) with the purpose of promoting technical and vocation education across the country.

As the future jobs have more high-tech orientation, we need to give significant importance on re-skilling and up-skilling efforts to prepare our workforce for future jobs focusing on big data analytics, robotics, artificial intelligence Internet of Things, Block chain computer-aided process, enterprise resource planning, mental elasticity, critical skill, interdisciplinary skill, green skill, blue economy exploration skills and renewable energy technicians.

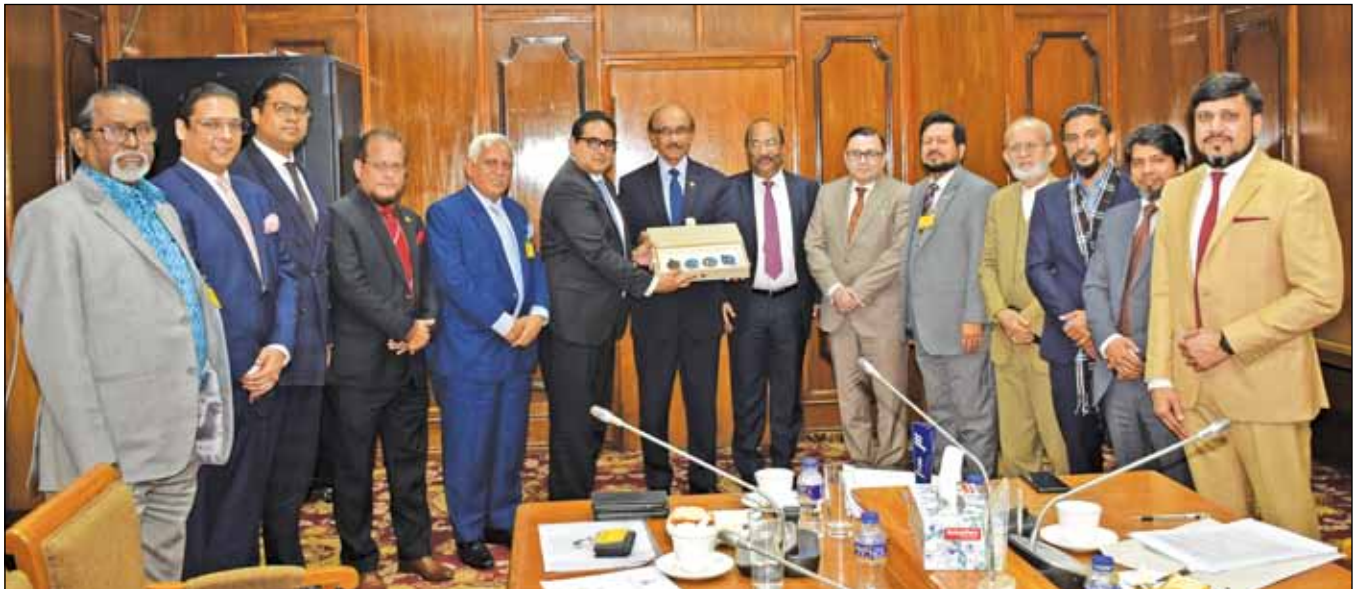
Today's skills are obsolete tomorrow. For high productivity economy transformation, skill development should get the highest policy priority with comprehensive focused initiatives. If we cannot improve the skills set of the workforce compared with competing countries, private investment will face ebb, slow down GDP growth, and the potential young generation will be a burden of the country. In these circumstances, without any delay, under the public-private initiative, a study on sectoral skills gap needs to be conducted. Based on the findings, market demand-driven skills development program needs to be designed with the provision of continuous improvement. Research & Innovation Bangladesh (RnI Bangladesh) Foundation offers a platform to the public and private sector to forge partnership for mapping the sector-specific skills gap and design skill development program considering the market demand for the next two decades.



*President's Pick of the Month*

## More private-sector credit flow for more investment, economic growth

### ***DCCI board of directors calls on BB governor***



*DCCI President Shams Mahmud (sixth from left) seen presenting a memento to Governor of Bangladesh Bank Fazle Kabir (seventh from left) on January 14. DCCI Senior Vice President N K A Mobin, FCA, FCS (fifth from left) and Members of the Board of Directors are seen in the picture.*

The newly elected board of directors of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, led by its President Shams Mahmud, called on the Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir on January 14. Executive directors of different departments and high official of the central bank attended.

Shams Mahmud said that although the GDP growth of Bangladesh had achieved a new height crossing an 8 percent growth trajectory, private investment is stagnant within 22–23 percent of the GDP. The stagnant private investment is aggravated by the slowdown in the private sector credit growth, which was 9.87 percent in November 2019.

A higher interest rate on bank loans is one of the reasons for the slowdown of private investments. The DCCI president requested a reduction in lending rate to a single digit. To

reduce non-performing loans, he suggested the establishment of a mechanism to identify wilful and unintentional defaulters.

To improve in the Ease of Doing Business Index, he suggested amendments to Section 42 (C) of the Bangladesh Bank Order 1972 for collecting and distributing credit information data from sources other than banks and Section 46(3) to allow private firms and individuals to access to own credit information.

Terming SME as the lifeline of the industry, Shams Mahmud sought an access to export market, infrastructure facilities and access to SME financing. In order to reduce dependence on public and banking system financing, the government should develop alternative sources of long-term financing for infrastructure and industrial projects such as the bond market on the local capital market.

The devaluation of the taka against the US dollar may have negative impact on the economy and this is why additional cash incentives may be given to major export sectors, without devaluing the taka, as the export-dependent businesses rely on the import of raw and intermediary goods, he said.

The Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir said that the economy mostly depends on the banking financial system. The government is trying to bring down the lending interest rate to a single digit for the betterment of economy, businessmen and people which may be implemented in April, he said.

The government has also taken various infrastructure development projects where private-sector interventions would be much appreciated. As for non-performing loans, he said that there is a clear definition of wilful

and unintentional loan defaulters in the law but any entrepreneur failing to repay the loan because of delayed connection of power, energy, gas or delayed loan approval process or some other reasons that have valid grounds might get special consideration.

The National Board of Revenue recently withdrew the stamp duty which will help to the bond market to flourish. He also urged that Bangladesh should have a strong

secondary bond market for long-term financing. He also sought the fullest cooperation of the business community for an effective and proper use of the Export Development Fund.

SK Sur Chowdhury, banking reforms adviser to the Bangladesh Bank, said that for the sake of overall banking eco-system and a healthy money market, the Bangladesh Bank will amend its rules and regulations, if necessary, and this put in more efforts

to achieve the targeted economic growth.

Senior Vice President of DCCI NKA Mobin, FCA, FCS, directors Andaleeb Hasan, Arman Haque, Alhaj Deen Mohammed, Enamul Haque Patwary, Engineer Md Al Amin, Monowar Hossain, Nuher L Khan, Engineer Shamsuzzoha Chowdhury, SM Zillur Rahman and Waqar Ahmad Choudhury also spoke at the meeting **r**

## SMEs should get single-digit lending facility

### DCCI president says at press conference

The newly elected Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Shams Mahmud highlighted some of the major players of the economy and shared his priorities for 2020 with journalists at a press conference in the DCCI auditorium on January 20.

The presentation covered export diversification, skills development, economic diplomacy, capital market, energy security, Fourth Industrial

Revolution, value-added and other taxes, foreign direct investments and doing business, research and innovation, infrastructure, small and medium enterprises and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Export diversification:** Shams Mahmud said that apparel is the only and the largest export-earning sector, but “we need to develop other sectors as well to as a backup.” To promote

other sectors, he urged bonded warehouse facilities, back-to-back letters of credit for leather products, tax rebate and new technology adoption. He also said that nearly 80 percent of exports are destined to North America and Europe and products sophistication has remained almost static.

**Skills development:** According to a study of a2i, around 40 percent



DCCI President Shams Mahmud (second from left) speaking at the Meet the Press held on January 20 at DCCI Auditorium. DCCI Senior Vice President N K A Mobin, FCA, FCS (right), Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (left) were present.

of all employment of Bangladesh from apparel and textile, agro-food, tourism and leather has a risk of loss because of automation. He urged a strong collaboration of the National Skills Development Authority and the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training for need-based skills development.

**Research and Innovation:** Shams Mahmud said that for SME development, the DCCI is going to establish a research and innovation centre as a separate entity. The centre will do the necessary research for SME. The DCCI will also work for the upskilling of entrepreneurs and startups. He emphasized a proper implementation of the SME Policy.

**Banking sector:** Shams Mahmud said that in terms of worldwide political and economic situation, “we are in a critical situation.” To contain non-performing loans, he suggested the identification of wilful defaulters. But if borrowers fails to repay the loans because of delayed power or energy connections, they should not be considered wilful defaulters.

He said that a soaring amount of non-

performing loans would increase the cost of doing business as it fuels cost of borrowers. Lastly, he hoped that the commitment of the government to cutting down lending rate to a single digit would come into effect in April. Shams Mahmud demanded a single-digit loan facility for SMEs as well.

He also said that micro-credit and banking loan to SMEs are different issues. Regarding a question on the government’s bank borrowing, he said that some private-sector companies are now getting foreign funds as their credit sources. But it would be better for all to keep in between the target.

**Stock market:** “We have to have a secondary bond market,” said Shams Mahmud. “We welcome the prime minister’s intervention and her six concrete directions to revive the stock market.” He also urged a buy-back system for companies and good governance.

**Value-added tax:** VAT rebate is allowed for 15 percent VAT quota, but Shams Mahmud demanded the VAT rebate facility for other slabs

such as 5 percent, 7 percent, 7.5 percent and 10 percent. VAT rebate in 5 percent, 7 percent, 7.5 percent and 10 percent slabs would boost SMEs, he suggested.

**Energy:** The quality of electricity is equally important as its price is, said Shams Mahmud. “We are surplus in power generation now.” But he requested that the private sector should be allowed in distribution and transmission of energy.

Factories that use green technology and have become successful to cut down on consumption should get incentives, he suggested. In terms of global political context, “we have to reduce fuel import dependency. Moreover, we need to encourage local explorer to allow gas exploration.”

**GSP:** Without the GSP, Bangladesh’s export to the USA is increasing. A forward linkage of apparel industry is good but the backward linkage industry for the apparel and textile sectors needs a push, he said. He requested the government to try at GSP facilities **r**

## DCCI, UIU sign memo on skilled development

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the United International University signed a memorandum of understanding on January 21. Shams Mahmud, President, DCCI, and Professor Dr Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman, Vice Chancellor, UIU, signed the memo on behalf of their respective organizations.

During the signing ceremony, Shams Mahmud said that for the development of research and innovation in the industrial sector, an industry-academia collaboration is important. Under the purview of this memorandum, both the parties will



DCCI President Shams Mahmud (third from right) and Vice Chancellor, United International University (UIU) Professor Dr. Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman (fifth from right) seen exchanging document after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on January 21. DCCI Senior Vice President N.K.A. Mobin, FCA, FCS (fourth from left), Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (right) and Secretary Md. Joynal Abdin (sixth from right) among others are seen in the picture.

work on skill development required for the industry. He also said that the Fourth Industrial Revolution ushered in a new era for technological advancement and the universities should redesign their curriculum keeping to need of the industries. For lack of industry-academia collaboration, graduates sometimes face challenges in getting jobs. He suggested the development of the

skills of our graduates keeping to the need of the industry.

Professor Dr Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman said that the UIU is going to take an initiative of establishing 'incubation centre' for startups or new entrepreneurs to help them with training and other supports. Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman also underscored the importance of industry-academia collaboration in

creating graduates compatible with the future of the industry.

DCCI's Senior Vice President NKA Mobin, FCA, FCS, Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin, Secretary Md Joynal Abdin, Pro Vice Chancellor of UIU Professor Dr Hasnan Ahmed and Director Professor Dr Md HR Jowerder and Dr F S Subhani attended the signing ceremony **r**

## 'Power Excel 2016' workshop closes



DCCI Senior Vice President N K A Mobin FCA, FCS (seated center), Secretary, DCCI & Executive Director of DCCI Business Institute (DBI) Md. Joynal Abdin (seated right), Resource Person Md. Feroz Kibria (seated left) along with the participants were present at the closing ceremony of workshop titled "Power Excel 2016: Beginners to Advance" organized by DCCI Business Institute (DBI) held on January 25.

A workshop on "Power Excel 2016: Beginners to Advance" was organised by the DCCI Business Institute on its premises in January 24–25. Thirty-one business professionals nominated by prominent organizations participated in the workshop.

Md Feroz Kibria, Specialist, Human Resources, conducted the workshop as a resource person. According to the participant's feedback, the workshop has broadened their mental horizon and made them conversant with very

important issues of Excel programme.

The closing and certificate award ceremony was held on the DBI premises on on January 25. NKA Mobin FCA, FCS, Senior Vice President, DCCI graced the program as chief Guest. He said that Excel is very helpful in day-to-day official activities. It simplifies complex tasks.

Md Joynal Abdin, Secretary, DCCI and executive director of the DCCI Business Institute, offered the vote

of thanks. He also advised the participants to practise and share their knowledge with fellows.

He thanked respective authorities for nominating officials to the training. All participants, Tamanna Sultana, Joint Secretary (Training) and the Course Coordinator Abul Bashar, Assistant Secretary (DBI) attended **r**

## Import liberalization and export dilemma

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After liberation in 1971, Bangladesh adapted an industrial policy pursued an import-substituting industrialization. The key objectives of the policy were to safeguard the country's infant industries, reduce the balance of payments deficit, use the scarce foreign exchanges efficiently, ward off international capital market and exchange rate shocks, lessen fiscal imbalance, and to achieve higher economic growth and self-sufficiency of the nation. However, it was not appropriate policy and could not deliver desired outcomes. There is polarization in the global politics and rising internal and external imbalances, trade policy reforms of openness of economy to the competition of overseas were introduced in the early 1980s.

At that time, number one export product Jute and jute goods has lost the market but due to their forms in trade liberalization, Bangladesh has successfully expanded the export-oriented garment industry, high-yield variety rice production, export of leather products, tea and remittances. Since then trade liberalization has become an integral part of Bangladesh's trade policy.

Conventional trade barriers in world trade, transaction costs related to transport, transit, non tariff measure (NTM) requirements and customs procedures for clearance of goods became more important. It has already been proven that trade openness can have a positive effect on economic growth, exports, imports, FDI and remittance of a country.

Bangladesh became competitive in some sectors like garments due to competitiveness through efficiency to attain to face global competition. The openness and competition gain through reduction of protection for the domestic sectors quite significantly by undertaking reduction of customs duty, substantial reductions in quantitative restrictions, drastic opening up of trade in many restricted items, significant rationalization and diminution of import tariffs, a move to a freely floating exchange rate system, and considerable adjustments to monetary and fiscal policies. All these import

trade openness and liberal trade policy resulted in competitiveness of garments and some other products. The relationship between import trade liberation and export competitiveness is a confusing state of affairs for policy makers.

Another important element of trade policy reform was the introduction of generous promotional measures for exports. The measures consisted permitting the exporters of non-traditional items to convert some of their export earnings at higher exchange rate in the secondary market, reduction of the tariff level and tariff dispersion, simplification and rationalisation of the tariff structure, and deregulation of the import process as well as export incentives such as Export Performance Licensing, Export Performance Benefit Scheme, Special Bonded Warehouse Scheme, Back-to-Back L/C System, Export Credit Guarantee Scheme, Export Promotion Fund, bank loans, and tax holiday.

The reforms were initiated with the prescriptions of IMF, WB and other international donor agencies with some conditions against financial assistance and on the basis of those, having no way left, structural Adjustment Program (SAP) was introduced, officially in 1980s. It has started to adapt the prescribed policies, primarily to get financial help to boost up economy. The liberation and reforms include liberalisation of interest rates, improvement of monetary policy, abolishing priority sector lending, strengthening central bank supervision, regulating banks, improving debt recovery and broadening capital market development. The well-known elements of adjustment policy include reducing subsidy on agricultural inputs and food, strictness bank credit, raising the interest rate, rationalize tax system, avoiding multiple currency practice, import liberalization and so on.

Bangladesh also signed agreement with IMF that ensure fund support from Extended Fund Facility (EFF) in 1980. Two years later in 1982 import program credit (IPC) signed under the condition of policy reform. This was considered as a major turn in the field of trade and industry policy reform as well as trade liberalization. Henceforth, from mid 1980s government of Bangladesh initiate numerous trade policy reform and trade liberalization.

Trade policy during 1972- 1980 had consisted significant import controls. Under the Import Policy Orders (IPOs), items were specified whether their importation were allowed, prohibited or required special permission for import. With the exception of a few cases, licenses were required for all the imports. All these make the process inefficient. The inefficiencies are also seen at poor and traditional port, rail, and road transport infrastructure, poor customs management, administrative and licensing restrictions and non-transparent trade rules as some of the common problems faced by developing regions.

Since early 1980s, import liberalization had started to take place. The import-licensing system was abolished and imports were permitted against letters of credit (L/C). The long Positive List in the Import Policy Order (IPOs) of importable was replaced by two lists, namely the Negative List (for banned items) and the Restricted List (for items importable on fulfilment of certain prescribed conditions) and imports of any items outside the lists were allowed. The range of products subject to quantitative restrictions (QRs) had been curtailed substantially during 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Whereas during mid-1980s, about 40 percent of all import lines at the HS-4 digit level was subject to trade-related QRs, these restrictions had drastically been reduced to less than 2 percent towards the end of 2000s (Raihan & Razzaque, 2007).

One important aspect of the tariff structure in Bangladesh relates to the use of import taxes which have protective effects (also known as para-tariffs) over and above the protection provided by customs duties (World Bank, 2004). These taxes have been the infrastructure development surcharge (IDSC), supplementary duties (SD), Regulatory duties. One of the major reasons behind this is because of the fact that though the VAT was instituted in the early 1990s as a revenue replacing tax, the VAT was not successful in early years as the tax base for the VAT was too low. Therefore, it appears that, despite the lowering of customs duties, the presence of para-tariffs did not significantly lower the total protection rate during the 2000s.

The tariff regime had become increasingly liberalized at the beginning from the late 1980s. In 1991-92 the un-weighted average rate of tariff was around 70 percent and by 2013-2014 it fell down to 13.2 percent (Sattar, 2014). Much of this reduced protection was achieved through

the reduction in the maximum rate. In 1991-92 the maximum tariff rate was 350 percent, which came down to only 25 percent in 2004-2005 (Raihan & Razzaque, 2007), and it has been kept at this rate in recent years. The number of tariff bands was 24 in the 1980s, 18 in the early 1990s and only 4 in recent years.

Conventional trade barriers lowered in world trade, transaction costs related to transport, transit, meeting Non-tariff measures (NTM) requirements and customs procedures for clearance of goods became more important. Therefore, to achieve higher productivity and export competitiveness, policy measures are obliged to relate to trade related infrastructure and domestic factors within the border.

All the stakeholders already aware that the high cost of formal trade due to poor trade facilitation promotes informal trade, brings loss of revenue for the governments and in many instances transaction costs exceed the cost of duties to be paid. For developing economies, inefficiencies in areas such as customs and transport can be roadblocks to the integration into the global economy and may severely impair export competitiveness or inflow of foreign direct investment.

The trade costs that include all costs incurred in getting a good to a final user other than the cost of producing the good itself: transportation costs (both freight costs and time costs), policy barriers (tariffs and non-tariff barriers), information costs, contract enforcement costs, costs associated with the use of different currencies, legal and regulatory costs, and local distribution costs (wholesale and retail), Ultimately, these costs make goods more expensive for the consumer and compromise the competitiveness of the domestic economy. As a result, trade costs contribute to a very high percentage of product costs in South Asia.

All these measures have greatly simplified the tariff regime and helped streamline customs administration procedures. A drastic reduction in un-weighted tariff rates during the 1990s also resulted in the fall in import-weighted tariff rates. The import-weighted average tariff rate declined from 42.1 percent in 1990-91 to around 13 percent towards the end of 2000s (Raihan & Razzaque, 2007).

To understand the state of trade facilitation in any country Global Competitiveness report uses over 100 indicators to measure competitiveness and develop a Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which is a comprehensive tool to assess the foundation of national competitiveness. Bangladesh scored 52.08 points out of 100 on the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum. Competitiveness Index in Bangladesh averaged 11.66 Points from 2007 until 2018, reaching an all-time high of 52.08 Points in 2018 and a record low of 3.50 Points in 2009.

The study has taken variables of institutions; infrastructure; ICT adoption; macroeconomic stability; health; skills; product market; labour market; financial system; market size; business dynamism; and innovation capability. The GCI varies between 1 and 100, higher average score means higher degree of competitiveness. It emphasizes the role of human capital, innovation, resilience and agility, as not only drivers but also defining features of economic success in the 4th Industrial Revolution.

The latest statistics show significant improvement in trade and economy. Bangladesh's trade-GDP ratio reached 46.30 per cent during fiscal year 2012-13 rising from 37.8 per cent in FY '10. The higher such a ratio the more integrated an economy. But such a ratio has fluctuated during the next six fiscal years until FY '19. The history of Bangladesh economy's degree of openness has seen a mixed trend in the last 10 years as economic expansion outstripped foreign trade rise. The trade-GDP ratio came down to 38.89 per cent in the FY '19 from 44.51 per cent in the FY'14, according to a measurement on the basis of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data.

Bangladesh is ranked 176 among 190 economies in the ease of doing business, according to the latest World Bank annual ratings. The rank of Bangladesh improved to 176 in 2018 from 177 in 2017. Ease of Doing Business in Bangladesh averaged 146.82 from 2008 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 178 in 2015 and a record low of 115 in 2008.



In order to become an upper middle-income country by 2031 and achieve high income country status by 2041, Bangladesh will require huge investments in physical capital, human capital, and innovation enabled by reforms in areas such as financial sector, business regulation, and addressing the infrastructure gap.

The World Bank continues to support the government's reform efforts to create large-scale, inclusive jobs, besides addressing the needs of other development challenges. Sustained reform efforts are needed in the following areas: (1) Banking sector, (2) Tax structure along with addressing bottlenecks in public financial management, (3) Infrastructure financing strategy in partnership with the private sector, (4) Skills for jobs growth starting with a skills development strategy, (5) Ease of doing business. The World Bank's Doing Business 2019 report indicates that the pace of reforms needs to be increased significantly.

## PM tells youths to become employers, not employees

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged the youth to develop a mindset of being self-employed and employers instead of desperately looking for jobs. "It won't be wise just to look for jobs... you should rather think you won't do jobs but give jobs to others," she said while distributing the National Youth Award, 2019 at her office in the city.

The prime minister handed over the award to 22 self-employed youths and five youth organisers in recognition of their contributions towards generating jobs for themselves and others. Sheikh Hasina called upon the youth to utilise their talents and innovative ideas in generating jobs.

"You should keep in mind that you would have to be capable enough to create jobs utilising your innovative ideas, talents, efficiencies and potentials rather than running after jobs," she said.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Md Zahid Ahsan Russel presided




over the programme while Youth and Sports Secretary Md Akhter Hossain delivered the welcome speech.

Director General of the Department of Youth Development Akhtaruz Zaman Khan Kabir was also present.

Engineer Md Atikur Rahman, who received the award as the country's best successful self-employed youth while Parveen Akter as the country's best youth organiser under the women category, spoke on the occasion on behalf of the award recipients.

Atikur of Kalai upazila in Joypurhat developed a fisheries and livestock farm after receiving training from the local office of the Department of the Youth Development.

Now his farm has a capital of Tk 50 million with some 115 workers.

Since the inception of this award in 1986, a total of 445 self-employed youths and youth organisers have been recognised with the accolade 

## Govt puts forth \$1.0tn investment needs

The government has brought up a \$1.02 trillion investment requirement for the 8th Five-Year Plan, which envisages achieving an upper middle income country status by 2031 and a developed nation by 2041. The needs came on the first day of the two-day Bangladesh Development Forum in Dhaka.

Officials let the development partners know that the country would need some \$783.50 billion, or three-quarters of the total requirement, from the private sector alone for implementing the next planning blueprint. And the remaining \$252 billion will be come from the public sector.

General Economics Division, member Professor Shamsul Alam presented the figures for the plan to be implemented over FY2021–2025.

He was presenting a paper on the "Effective Partnership for Implementation of 8th Five-year Plan towards achieving SDGs" at the keynote session of the forum where cabinet secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam presided over the meeting.

Development partners, policymakers, civil servants, private sector and civil society representatives and academics spoke in different sessions.

Donor representatives highlighted the poor country ranking in the

World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, and the lack of transparency and accountability as the major impediments to drawing expected foreign direct investment into Bangladesh.

At the working session on "Private sector engagement and trade facilitation," Economic Growth Office director of USAID John Smith-Sreen said the lack of transparency and accountability are affecting Bangladesh's business expansion.

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Fazle Fahim presided over the session.


John Smith-Sreen said the gap between policy and practice is also a big challenge for the country for attracting private investments and business.

The USAID director has suggested Bangladesh diversify its export products immediately ahead its graduation from the Least Developed Country status.

DFID Bangladesh chief Judith Herbertson said business climate is still a “big challenge” for Bangladesh to attain an upper middle-income country status. “Here the lower tax-GDP ratio is a challenge for higher growth,” she added.

Programme leader for equitable growth, finance and institutions of the World Bank Yutaka Yoshino said that FDI is constrained in the country. He suggested the government frame a comprehensive import and export policy so that it can have a proper link to business growth of the country.

EU ambassador in Bangladesh Rensje Teerink urged the government to arrange a business climate dialogue to discuss on how the country can overcome the barriers to easing doing trade and commerce.

President of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters’ Association Rubana Huq laid emphasis on taking preparation for the possible impact after graduation to a developing nation status in 2024 

### Govt allowed to borrow more under new monetary policy

The central bank drastically raised the borrowing target for the government from banking sources for this fiscal year to meet its demand for funds in the face of revenue shortfall — a move that will make it difficult for businesses to get loans.

On January 16, the monetary policy committee of the Bangladesh Bank revised the key monetary and credit programmes, setting a fresh government sector credit growth of 37.7 percent for the 2019–2020 financial year compared with 24.3 percent set in July in the past year.

The committee took the decision at a meeting presided over by BB Governor Fazle Kabir at the central bank headquarters in Dhaka.

The BB was forced to revise the target of broad money supply to the market to meet the government’s growing borrowing demand from banking sources. Broad money is a category for measuring the amount of money circulating in an economy.

As per the revised monetary policy, the central bank set a 13 percent growth of broad money for the fiscal year, up from its July target of 12.50 percent. The government overshot its annual limit for bank borrowing in the first half of fiscal 2019/20 due to poor revenue collection.

Between July and December last year, the government borrowed Tk 48,015 crore from banking sources against the annual target of Tk 47,363 crore, BB data showed.

In contrast, Tk 26,446 crore was borrowed from the banking sector in the entire fiscal 2018-2019.

According to a central bank projection, public sector credit growth was 59.6 percent in December against the target of 25.20 percent.

“It is tough to contain year-on-year government sector credit growth to 37.70 percent for fiscal 2019-20 given the ongoing trend of government borrowing,” said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute.

Public sector credit growth may accelerate further than the revised target set by the central bank.

“The high borrowing is poised to aggravate the already tight liquidity condition in banks and it will ultimately hit the private sector,” said Mansur, also the chairman of Brac Bank and a former official of the International Monetary Fund.

The private sector has been dealing with inadequate credit for months and their woes would worsen due to the increased government borrowing.

The central bank kept unchanged the private sector credit growth at 14.8 percent, which is way higher than the 10 percent it projected in December.

In November last year, private sector credit growth dropped to 9.87 percent, the lowest since 2008, the latest for which data is available. The central bank has projected that the GDP growth will be close to 8.2



## MPS AT A GLANCE

**BB raises public sector credit growth to **37.7pc****

**Keep private sector credit growth unchanged at **14.8pc****

**Remittance growth propels GDP growth to **8.2pc****

**Broad money supply will increase to **13pc****

**Containing inflation at **5.5pc** will become a challenge**

percent this fiscal year, riding on robust growth of inward remittances. The high growth of remittance will offset the challenges stemming from lower growth in the manufacturing sector amid negative earnings from exports.

Remittance hit an all-time high of \$18.32 billion in 2019, much to the relief of the government that has been on edge for the lower foreign exchange earnings from declining export shipments.

The ongoing trade war between the US and China and the recent spates of political unrest in the Middle East have mainly put the country's export sector under pressure.

But the government will face hurdles in achieving the GDP growth as remittance does not have direct impact on economic expansion. The central bank says it will face some challenges to keep inflation at 5.5 percent because of rising price of edible oil and other commodities in the global market **r**

## Govt begins work on bank commission

The government has finally started working on a bank reforms commission to review the sector's health and take necessary remedial measures, finance ministry officials said. Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal has already talked to some former bankers, bureaucrats and economists, whom a ministry official believes are probable chairman and member candidates of the commission.

According to the official, the commission is likely to be formed by this month if the members are finalised. While unveiling the budget for the 2019–2020 financial in June, Kamal said a banking commission would be formed at the earliest.

Six months on, the commission is yet to be formed. His predecessor AMA Muhith had several times announced that he would form the commission.

Bangladesh's banking sector has been deteriorating for the last few years owing to increasing default loans and corruption. The sour loans average 10.69 percent of the total outstanding loans while, in case of state-run banks, over 25 percent. The actual size of bad loans is, however, more than double the officially recognised figure, according to a recent report of the International Monetary Fund.

The finance minister recently gave defaulters a chance to have their loans rescheduled by making a 2 percent down payment.

The central bank recently decided to cap the interest rate on industrial loans in a move that would be a boon for manufacturers as their cost of funds would go down to single digit at the expense of banks' profitability. But experts and economists say the bad loan situation would not improve without good governance in the banking sector **r**

## Trade deficit tapers off

Trade deficit narrowed 79.51 percent in November to \$1.06 billion from the previous month on the back of sliding imports — a worrying development as it suggests of sluggishness of the

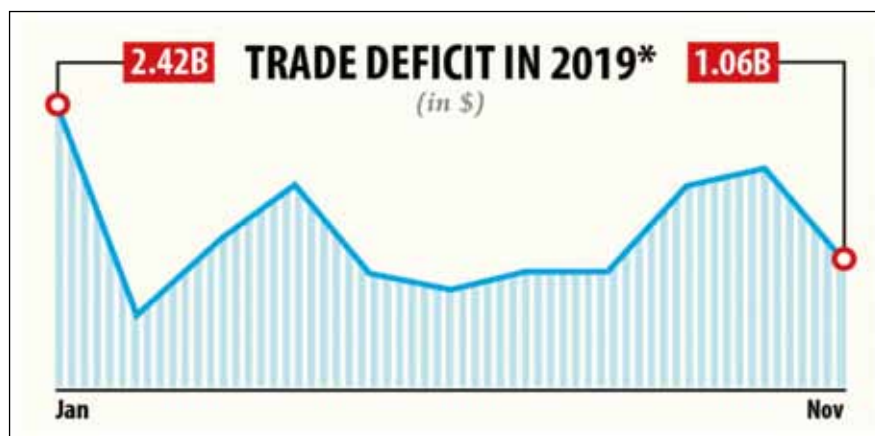
economy. November's figures were down 19.70 percent from a year earlier, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

The decreasing trend of trade deficit is good for a strong economy but such a phenomenon is not a positive indicator at all for the growing economy like Bangladesh, experts said. During the period, imports declined 17 percent from a month earlier to \$4.06 billion and exports nearly 1 percent to \$3 billion.

“Both falling exports and imports is a sign of an economic slowdown,” said Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, adding that businesses are facing a lack of confidence in activating their investment plans for want of a conducive climate. Bangladesh's ranking in the World Bank's ease of doing business index is far from ideal and that has hit the confidence of businesses.

Inadequate infrastructure, corruption and bureaucratic complexities discourage businesses from going for expansion by taking bank loans, Khatun said.

Besides, banks are also feeling discomfort in giving out loans to businesses due to high volume of default loans, which has squeezed their capacity for disbursement **r**



On top of that, the government has recently taken a decision to fix the interest rate for lending at 9 percent from April 1 — a move not welcomed by banks. “Banks think that loan disbursement at that rate will not be viable for them in many cases.”

The lower import growth has also brought a negative impact on private sector credit growth, said Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank.

In November, private sector credit growth dropped to 9.87 percent, which is the lowest since 2008 at least. Bangladesh Bank’s data goes as far back as 2008. “We should give our all-out effort to bring back the confidence of businesspeople for the greater interest of the economy.”

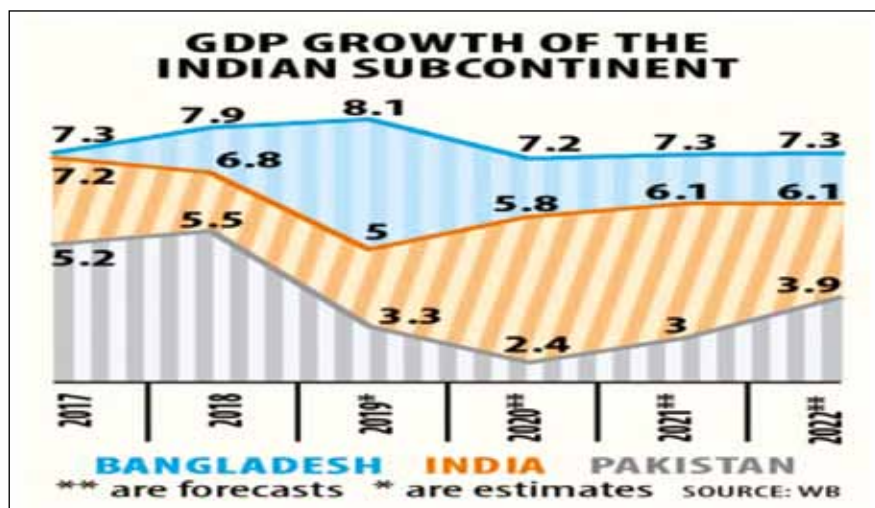
Both exports and imports will turn around from the existing frustrating condition if businesses get back their confidence, he added. The overall trade deficit in the first five months of the 2019–20 financial year, however, were higher by \$28 million from a year earlier at \$6.68 billion.

“But the upward trend will not be sustainable if imports maintain the declining stance,” Khatun said.

The deficit in current account balance, however, decreased more than half to \$1.09 billion in the first five months of the fiscal year due to a remarkable growth in remittance. Between July and November this fiscal year, remittance inflows stood at \$7.71 billion, up 22.71 percent from a year earlier **r**

## WB trims Bangladesh growth forecast

The World Bank has cut its economic growth forecast for Bangladesh by 0.2 percentage points to 7.2 percent for the current fiscal year, but the country is still poised to clock in the highest growth in South Asia.



The Washington-based multilateral lender, however, kept the growth outlook unchanged at 7.3 percent for the next fiscal year, according to its semi-annual Global Economic Prospects.

The growth forecast — which are revisions of the projections made in June — still puts Bangladesh as one of the fastest growing nations in the world.

“A solid macroeconomic framework, political stability, implementation of planned public infrastructure projects and ongoing reforms to improve the business environment underlie this projection.”

Bangladesh, the third-largest economy in the region, fared better than India and Pakistan, with growth officially estimated at 8.15 percent in fiscal 2018-19. A moderation in domestic demand was more than offset by a pickup in exports, partly as a result of trade diversion following bilateral tariff increases between China and the US.

Global growth is set to rise by 2.5 percent this year, a small uptick from 2.4 percent in 2019, as trade and investment gradually recover. Advanced economies are expected to slow as a group to 1.4 percent

from 1.6 percent, mainly reflecting lingering weakness in manufacturing.

Emerging market and developing economies will see growth accelerate to 4.1 percent from 3.5 percent last year.

Bangladesh’s exports showed signs of softening in recent months, after a substantial increase in exports to major trade partners in the last fiscal year. While regional exports softened in aggregate, Bangladesh’s export growth accelerated, partly reflecting trade diversion amid trade tensions between major economies, according to the report.

Bangladesh’s export earnings fell 5.84 percent year-on-year to \$19.3 billion in the first six months of the fiscal year, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau.

Regional economic activity is expected to benefit from policy accommodation (India, Sri Lanka), improvement in business confidence and support from infrastructure investments (Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan), the WB said.

Another aspect of the disappointing pace of global growth is the broad-based slowdown in productivity growth over the last ten years. Growth in productivity, which is output per worker, is essential to raising

living standards and achieving development goals.

In Bangladesh, post-crisis productivity growth benefited from improved macroeconomic and political stability, which supported both public and private fixed investment.

As a result, productivity growth in Bangladesh was robust during 2013-18 at 5.1 percent, slightly above the pre-crisis average of 4.7 percent and in the top decile of emerging and developing economies.

According to the report, demand faltered amid credit tightening, reflecting structurally high non-performing assets in countries such as Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

South Asia's growth outlook has deteriorated considerably over the past six months. Private consumption and investment weakened sharply amid challenges in the financial sector, which hampered confidence.

Risks to the growth outlook remain tilted to the downside and relate primarily to the financial sector vulnerabilities, geopolitical tensions and lack of progress on reforms.

Although recent tensions between India and Pakistan have abated, a re-escalation would damage confidence and weigh on investment in the region.

Non-performing assets in the financial sector remain high amid weakening regional growth. Further deterioration of balance sheets of banks and corporates would threaten the funding of productive investments. Failure to close the infrastructure gaps would hold back output and employment.

According to the report, lack of progress in reforms to improve tax collection could result in more acute revenue shortfalls in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and put further pressure on elevated fiscal deficits in Pakistan **r**

## Bangladesh must comply with ILO standards for GSP Plus

The European Union wants a guarantee from Bangladesh that its factories would ensure fair practice and comply with the International Labour Organisation standards if the country wants to enjoy continued trade privilege from the bloc following graduation to the developing country bracket.

"We have to make sure that all these [goods] are ILO-compliant and of course, compliant with our own standards," said Rensje Teerink, the EU ambassador to Bangladesh, at a discussion on "EU and the contemporary global scenario: a reflection for the future" at the Six Seasons Hotel in Dhaka.

Bangladesh is set to lose its current trade privilege of zero-duty export benefit under the EU's Everything But Arms scheme when the country makes the transition in 2024.

As the EU will give three years to Bangladesh as a grace period to ensure a smooth transition, the country will finally lose the Generalised Scheme of Preferences in 2027.

Once the country loses the preferential treatment, Bangladesh will have to face nearly 12.50 percent duty on exports to the EU as a developing country.

But Bangladesh can continue to export duty-free if it can manage EU's GSP Plus status by meeting some conditions such as core conventions of the United Nations, including practising good governance, following international standards on labour rights and human rights and ensuring protection of environment.

"The goods need to be produced following the sustainability of environment, labour rights and human rights," Teerink said.

The EU is evaluating the practices

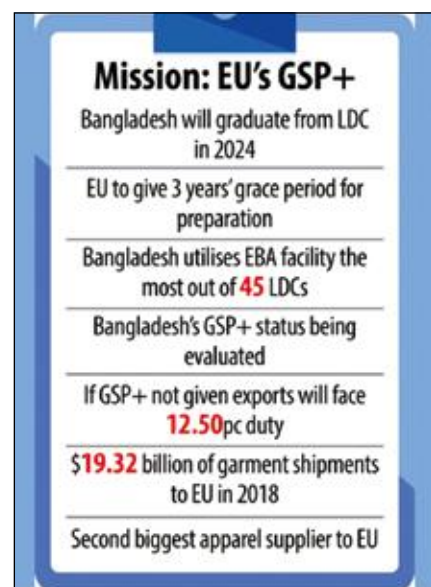
of Bangladesh about the core conventions and this will determine whether the GSP Plus status will be granted or not after the formal graduation.

Currently, eight countries enjoy the GSP Plus benefit. The countries are Armenia, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, according to the EU website. The Rana Plaza tragedy back in 2013 opened the eyes of the European consumers and called for some correction plans, which must be done, Teerink said.

"This is why the Accord, the Alliance and the Sustainability Compact were created." So far, Bangladesh has put in place a number of commendable changes on workplace safety in the garment sector.

"Despite the commendable changes, more progress is needed in the sector," Teerink added. The EU is working on the EBA scheme, which offers duty-free trade privilege to 45 least-developed countries, including Bangladesh.

"The EBA has really helped Bangladesh from the very beginning of the scheme. It is a major instrument that really helped Bangladesh more than the bilateral aid" **r**



## Afghan parliament approves \$5.5B budget

The parliament in Afghanistan approved the draft annual budget of an estimated \$ 5.5 billion amid protest over unequal distribution of funds. Earning the parliament's critical support, the country's finance ministry had drafted the annual budget for 2020-21 with some \$3.5 billion for expenditures and \$2 billion for development projects.

An overwhelming amount of the development budget is set to be spent on infrastructure in the agriculture sector followed by education, health and services.

The Afghan security sector relies heavily on NATO support that has committed to extending financial sustainment through at least 2024.

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has hailed the parliament's approval for the budget as a critical development for the timely execution of the government's plans.

There was, however, an uproar in



the parliament from representatives from different provinces over alleged discriminations in distribution of funds.

Hundreds of protesters also took to the streets in central Ghor province against the government's move of not allocating funds for a dam and a main highway there.

Shamroz Khan Masjidi, the Finance Ministry spokesman, told media the

government has limited available resources, with which it is trying best to ensure equal and just distribution of funds among all 34 provinces.

Separately, the World Bank in its latest edition of the twice-a-year Afghanistan Development Update said that the country's economy grew by some 2.9 per cent last year driven mainly by strong agricultural growth **r**

### Afghan economy up by 2.9pc in 2019: WB

Afghanistan's economy grew by an estimated 2.9 percent in 2019, driven mainly by strong agricultural growth following recovery from drought, but lingering political uncertainty dampens private confidence and investment, says the World Bank.

Growth picked up in Afghanistan in 2019. This is good news, but insecurity and political uncertainty are holding back the Afghan economy," said World Bank country director for Afghanistan Henry Kerali.

The World Bank in a press release said that as drought impacts further recede and private sector confidence improves following conclusion of the presidential election, growth is

expected to accelerate to 3.3 percent in 2020.

"Domestic revenue collection reached a new high of 14.5 percent of GDP in 2019, up from 13.3 percent in 2018. Strong revenue performance reflected both progress in establishing a robust tax system and substantial one-off revenues, including transfers from the Da Afghanistan Bank," the press release reads.

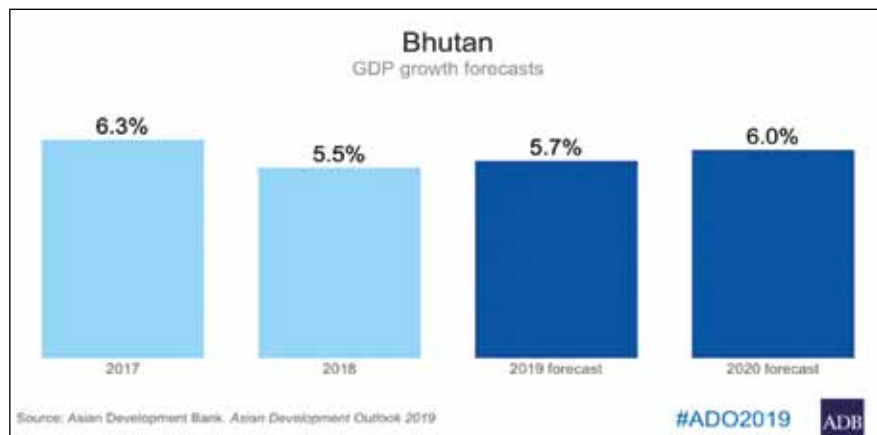
"The international community needs to maintain its support to Afghanistan over the medium-term to sustain the country's recent development progress and help realize its long-term growth and self-reliance prospects. In this effort, the Afghan government

needs to assure its international partners that progress is being made on governance and that aid resources are used efficiently," said Kerali **r**

### Roadmap needed to steer Bhutan to higher GDP growth

With Bhutan's GDP growth rate hitting its second lowest recorded low of 3.03 percent in 2018, the situation looks bleak. This is compounded by the slowing of credit due to a liquidity crunch and its impact on large sections of the private sector.

According to the Finance Minister, Namgay Tshering as well as Prime Minister Dr Lotay Tshering, both felt



that growth in the short term will pick up from 2020 due to a host of government activities.

Lyonpo Namgay said that GDP growth in 2019 has been predicted at 7.5 percent. However, a senior NSB official associated with the 2018 GDP report said that in 2019, Bhutan's GDP would hover around or even below 4 percent.

He also added that GDP in the country is driven by public sector investments while in the private sector, it has more to do with construction and infrastructure development.

The Finance Minister said that the government has allocated budget for both the central agencies and local government. Many infrastructure development look set to be taking place. Moreover, any dip in the Indian economy also leads to a dip in the Bhutanese economy.

The trend is that Bhutanese economy cannot pick up when the Indian economy starts dipping as the Indian economy gets mirrored in the Bhutanese economy about five to six months later.

The government will have its task cut out as figures coming out from India show that this could be India's worst economic slowdown in the last three decades due to deep structural and financial issues.

Consultations with experts from the Macro Finance Coordination Committee were sought to provide some suggestions on shock absorbers in the short term, so that the Bhutanese economy does not mirror what is happening in New Delhi.

The Lyonchhen also said that the economic figures will improve in the coming year as 70 percent of the capital investments still lie unused for the financial year, with only 50 percent of the time remaining.

2020 will see the implementation of 25 percent of the capital works coming to around Nu 28b. The Lyonchhen added that his bigger worry is the long term and the need for a good economic roadmap **r**

### Pakistan's economic freedom improves: report

Pakistan's economic freedom overall score has improved by 0.6 percent with higher scores for judicial effectiveness and property rights outpacing modest performance in monetary freedom and fiscal health.

According to a report compiled by Washington based Heritage Foundation, Pakistan's economic freedom score is 55 and its economy is the 131st freest in the 2019 index.

Pakistan is ranked 32nd among 43 countries in the Asia-Pacific region,

and its overall score is below the regional and world averages, the report added.

At global level Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand are the top three ranked countries at the world economic freedom index.

In South Asia, Bhutan is ranked at 78, Sri Lanka 115, Bangladesh 121, India 129, Pakistan 131, Nepal 136, Maldives 141, and Afghanistan is at 152.

The report said that although some aspects of economic freedom had advanced modestly in Pakistan in recent years, decades of internal political disputes and low levels of foreign investment had led to erratic growth and underdevelopment.

Excessive state involvement in the economy but omnipresent regulatory agencies inhibit private business formation. Lack of access to bank credit undermines entrepreneurship, and the financial sector's isolation from the outside world slows innovation.

The foundation defines economic freedom as "the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labour and property."

The report pointed out that in economically free societies, governments allow labor, capital, and goods to move freely, and refrain from coercion or constraint of liberty beyond the extent necessary to protect and maintain liberty itself.

The report argues that in an economically free society, "individuals are free to work, produce, consume, and invest in any way they please".

The foundation measures economic freedom by assessing the rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency and access to open market. The data

is shared with investors, business and finance leaders, policymakers, academics, journalists, students, and teachers.

The report added that the tax system of Pakistan is complex despite reforms to cut rates and broaden the tax base. The top personal income tax rate is 30 percent, and the top corporate tax rate has been cut to 30 percent. The overall tax burden equals 12.4 percent of total domestic income.

Over the past three years, the government spending has amounted to 20.3 percent of the country's output (GDP), and budget deficits have averaged 5.1 percent of GDP.

Progress in improving the entrepreneurial environment has been modest. The government's 2018–2019 budget increased spending on subsidies for the construction sector and for such items as food (especially sugar), power, water, and textiles by 36 percent.

The combined value of exports and imports is equal to 25.8 percent of GDP. The average applied tariff rate is 10.1 percent **r**

### **Pakistan, ADB to further strengthen cooperation: Hafeez**

Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenues, Dr Abdul Hafeez said that Pakistan looked forward

to further strengthening partnership with Asian Development Bank under the leadership of its new President, Masatsugu Asakawa.

Talking to media persons at the sidelines of World Economic Forum annual meeting at Davos, he said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan had an excellent meeting with the new ADB president. He thanked ADB for supporting Pakistan through various financing tools, which he said have helped turn around the economy of the country.

“We are thankful to the ADB for the special financing tools they have adopted to support Pakistan and this is an excellent partnership; and they have contributed in a significant way in a turnaround our economy,” the advisor added.

ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa said that it was honour for him to meet Pakistani Premier, which he said was his first official meeting with Pakistan after assuming the job. He said that Pakistan had been very good partner of the bank for last fifty years and was also one of the founding members of the bank. He said that Pakistan and ADB were maintaining beautiful relationship for years.

Especially last year, he added, when Pakistan entered into the International Monetary Fund Programme, ADB decided to support Pakistan's reform

agenda as much as possible including its agenda on monetary policy, fiscal policy and taxation issues **r**

### **SL achieves highest-ever tea export revenue in 2019**

The revenue of Rs 240.6 billion realized from tea exports for January to December 2019 is the highest ever surpassing the previous best of Rs 233.3 billion realized in 2017, the chairman of the Tea Exporters Association Sanjaya Herath said.



He also said that this further showed a growth of Rs. 8.9 billion when compared to Rs. 231.7 billion of the corresponding periods of 2018. However the export volumes were still lower than the highest volume of 320 million kilograms achieved in 2014.

Some are of the view that Sri Lanka should concentrate on improvement of quality of the product and production of about 250 million kilograms of good quality tea could fetch better prices while another school of thought says country should maintain about 350 million kilograms of annual tea production so that factories can operate in full capacity. “However it should be noted that world tea export volume remains at the level of 1.8 billion kilograms for the last 5-6 years and hence one has to offer something better than others to remain competitive” **r**



## China built port city in Colombo invests \$800m

CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd, a unit of China Communications, has invested 800 million US dollars out of a total of 1.4 billion dollars in reclaiming land, and is preparing to market and build support facilities, an official said.



“Only \$800 million from the initial investment of \$1.4 billion has been spent so far,” Nihal Fernando, Project Manager for the Port City initiative said.

The Port City is being rolled out with Sri Lanka’s Urban Development Authority.

In 2019 it completed the reclamation of 269 hectares of land from the ocean south of the Colombo Port under the project’s first phase.

Fernando said the remainder of funds from the initial investment will be used to construct a marina for yachts. It will also have a central park and other facilities.

The second phase of the project will see the firm marketing the project for international investments.

Overall, the Port City, also called the Colombo International Financial Centre, is expected to attract 15 billion US dollars in investments to Sri Lanka.

The first three buildings have already been earmarked. Fernando said some of the construction has already started and the first building will open in 2023. He said CHEC is awaiting government concessions to go out and market the project.

in spending on roads, railways and rural welfare could revive growth. The budget will be delivered to parliament.

A weak economy and the wave of anti-government protests have increased the chances of a fiscal stimulus in the budget, said Shilan Shah, an economist at Capital Economics in Singapore.

“That would provide a small boost to growth over the coming quarters, at the cost of putting upward pressure on bond yields,” he said in a note.

The International Monetary Fund this month cut its forecast for India’s growth to 4.8 per cent for the fiscal year ending in March and lowered its forecast for growth in the coming financial year to 5.8 per cent.

The central government looks set to miss its deficit estimates for a third straight year after estimates revenue will fall short by nearly 3 trillion rupees.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who will present her second full-year annual budget to parliament, could defer the earlier target of cutting fiscal deficit to 3 per cent of gross domestic product in 2020–21 by at least two years, government sources told Reuters. This will be on top of roughly \$28 billion of expenditure outlay from off-budget borrowings, as she seeks to keep the deficit in check.

Economists in a Reuters poll predicted the government would set a fiscal deficit target of 3.6 per cent of GDP for 2020–21, up from 3.3 per cent targeted for the current year.

Sitharaman is expected to announce a plan in the budget to invest 105 trillion rupees (\$1.48 trillion) in infrastructure over the next five years.

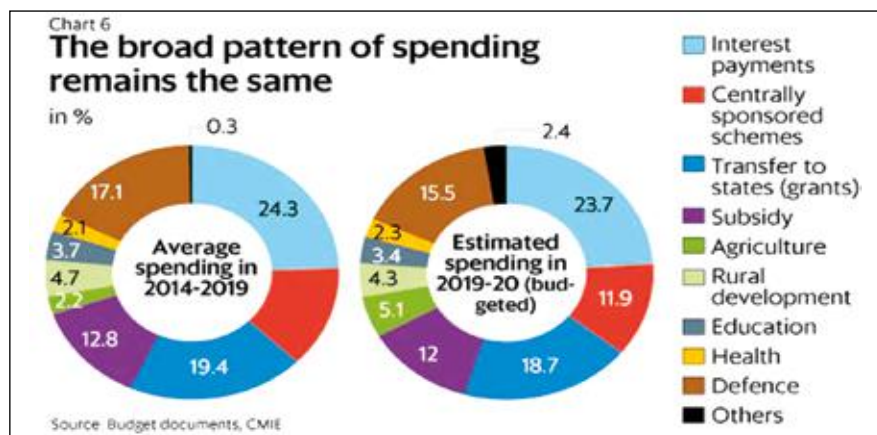
## India’s budget likely to up spending to revive growth

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government is expected to raise spending on infrastructure and cut some personal tax in its 2020–2021 budget, to spur consumer demand and investment, government sources and economists said.

India is facing its worst economic slowdown in a decade. Growth slipped to 4.5 per cent in the July–September quarter, worsening the job prospects for millions of youth entering the workforce each year.

Despite cuts in corporate taxes and monetary easing by the central bank, investments have failed to pick up, adding to Modi’s worries as he tries to quell public protests over a new citizenship law.

Economists and investors say fiscal stimulus in the budget for the year beginning April 1 and an increase



By then it hopes to make India a \$5 trillion economy, compared with \$2.8 trillion now, government sources have said. Since taking charge in 2014, Modi has increased state spending on roads, railways, airports and ports, and has pruned state subsidies.

The budget could push privatisation and set a target of 1.5 trillion rupees, after missing the target by a wide margin this year, the sources said. The government has already announced plans to sell the loss-making national carrier Air India and oil retailer Bharat Petroleum Corp. Ltd, along with a few others **r**

## India faces first fall in direct taxes in two decades

India's corporate and income tax collection for the current year is likely to fall for the first time in at least two decades, several senior tax officials told Reuters, amid a sharp fall in economic growth and cut in corporate tax rates.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government was targeting direct tax collection of 13.5 trillion rupees (\$189 billion) for the year ending March 31 — a 17 percent increase over the prior fiscal year.

But a sharp decline in demand has stung businesses, forcing companies

to cut investment and jobs, denting tax collections and prompting the government to forecast 5 percent growth for this fiscal year — the slowest in 11 years.

The tax department had managed to collect only 7.3 trillion rupees as of January 23, more than 5.5 percent below the amount collected by the same point last year, said a senior tax official.

After collecting taxes from companies in advance for the first three quarters, officials typically garner about 30-35 percent of annual direct taxes in the final three months, data from the past three years shows.

But eight senior tax officials interviewed by Reuters said despite their best efforts, direct tax collections this financial year were likely to fall below the 11.5 trillion collected in 2018-19.

“Forget the target. This will be the first time that we’ll see a fall in direct tax collection ever,” said a tax official in New Delhi. He estimates that direct tax collections for this year could end up roughly 10 percent below fiscal 2019.

The finance ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Direct taxes typically account for about 80 percent of the government's projections for annual revenue, and the shortfall may leave the government needing to boost borrowing to meet expenditure commitments.

The tax officials also say that a surprise cut in the headline corporate tax rate last year aimed at wooing manufacturers and boosting investment in Asia's third-biggest economy is another reason behind the sluggish tax collections.

The concerns are exacerbated by a gaping shortfall in the goods and services tax that is expected to further hurt total collections.

The total tax collection shortfall for the current fiscal year could be about 3 trillion rupees — the highest shortfall ever recorded **r**



## Cambodia expect Brexit to boost trade with UK

Cambodia expects bilateral trade relations with the UK to improve following its departure from the EU, trade officials said. Ministry of Commerce spokesman Seang Thay said Cambodia hopes that Brexit will help ease trade talks with the UK and boost exports to its market.

He said this at a press conference on the Ministry of Commerce's Update and Progress' which was organised by the Royal Government Spokespersons Unit. "Before the UK left the EU, all decisions had to be made jointly. The UK had to define the Everything But Arms [preferential trade scheme] in the same way the EU did. "We hope that Britain withdrawing from the EU will improve bilateral cooperation," he said.

The UK departed from the EU on January 31, which means that the UK's course of action is independent of the European Commission's decision regarding EBA for Cambodia. Thay said the UK's market share of the Kingdom's exports was worth more than \$1 billion last year.

The EU is set to announce its decision on EBA for Cambodia on February 12. In the first three quarters



of last year, Cambodian exports to international markets totalled \$10.9 billion, a report from the National Bank of Cambodia said. UK was the fifth largest market, accounting for seven per cent of exports, following the US, Japan, Germany and China.

Cambodia Chamber of Commerce vice-president Lim Heng said the UK is a large country with a strong economy and a big market for Cambodia. He forecasted that goods exports to the UK would steadily increase following its departure from the EU, especially garments.

"Britain previously pledged to Cambodian leaders that even if it leaves the EU, it will continue to

further strengthen and increase its trade volume with Cambodia," said Heng. He said the British were mainly investing in sectors such as garment factories, footwear, electronics and cigarette manufacturing.

However, Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia secretary-general Kaing Monika said garment sector would remain largely unaffected. The UK is currently the largest market for Cambodian garment in Europe, he said.

Cambodia exported \$2.584 billion in garments to the EU market during the first nine months of last year, \$584 million of which went to the UK, GMAC data shows **r**

### 54 special economic zones in Cambodia

Cambodia has in total 54 special economic ones as of 2019, according to the Council for the Development of Cambodia. In 2019, the exports from Cambodia's Special Economic Zones were \$2,688 million, up 27 percent compared to 2018, continued the source.

Specifically for Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone encompassing 353 hectares of land surface, it has 121 investment companies providing 21,717 jobs for Cambodians.

The exports from Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone were valued at \$518 million in 2019, according



to the figure shared during the recent visit of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance Dr Aun Pornmoniroth to the zone.

Most of the companies invested in the Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone are from Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan, Belgium, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, USA, the Philippines, and so on **r**

## HK economy to see more weakness for virus outbreak

The risk of further contraction in the Hong Kong economy, which was buffeted by anti-government protests last year, has increased due to the coronavirus epidemic, Financial Secretary Paul Chan said.

“As it (the economy) enters 2020, it has not shaken off the risk of continued decline, but has encountered the threat of a new coronavirus pneumonia epidemic, which will definitely cause a double blow to the economy,” Chan said in a blog post.

“It is estimated that the epidemic situation will greatly increase the risk of continued economic contraction this year, and this will also affect the reduction of government revenue and increase in expenditure.”

Hong Kong sank into recession for the first time in a decade in the third quarter as political protests plunged the city into its worst crisis since it reverted from British to Chinese rule in 1997.

Chan said catering, retail, tourism and consumer sectors, which have been hit in the last six months, would “fall into a deeper winter.” The government will continue to monitor closely to ensure the financial stability of Hong Kong, he added **r**

## Japan’s GDP on track to rebound

Japan’s economy will take longer than first expected to recover from last October’s consumption tax hike, with the widening coronavirus outbreak weighing on both exports and consumer spending, economists say.

January-March real gross domestic product will grow at an annualized rate of only 0.5 percent from the previous quarter, based on the average forecast of 11 private-sector economists surveyed by Nikkei.

This would follow the October-December quarter’s 6.3 percent contraction in government estimates out recently — the sharpest in more than five years. Some economists see the risk of a second straight quarter of negative growth in January to March, a streak that would constitute a technical recession.

“Due to factors such as worsening domestic demand in China, Japan’s exports and manufacturing activity will sustain a heavy blow,” said Yoshiki Shinke, chief economist at the Dai-ichi Life Research Institute.

The virus appears to be slowing the global economy — especially in epicenter China, which for Japan is a key trading partner on a par with the US.

China is also a main source of tourists. Hokkaido’s Sapporo Snow Festival, which closed February 11, welcomed 710,000 fewer visitors than a year earlier. The total of 2.02 million marked the lowest level of traffic in the past decade. Visitors from China plunged, owing to its recent ban on overseas group travel. In addition, elementary schools in the city of Sapporo cancelled field trips.

Japan’s retail sector counts on the Lunar New Year holiday as a major shopping season. But its hopes were dashed after Chinese authorities imposed the travel ban January 27. Outbound tourism is languishing as well **r**

## China virus outbreak pressures weakened economy

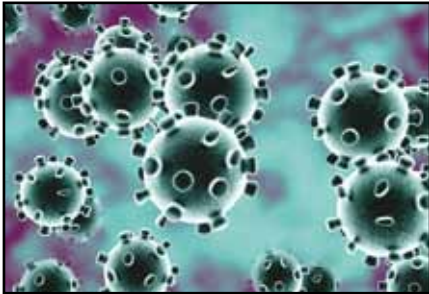
A coronavirus outbreak in China which has killed 81 people and spread to many countries is expected to hurt its economy, an engine of global growth, though analysts say it is too early to quantify the overall impact on businesses and consumers.

The consensus is that in the short term, economic output will be hit as Chinese authorities step up preventive measures, impose travel restrictions and extend the Lunar New Year holidays to limit the spread of the virus.

Millions who usually travel during this period have cancelled their plans, with the government ordering that full refunds be provided to air and rail passengers. Shanghai said that companies cannot restart operations before February 9, and businesses in the eastern Chinese manufacturing hub of Suzhou have been ordered to stay shut until at least February 8.

The government has lengthened the week-long Lunar New Year holiday nationally by three days to February 2. Wuhan, a city of 11 million and





the epicenter of the virus outbreak in central China, is already in virtual lockdown and severe limits on movement are in place in several other Chinese cities.

Many analysts are turning to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, a coronavirus that originated in China and killed nearly 800 people globally in 2002 and 2003, to better understand the likely longer-term effects.

“The economy rebounded quickly after SARS faded away,” said Larry Hu of Macquarie Capital, in a note to clients. Transportation, restaurants and retail sales were hit, but Hu said on the whole SARS was “just a blip which didn’t change the big trend.”

This time, however, analysts say China’s increased reliance on consumption to drive the world’s second-biggest economy compared to early 2000s, could undermine growth.

“In China during 2019, consumption contributed about 3.5 percentage points to the overall real GDP growth rate of 6.1 per cent. A back of the envelope calculation suggests that if spending on such services fell by 10 per cent, overall GDP growth would fall by about 1.2 percentage points,” said analysts from S&P Global Ratings in a note.

The usual Lunar New Year rush of spending on travel, tourism and entertainment is taking a beating

already. Overall passenger travel declined by nearly 29 per cent from a year earlier on the first day of the Lunar New Year, a transportation ministry official said **r**

### Flower industry a multi-billion-peso business

The Philippine flower production has the potential to become a multi-billion-peso industry amid the high demand from local and international markets, according to a New York-based floral designer.

Jerry Sibal, the New York-based events and floral designer who visited Manila to officially launch the first Philippine International Flower Show, said the Philippine horticulture and floriculture sector could spur economic activities, support small businesses, generate more jobs and increase export revenues.

Sibal said this would be possible if the government and the private sector would work together toward this common goal.

The Philippine flower industry has grown over the past three decades because of high local and foreign demand, combined with the expansion of the tourism sector.

Data show that fresh cut flower exports posted sales of more than \$370,000 annually from 1991 to 2000. Production, however, fell short of the rising domestic demand particularly on Valentine’s Day, Christmas, All Saint’s Day and school graduation, forcing the country to import flowers like orchids and chrysanthemums.

This was because local farmers and horticulturists need to build more greenhouses which require big investments. Flower production also requires technologies and agricultural

chemicals that are usually imported from other countries.

Sibal said the PIFS will be held from October 15 to 18, 2020 at the Philippine International Convention Center to promote awareness on the local flower industry and bring together representatives from various groups and stakeholders — from farmers, agriculturists and florists to end-users like hotels and corporates, government representatives, private investors and technology providers **r**

### Vietnam might not reach 2020 GDP growth target

Vietnam might fail to achieve its 6.8 per cent GDP growth rate target set earlier this year as the novel coronavirus epidemic continues to take a heavy toll on the global economy, according to the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

In a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister Nguy’n Xuân Phúc to look at revised growth scenarios in the wake of the devastating COVID-19, the ministry said if the outbreak is contained within the first quarter this year, 2020’s GDP growth target will be 6.25 per cent, 0.55 percentage points lower than the previous goal.

In case the disease is contained in the second quarter, the Vietnam’s economic growth this year goal will be 5.96 per cent, 0.84 percentage points lower than the original.

The ministry cited Professor Warwick McKibbin from the Australian National University, who counted losses for the world economy due to the SARS outbreak in 2003 at \$40 billion and put the damages from COVID-19 at triple or quadruple this number at \$120-160 billion **r**

## Egypt - Sudan trade exchange reaches \$648m in 9 months

Trade exchange between Egypt and Sudan recorded \$648 million during the first nine months of 2019, marking an increase of 6 percent on a year-on-year basis, a report issued by Trade and Industry Ministry showed.

The Egyptian Commercial Representative office in Khartoum said that Egypt's exports to Sudan hiked 15 percent in January-September 2019 to hit \$328 million.

It pointed to the success of the efforts made in starting negotiations to conclude export contracts between a number of Sudanese and Egyptian companies participating in the 37th session of the Khartoum International Fair in January 20–27, 2020.

The fair witnessed a participation of an Egyptian delegation of companies from the chemicals, detergents, medicines, electrical appliances, cables and cigarette sectors in the



presence of 600 companies from 25 Arab and foreign countries in various fields.

From 2010 to 2016, trade exchange between both countries amounted to \$3.86 billion, marking its highest value in 2010 at \$629 million, and its lowest in 2012 at \$473 million.

During these seven year, trade balance came in Egypt's favor by

\$3.18 billion, hitting its highest value in 2010 at \$545 million, and its lowest in 2014 at \$280 million.

The main Egyptian exports to Sudan are food commodities, including meat and sesame; plastic and chemical products. Cotton is the most important item among Egypt's imports from the Sudanese market **r**

## Egypt climbs 6 spots in Agility Emerging Markets Index

Egypt jumped up six positions in Agility Emerging Markets Index 2020, reaching the 20th place. According to the index, despite a brief social unrest in 2019, Egypt's economy showed surprising gains in key areas and moved up six spots to #20 in the overall index.

"Egypt actually gained six spots in the 2020 Index and showed improvement in the domestic and international logistics opportunities and business fundamentals indices," CEO and President of Agility Global Integrated Logistics Essa al-Saleh stated in the report.

The report pointed out that Egypt has made rapid progress because of economic growth. The government successfully implemented a first


wave of macroeconomic and structural reforms that addressed many entrenched issues and helped to stabilize the economy, spur growth and lay the groundwork for robust private sector participation in the economy.

"Smaller markets can make progress up the rankings if they display solid fundamentals, either economic or in terms of openness to trade (such as Egypt)," CEO Transport Intelligence John Manners-Bell said.

In domestic logistic opportunities, Egypt and Thailand both leapt six spots to 13th and 14th respectively. Egypt and Nigeria have made significant progress because of economic growth, infrastructure upgrades and improved domestic demand.

"In Egypt, whose rankings in each of the three sub-Indices saw rise, GDP growth is expected to quicken to 5.5 percent in 2019. Strong performance from the energy, retail and construction sectors are leading the growth, with underlying reforms that followed a \$12 billion IMF loan in 2016, helping to improve private sector cash flows and stabilize fuel costs. Forecast growth in Egypt's contract logistics and domestic express markets are relatively low, highlighting the potential for further gains in the coming years," according to the index.

The index revealed that Egypt has engineered one of the most remarkable turns of economic fortune in recent memory. It jumped six places to the 20th place in the 2020

Agility Emerging Markets Logistics Index, improving in all categories but most notably in business conditions, where it leaped up 10 spots to the 17th place 

## ME tension could impact markets after strong 2019 end

Financial markets enjoyed a strong end to 2019 with the US S&P equity index up 3 percent m/m and 10-year treasury yields edging back above 1.9 percent as optimism grew over the outlook for global growth amid mildly encouraging economic data and the agreement of a 'phase one' trade deal between the US and China.

Some of this optimism was punctured in January however with the escalation in military tensions between the US and Iran that if sustained could jeopardize conditions in the broader Middle East region. These developments saw the price of Brent crude oil spike to nearly \$70/bbl having already finished 2019 on a strong note thanks to the better global demand outlook and fresh OPEC+ supply cuts announced in December.

Pessimism over the US growth climate has mostly ebbed over the past month amid decent economic data especially on jobs, housing and service sector activity and also the boost to sentiment from the partial US-China trade deal which could ease pressure on the still-weak US manufacturing sector. Estimates of fourth quarter GDP growth have been rising and the Atlanta Fed 'nowcast' suggests growth could even have reached an annualized 2.3 percent in 4Q19 from 2.1 percent in Q3.

This would leave growth at a decent 2.4 percent for 2019 overall, though still down from 2.9 percent a year earlier and versus a consensus forecast of 1.6 percent for 2020. A

reasonably solid economic picture, a strong stock market, contained inflation and reduced risks from overseas trade point to little urgency from the Federal Reserve to change interest rates from current levels, a view supported by minutes from the bank's December meeting that showed a growing consensus among officials for keeping policy on hold through 2020.

There was at last some positive news on trade with the US and China agreeing a 'phase one' deal that effectively calls a provisional truce on their now 18-month dispute, and is scheduled to go into force from January 15.

The deal sees China purchase \$40 billion more US agricultural goods per year, take steps to end forced technology transfer and also avoid currency devaluation to gain competitive advantage. The US on the other hand will halve the 15 percent duties on imports from China introduced in September and shelved further tariff hikes that were scheduled for December 


## Iran crisis fuels fear over ME oil supplies

The burgeoning Iran crisis has sparked oil supply worries over the Strait of Hormuz-a vital shipping lane

for a fifth of global crude-and also over Iraq's output, analysts say. Oil prices had surged after US President Donald Trump ordered the drone assassination of Iran's top general Qasem Soleimani, but the market stabilized with Middle East crude supplies unaffected.

However, the oil market shifted higher once more after Tehran launched revenge attacks to target US forces in Iraq, making good on its pledge to hit back over the killing. Iran fired missiles overnight at Iraqi bases housing the US and British military, officials in Washington and Tehran said.

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab voiced concern over "reports of casualties". But Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif insisted that the country does "not seek escalation or war".

Traders remain fearful nevertheless that Tehran could seek to block the Hormuz waterway-a key artery for crude that stretches between Oman and Iran. Hormuz, one of the world's most congested transit points, links up the region's oil producers with markets in Asia, Europe and North America. "Supply disruptions were put at the forefront of the agenda for investors," said Mihir Kapadia, CEO of Sun Global Investments 



“These concerns have been fuelled by the killing of Soleimani and it is likely Iran will try and disrupt oil exports that travel through the Straits of Hormuz. “However... it remains unclear as to what the next developments will be.”

The US government’s Energy Information Administration describes Hormuz as “the world’s most important oil transit chokepoint” through which 21 million barrels of crude per day passed in 2018.

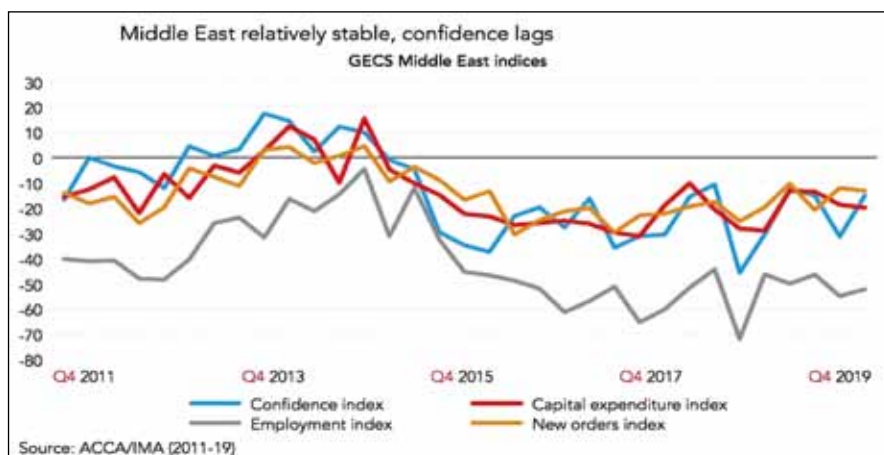
The strait had already been rocked last year by a string of attacks that Washington and its allies blamed on Iran, accusations Tehran firmly denied. Its Western foes have also accused Iran of being behind a major attack on Saudi oil installations and Iran has in recent months also repeatedly seized tankers operating in the Gulf.

Traders remain less fearful over the loss of Iranian oil because the Islamic republic remains under punishing US sanctions that were re-imposed by Trump in 2018 **r**

## Non-oil sectors to boost Saudi growth in 2020

A survey of nearly 440 senior accountancy experts on economic conditions in MESA showed a recovery in confidence in Q4. A revival in growth is likely to come mainly from the non-oil sector as the economy diversifies.

Detailed in the latest Global Economic Conditions Survey, jointly published by ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) and IMA (Institute of Management Accountants) the findings also point to mixed results from government spending measures as some economies make greater efforts to boost the non-oil sectors of their



economies, eg United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Commenting on the findings, Fazeela Gopalani, Head of Middle East ACCA, said: “A revival in growth is likely to come from the non-oil sector as the economy diversifies. Reforms in the entertainment and tourism sectors are expected to boost growth in Saudi Arabia this year.

The Q4 GECS recorded a significant improvement in orders and confidence compared with Q3, suggesting a brighter outlook. Non-oil private sector growth is likely to support growth in 2020, especially with the World Expo set to take place in Dubai later in the year.”

The dominant influence on confidence in the Middle East region is fluctuations in oil prices. Both confidence and oil prices recovered in Q4 and there was also a lessening of geopolitical risk in the region. Oil prices are expected to be in the \$60 to \$70 per barrel range this year.

A positive development for those countries with a fixed exchange rate with the US dollar (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar) is the reduction in interest rates by the US Federal Reserve. The US cuts in the second half of last year totalled 0.75 percentage point and were immediately followed by

reductions of similar size in these countries

In Q4, most of the components of the regional index are slightly below their long-run average. This is consistent with growth in the region of around 1.5 percent to 2 percent in 2019.

Last year GDP growth in Saudi Arabia slowed to less than 0.5 percent, dragged lower by falling oil production and lower average oil prices. As the largest oil exporter Saudi Arabia is at the forefront of OPEC efforts to stabilize prices by controlling output. Saudi oil output is likely to be cut again this year as these efforts continue.

There is limited official data available so far on UAE economic activity in 2019. But survey data points to annual GDP growth of between 1.5 percent and 2 percent last year **r**

## UAE closer to self-sufficiency in gas production

The UAE announced the discovery of huge gas reserves, saying the find would help the country achieve self-sufficiency. Abu Dhabi National Oil Co said about 80 trillion standard cubic feet of shallow gas resources were discovered between the emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

“This new discovery reinforces the nation’s goal of achieving gas



self-sufficiency, enabling major development projects,” it said in a statement. Leaders of Abu Dhabi and Dubai witnessed the signing of an agreement between Adnoc and Dubai Supply Authority for the exploration and development of the gas resources.

In November, Abu Dhabi announced new discoveries of seven billion barrels of oil to raise the UAE’s total crude reserves to 105 billion barrels, the world’s sixth largest.

It also announced the discovery of 58 trillion cubic feet of conventional gas, boosting total reserves to 273 trillion cubic feet as well as 160 trillion cubic feet of unconventional gas.

Most of these reserves are located in Abu Dhabi. Shallow gas resources are reserves found trapped not too deep from the surface but they need advanced technology for production.

The produced gas will be supplied to Dubai which currently imports most of its gas needs from neighbouring Qatar which is under embargo by an Arab coalition that includes the UAE.

The agreement “reinforces Adnoc’s commitment to ensuring a sustainable and economic gas supply and achieving gas self-sufficiency”, said Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of State and CEO of Adnoc.

Throughout 2018, Adnoc granted concession rights in existing and new oilfields to several international companies, and earmarked some \$132 billion to invest in the oil sector over the next five years **r**

### Saudi Arabia’s CO2 emissions plunge 4.4%

Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in Saudi Arabia have dramatically dropped in 2018, falling by 4.4% or 26 million tons (MtCO2) to 553 MtCO2 in 2018 from 579 MtCO2 in 2017, the most recent update by Enerdata revealed. The previous estimate was a 2.4% reduction (15 MtCO2).

Researchers at the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC) published an analysis based on the updated estimates, noting that Saudi Arabia moved up from being fourth to the third fastest reducer of emissions from fuel consumption among the G20 group of countries, behind Brazil and France and in front of Germany and Japan, which round out the top five.

“This new data shows that the impact of energy efficiency and energy price reforms in reducing wasteful energy use has been even greater than expected,” said Dr. Nicholas Howarth.

“Prior to 2016, CO2 emissions grew at over 5% each year. Seeing emissions now fall so strongly may come as a surprise to many.”

“It also comes as Saudi Arabia hosts the G20 where climate change is an important agenda item. It sets the stage well for the Kingdom to show leadership on the issue.

KAPSARC’s analysis shows that the rate of improvement in the energy intensity of Saudi Arabia’s economy was 5.5% in 2018, well above the global average of 1.2%.

According to Dr. Alessandro Lanza, “falling energy intensity was responsible for 81% of the emissions reductions, meaning more value is being created for every unit of energy consumed locally,” Dr Lanza said.

Thamir Alshehri said that a sharp fall in diesel consumption was the main reason for the additional fall in emissions.

“Emissions from the transport sector fell by an extra 10 MtCO2 than what was previously expected. This was due to diesel emissions falling by 19 MtCO2, or 43%, from 43.5 MtCO2 in 2017 to 24.5 MtCO2 in 2018.”

“In addition to lower fuel use from consumers, part of the explanation for this large drop may be a lower payoff due to higher local diesel prices for those who would buy the fuel in Saudi Arabia to illegally export to other countries,” KAPSARC’s analysis noted.

The industrial sector in Saudi Arabia consumes 2.1 million barrels of oil equivalent per day, around 44% of the Kingdom’s total energy consumption (SEECa 2018). Enerdata’s updated figures for 2018 suggest industrial emissions in the manufacturing and construction sector from fuel combustion accounted for 238 MtCO2 **r**

## EU urges UK to go for trade deal

The EU wants a uniquely close post-Brexit relationship with the UK, but is “fine” if London opts to walk away without one, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said. The blunt language mirrors that being used by Britain, which formally left the EU two weeks ago but which still trades like a member under a transition period ticking down to the end of this year. The government of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson insists it will not seek to extend the transition.

At the same time, the EU is putting the final touches on its negotiating mandate, which is to be fixed on February 25 ahead of talks with the UK scheduled to start from next month. Speaking to the European Parliament, von der Leyen responded to Britain’s moves bracing for a possible no deal on trade by saying: “If this is the British choice, well, we are fine with that without any question.”

She added however that “I personally believe that we should be way more ambitious” and reiterated Europe’s conditions Britain would have to



abide by if an accord were to be struck.

The EU insists on a “level playing field” so that Britain does not try to get an unfair trading advantage by getting rid of costly EU standards on labor, the environment and taxes. It also wants oversight on UK state aid decisions, and says giving EU fishing boats continued access to British waters is crucial for a trade deal.

At the same time, the EU’s chief negotiator Michel Barnier warned that Britain’s big financial sector would lose its automatic right to operate in EU countries, and checks would be

carried out on British goods.

“Brexit cannot be business as usual,” he told the MEPs. “Brexit has mechanical and logical consequences. We have to find a new way of cooperating with them, and we are seeking that.” In the lead-up to Britain’s January 31 exit from the EU, London had said it wanted an ambitious and comprehensive accord with the European bloc.

But since then, Johnson has dialled back on that scope and his government has signalled it is willing to accept trade friction as the cost of exercising sovereignty **r**

## Virus outbreak casts shadow on global economy

A rapidly spreading virus outbreak in China is emerging as a potentially major new risk to the global economy and leaving policymakers, still grappling with the impact of the Sino-US trade war, fretting over the widening fallout. In a sign of alarm over the possible damage, Bank of Japan Deputy Governor Masayoshi Amamiya said China’s huge presence in the world economy must be taken into account in gauging the impact the outbreak could have on global growth.

Stocks around the world tumbled as the death toll from the spread of the coronavirus reached 170, forcing airlines to cut flights and some stores to close. The potential impact on the world economy from the outbreak took center stage in US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell’s news conference.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also voiced concern, saying he was closely watching the impact on Japan’s economy including declining inbound tourism. Zhang Ming, an

economist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a top government think tank, projected the outbreak would cut China’s first-quarter growth by one percentage point to 5 percent or lower.

China has imposed travel restrictions and shut businesses to contain the outbreak, but has not quelled rising concern among companies and governments across the world.

Asian stocks sank as the death toll from the virus rose and more cases were reported around the world.

“Apart from the risk to human lives, it is likely to hit travel and consumption activities. In a scenario of widespread infection, it could materially weaken economic growth and fiscal positions of governments in Asia,” S&P said.

Analysts are comparing the current coronavirus outbreak to the 2002-2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic, which led to about 800 deaths and slowed Asia’s economic growth.

Many say the impact on global growth could be bigger this time as China now accounts for a larger share of the world economy, a view echoed by BOJ’s Amamiya. The number of Chinese tourists visiting Japan has increased by more than 20 times since then, Amamiya said. “The outbreak also spread during China’s Lunar (New Year) holiday, when consumption tends to peak,” he added.

China is Japan’s second-largest export destination. The Chinese make up 30 percent of all tourists visiting Japan and nearly 40 percent of the total sum foreign tourists spent last year, an industry survey showed **r**

## Trump relaunches trade war with Europe

US President Donald Trump relaunched a major trade offensive against Europe threatening to hit

the EU with damaging auto tariffs if Europeans failed to agree a long-delayed trade deal. With observers warning that global harmony on trade was crucial to the health of the world economy, Trump warned Europe that the US would protect its interests, on the second day of his stay at the Davos economic forum.

His interventions took the focus off climate change which had dominated the first day of event, where Trump lashed out at the “prophets of doom” who say that the world is in crisis over global warming. “The European Union is tougher to deal with than anybody. They’ve taken advantage of our country for many years.” Trump said on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. “Ultimately, it will be very easy because if we can’t make a deal, we’ll have to put 25 percent tariffs on their cars,” he added.

Trump said that his attention would now turn to Europe, after he sealed a trade truce with China that cooled several years of a bitter trade war that destabilized the world economy. “I wanted to wait till I finished China, to be honest with you. I always like to be very transparent. I wanted to wait till I finished China. I didn’t want to go with China and Europe at the same time” **r**

## US, China sign ‘momentous’ trade deal

The United States and China signed a truce in their trade war after nearly two years of tensions, bringing relief to markets but largely leaving massive tariffs in place.

The “phase one” deal is also a boon for Donald Trump as he faces an impeachment trial and a tough re-election fight this year, with the US president hailing the agreement as “momentous”.

However, with tariffs still in place on two-thirds of more than \$500 billion in imports from China, US consumers and businesses will be left to foot the bill.

The agreement includes pledges from China to beef up purchases of US agricultural goods and other exports for two years, provides some protections for US technology, and new enforcement mechanisms that allow Washington to quickly impose penalties that Beijing cannot respond to.

“Today, we take a momentous step, one that has never been taken before with China”, which will ensure “fair and reciprocal trade”, Trump said at the White House signing ceremony. “Together, we are righting the wrongs of the past”.

But as Trump ambled through a lengthy commentary on the deal, major networks switched away from the White House to Congress where articles of impeachment were to be presented to the Senate as the first step towards a trial.

The easing of trade frictions has boosted stock markets worldwide in recent weeks, as it takes the threat of new tariffs off the table for now. On Wall Street, the Dow and S&P





500 ended at new record highs after the signing, while Asian markets were mostly up in the afternoon. Trump signed the deal with China's Vice Premier Liu He, who has led Beijing's negotiations with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin **r**

## UK economy seeks to balance Brexit with global strains

Britain's economy, lifted by the country's post-election political stability, risks fresh turbulence as Prime Minister Boris Johnson seeks tricky Brexit trade deals amid global threats that include the coronavirus.

Recent positive British economic data offset weaker figures at the end of 2019, but this is not expected to have a lasting impact despite government promises of major infrastructure spending.

On eve of Brexit, there is a strong possibility that the Bank of England will announce its first interest rate cut in more than three years, as economic headwinds gather on the horizon.

"There's still a huge amount of uncertainty over Brexit ahead of the deadline at the end of this year," OANDA analyst Craig Erlam said.

Britain faces an 11-month Brexit period that expires on December 31, by which time Johnson will try to strike new trade deals with the EU and other countries around the world.

Erlam said that, despite data pointing to a slight uplift for the UK economy late last year, the outlook was far from rosy. "If the government can do as they promise then the honeymoon can begin in 2021," he said.

Investors have been reassured by December's election triumph for Johnson's right-wing Conservative party, which coasted to victory on a pledge to get Brexit done on January 31 **r**

## Global renewable energy needs \$750b by 2030

The next decade is one of action. By 2030, investments into renewable energy projects should be doubled from \$330 billion to \$750 billion to achieve the objectives of energy transition and sustainable development goals, a top decision-maker said in Abu Dhabi.

International Renewable Energy Agency director-general Francesco La Camera stressed the need for stronger policies and more investment. He noted renewables should be central to energy and economic planning.

"Renewables are most competitive way to produce energy. It could be the most effective way to give access to energy to population in remote and rural areas. But if you want to avoid

consequences of climate change, we have to accelerate our task. We have to double our investment in renewables.

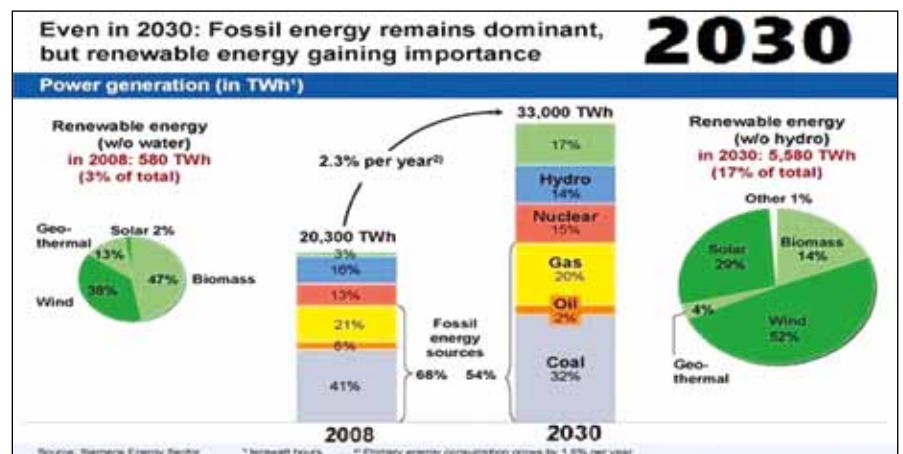
We started having \$50 billion investment at the start of the decade, now it is \$330 billion and hope to achieve \$750 billion goal [by 2030]," he told reporters during the 10th annual assembly of Irena.

"There is tremendous liquidity available," La Camera said, adding that investment can be met by redirecting planned fossil fuel investment.

"Close to \$10 trillion of non-renewables related energy investments are planned to 2030, risking stranded assets and increasing likelihood of exceeding the world's 1.5 degree carbon budget this decade."

La Camera underlined the share of renewables in global power should more than double in the next decade. "Renewable electricity supplies 26 per cent of global power and by end of 2030 should be 57 per cent," he added.

La Camera said additional investments bring significant cost savings, including minimising losses by climate change as a result of inaction **r**




## Turkey's industrial output beats estimates

Turkish industrial production climbed 8.6 percent year-on-year in December, official data showed, exceeding forecasts in the fourth consecutive rise as the economy gathers pace.

Month-on-month, industrial production was up 1.9 percent in December on a calendar and seasonally adjusted basis, the Turkish Statistical Institute said.

A Reuters poll for the calendar-adjusted index had forecasted that output would increase 7 percent annually in December. The output also saw an increase of 5.8 percent year-on-year in the last quarter of 2019.

In the month, all the three main sub-indices – mining and quarrying, manufacturing and electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning – rose by 9.8 percent, 9.1 percent and 0.3 percent, respectively.

“The steps we have taken for growth based on value-added production, export and employment are bearing fruits. The annual 8.6 percent increase in the December industrial production demonstrates that this growth trend has started,” said Treasury and Finance Minister Berat Albayrak, evaluating the data .

## Italy faces recession

Italy's economy performed woefully in 2019 and is set to do even worse this year due to the coronavirus, with the threat of recession looming large, experts said Monday.

“In the best scenario for Italy, we expect zero growth (in 2020) with a negative first quarter followed by a slow recovery,” OECD chief economist Laurence Boone said.

The economy expanded last year by just 0.3 percent – its worst figure since 2014, when gross domestic product (GDP) growth was zero.

Europe had fared badly across the board recently, weighed down by Brexit and US President Donald Trump's protectionist threats.

But Italy, the third largest economy in the eurozone, has lagged well behind the bloc's 1.2 percent growth.

The economy is traditionally export-driven and has been hit hard by global trade tensions, political uncertainty at home – two general elections in two years – and a slowdown in Europe, particularly in Germany.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte's government has had some good news – the public deficit fell to 1.6 percent of GDP last year from 2.2 percent in 2018, while the debt ratio at least remained stable at 134.8 percent, well above the EU limit of 60 percent.


But just as Italy was expecting a gradual improvement in both growth and debt, the coronavirus epidemic struck.

The country is the worst-hit in Europe, with 1,694 positive cases and 34 deaths, one of the largest outbreaks outside Asia, according to figures published Sunday.

Wealthy Lombardy and Veneto, regions that alone account for some 30 percent of Italy's GDP, have been hit hardest – with 11 towns between them forced into lockdown in a bid to contain the virus.

The government initially expected 0.6 percent growth in 2020, while the European Commission had forecast 0.5 percent. But that was before the virus disrupted manufacturing supply chains, travel and tourism, with airlines cutting flights to northern Italy, trade fairs postponed, sports

events cancelled and employees forced to work from home.


“After Italian GDP contracted sharply in fourth quarter of last year, the coronavirus outbreak spells the near-certainty of a renewed contraction in the first quarter that would leave Italy in a new recession,” says Oxford Economics expert Nicola Nobile .

## IMF likely to downgrade global growth

The fast-spreading coronavirus will have an impact on global economic growth and the International Monetary Fund is likely to downgrade its growth forecast as result, an IMF spokesman said.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva flagged the expected downgraded on Saturday during a meeting of finance officials from the world's 20 largest economies in Riyadh. In a statement, she said the virus outbreak would likely lower China's economic growth this year to 5.6%, down 0.4 percentage point from its January outlook, and shave 0.1 percentage point from global growth.

“We are likely to downgrade our growth projections for the world,” IMF spokesman Gerry Rice told a regular briefing. He added that he had no new numbers beyond those in Georgieva's statement, but said more details would emerge as the IMF prepared to release a new World Economic Outlook in April.

U.S. financial markets took a hit on Thursday, as the rapid spread of the coronavirus outside China intensified fears about the impact on economic growth and corporate earnings. The S&P 500 and Nasdaq are now more than 10% below their intraday record highs hit on Feb. 19, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average is 10% off its Feb.12 peak .

## প্রবৃদ্ধিতে তৃতীয় অবস্থানে থাকবে বাংলাদেশ

জাতিসংঘের বিচারে সারা বিশ্বে যাদের অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি অনেক বেশি হবে তাদের মধ্যে এ বছরও থাকবে বাংলাদেশ। সম্প্রতি সংস্থাটির প্রকাশিত এক প্রতিবেদনে দেখা গেছে, চলতি ২০২০ সাথে বিশ্বে মাত্র দুটি দেশের মোট দেশজ উৎপাদনে (জিডিপি) প্রবৃদ্ধি বাংলাদেশের চেয়ে বেশি হবে। তৃতীয় সর্বচ্চো প্রবৃদ্ধি হবে বাংলাদেশের। জাতিসংঘ চলতি অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের সম্ভাব্য প্রবৃদ্ধি ধরেছে ৭ দশমিক ৮ শতাংশ। যদিও বাংলাদেশের সরকার আশা করছে, এ বছর প্রবৃদ্ধি হবে ৮ দশমিক ২ শতাংশ।

বিশ্ব অর্থনীতির গতিপ্রকৃতি নিয়ে জাতিসংঘ প্রকাশিত 'বৈশ্বিক অর্থনৈতিক পরিস্থিতি ও সম্ভাবনা ২০২০' শীর্ষক প্রতিবেদনে এ সম্ভাবনার কথা বলা হয়েছে। জাতিসংঘের অর্থনৈতিক ও সামাজিক বিভাগ (ইউএন-ডেসা) আফ্রিকা ও জাতিসংঘের পাঁচটি আঞ্চলিক পরিষদের যৌথ উদ্যোগে এ প্রতিবেদন তৈরি করা হয়েছে।

প্রতিবেদনের তথ্য অনুযায়ী, বাংলাদেশের চেয়ে বেশি প্রবৃদ্ধি হবে ক্যারিবিয়ান অঞ্চলের দেশ গায়ানা ও আফ্রিকার দেশ দক্ষিণ সুদানে। গায়ানায় হঠাৎ করেই তেলের উৎপাদন ব্যাপকভাবে বেড়ে গেছে।

বর্তমানে প্রতিদিন এক লাখ ২০ হাজার ব্যারেল তেল উৎপাদন হচ্ছে দেশটিতে। ফলে চলতি বছরে দেশটির অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি ৮০ দশমিক ৬ শতাংশ হবে বলে পূর্বাভাস দিয়েছে জাতিসংঘ। এ ছাড়া দক্ষিণ সুদানের প্রবৃদ্ধি ৮ দশমিক ১ শতাংশ ধরা হয়েছে।

যেসব দেশের ৭ শতাংশের বেশি প্রবৃদ্ধির পূর্বাভাস রয়েছে তাদের মধ্যে ইথিওপিয়ার ৭ দশমিক ৫ শতাংশ, রুয়ান্ডার ৭ দশমিক ৩ শতাংশ, আইভরি কোস্টের ৭ দশমিক ১ শতাংশ ও মালদ্বীপের ৭ দশমিক ১ শতাংশ। প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, বাণিজ্যযুদ্ধের কারণে ২০১৯ সালে বিশ্ব অর্থনীতির প্রবৃদ্ধি কমে দাঁড়িয়েছে ২ দশমিক ৩ শতাংশের। এ বছর তা খানিকটা বেড়ে ২ দশমিক ৫ শতাংশ হতে পারে।

জাতিসংঘের এই প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার কয়েকটি দেশ তুলনামূলক বেশি অগ্রগতি করছে। বাংলাদেশ এর মধ্যে অন্যতম।



২০২০ সালের  
অর্থনৈতিক  
পরিস্থিতি নিয়ে  
পূর্বাভাস

বাংলাদেশ বৈশ্বিক অর্থনৈতিক অস্থিরতার সুযোগ নিয়েছে। পাশাপাশি তৈরি পোশাক শিল্পের বৈশ্বিক চাহিদাকেও কাজে লাগিয়েছে। বাংলাদেশে সর্বশেষ অর্থবছরে ৮ দশমিক ১ শতাংশ অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে, যা ছিল অপ্রত্যাশিত।

বাংলাদেশ এখনও বস্ত্র ও তৈরি পোশাক শিল্প নির্ভরশীল। প্রতিবেদনে আরও বলা হয়, প্রথম লক্ষ্যমাত্রা হচ্ছে এলডিসি দেশগুলোতে অন্তত ৭ শতাংশ অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি অর্জন। এই লক্ষ্যমাত্রা এলডিসি দেশগুলোর মাত্র ১৫ শতাংশ দেশ অর্জন করতে পেরেছে। তার মধ্যে বাংলাদেশ রয়েছে।

প্রতিবেদনে আরও বলা হয়েছে, দক্ষিণ এশিয়া বৈশ্বিক ও অভ্যন্তরীণ কারণে দুর্দশায় আছে। ভারতের অর্থনৈতিক মন্দা এবং পাকিস্তানের অর্থনৈতিক ও রাজনৈতিক সমস্যার কারণে দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার সামগ্রিক অগ্রগতি কিছুটা বাধাগ্রস্ত হবে। তবে এ অঞ্চলে বাংলাদেশ, ভূটান, মালদ্বীপ ও নেপালে শক্তিশালী অগ্রগতি হবে বলে মনে করছে জাতিসংঘ। দক্ষিণ এশিয়ায় খাদ্যপণ্যের দাম বৃদ্ধি ও জ্বালানি তেলের বাজারে অস্থিরতার কারণে মূলক্ষীতি বাড়বে। জলবায়ুর পরিবর্তন বড় ঝুঁকি হিসেবে দেখছে জাতিসংঘ।

সংস্থাটি বলছে, এই অঞ্চলের দেশগুলোতে মৎস্য আহরণ, কৃষি উৎপাদন ও ভৌগোলিক কাঠামোতে পরিবর্তন আসবে। এতে শ্রম উৎপাদনশীলতা কমে গিয়ে বৈষম্য বাড়বে। বাংলাদেশ এই ঝুঁকির বাইরে নয়। বাংলাদেশের ৩০ ভাগ তরুণ জনগোষ্ঠীর কর্মসংস্থানের শিক্ষা

ও প্রশিক্ষণ নেই। এদের বয়স ২৪-৩৪ বছরের মধ্যে।

২০১৯ অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে ৮ দশমিক ১৫ শতাংশ। বিশ্বব্যাংকের গ্লোবাল ইকোনমিক প্রসপেক্টাসে চলতি অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের জিডিপি প্রবৃদ্ধি ৭ দশমিক ২ শতাংশ হবে বলে প্রক্ষেপণ করা হয়েছে।

বিশ্বব্যাংক বলছে, সামগ্রিক অর্থনীতির সবল কাঠামো, রাজনৈতিক স্থিতিশীলতা, সরকারের বড় অবকাঠামো প্রকল্পের বাস্তবায়ন এবং ব্যবসার পরিবেশ উন্নয়ন চলমান সংস্কারের কারণে ২০১৯-২০ অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের ৭ শতাংশের বেশি অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি হবে।

### অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধ রফতানিতে ঋণাত্মক প্রবৃদ্ধি অব্যাহত

চলতি অর্থবছরের দ্বিতীয় মাস থেকে প্রবৃদ্ধির যে নেতিবাচক ধারা চালু হয়েছিল, প্রথম ছয় মাস শেষেও তা কাটিয়ে ওঠা যায়নি। অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধে (জুলাই-ডিসেম্বর) বিশ্ববাজারে ১ হাজার ৯৩০ কোটি ২১ লাখ ৬০ হাজার ডলারের পণ্য রফতানি করেছে বাংলাদেশ। গত অর্থবছরের একই সময়ে রফতানি হয়েছিল ২ হাজার ৪৯ কোটি ৯৮ লাখ ৭০ হাজার ডলারের পণ্য।

অর্থাৎ গত অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধের তুলনায় চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধে রফতানি কমেছে ১১৯ কোটি ৭৭ লাখ ১০ হাজার ডলার বা ৫

দশমিক ৮৪ শতাংশ। জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ডের (এনবিআর) তথ্যের ভিত্তিতে হালনাগাদ রফতানি পরিসংখ্যান প্রকাশ করেছে রপ্তানী উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো (ইপিবি)। ইপিবির হিসাবে চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধে রফতানি কমেছে ৫ দশমিক ৮৪ শতাংশ। অর্থবছরের প্রথম দুই মাসে রফতানির নেতিবাচক প্রবৃদ্ধির এ ধারা শুরু হয়, প্রথমার্ধ শেষেও যা অব্যাহত আছে।

গত পাঁচ অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধের রফতানি পরিসংখ্যান বিশ্লেষণে দেখা যায়, প্রতিবছরই ইতিবাচক প্রবৃদ্ধির ধারায় ছিল রফতানি। ২০১৫-১৬ অর্থবছরের প্রথম ছয় মাস শেষে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ৭ দশমিক ৮৪ শতাংশ। ২০১৬-১৭-তে প্রবৃদ্ধি হলেও তা আগের অর্থবছরের চেয়ে কমে হয় ৪ দশমিক ৪৪ শতাংশ। ২০১৭-১৮-তে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয় ৭ দশমিক ১৫ শতাংশ।

২০১৮-১৯ অর্থবছরে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয় দুই অংকের, ১৪ দশমিক ৪২ শতাংশ। সর্বশেষ চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ঋণাত্মক ৫ দশমিক ৮৪ শতাংশ।

চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথম মাসে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ইতিবাচক। জুলাইয়ে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ৮ দশমিক ৫৫ শতাংশ। জুলাই-আগস্ট দুই মাসে শুরু হয় নেতিবাচক ধারা। ওই দুই মাসে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ঋণাত্মক শূন্য দশমিক ৯২ শতাংশ। তিন মাস শেষে প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ঋণাত্মক ৭ দশমিক ৫৯ শতাংশ। জুলাই থেকে অক্টোবর পর্যন্ত সময়ে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ঋণাত্মক ৬ দশমিক ৮২ শতাংশ।

অর্থবছরের পাঁচ মাস শেষেও রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল নেতিবাচক। জুলাই থেকে নভেম্বর পর্যন্ত

সময়ে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে ঋণাত্মক ৭ দশমিক ৫৯ শতাংশ।

রফতানি খাতের শীর্ষ তিন পণ্য হলো পোশাক, চামড়া ও চামড়াজাত এবং পাট ও পাটজাত পণ্য। অর্থবছরের ছয় মাসের পরিসংখ্যান বলছে, পাট ও পাটজাত পণ্যের রফতানি বাড়লেও কমেছে পোশাক এবং চামড়া ও চামড়াজাত পণ্যের রফতানি।

তবে দেশের মোট রফতানির ৮৪ শতাংশ অবদান রাখা পণ্য পোশাকের রফতানি কমার প্রভাব পড়েছে সামগ্রিক রফতানিতে।

ইপিবির পরিসংখ্যান অনুযায়ী, চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথমার্ধে পাট ও পাটজাত পণ্যের রফতানি বেড়েছে ২১ দশমিক ৫৫ শতাংশ। চামড়াজাত পণ্যের রফতানি কমেছে ১০ দশমিক ৬১ শতাংশ। এদিকে প্রধান পণ্য পোশাক চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথম ছয় মাসে রফতানি হয়েছিল ১ হাজার ৬০২ কোটি ৪০ লাখ ১০ হাজার ডলারের।

গত অর্থবছরের একই সময়ে রফতানি হয় ১ হাজার ৭০৮ কোটি ৪৯ লাখ ২০ হাজার ডলারের পোশাক। এ হিসেবে পোশাক রফতানি কমেছে ৬ দশমিক ২১ শতাংশ।

মাসভিত্তিক রফতানি পরিসংখ্যান অনুযায়ী, চলতি বছরের আগস্ট থেকে নভেম্বর পর্যন্ত রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধির নেতিবাচক ধারা অব্যাহত ছিল। এ সময়ে যথাক্রমে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ঋণাত্মক ১১ দশমিক ৪৯, ৭ দশমিক ৩, ১৭ দশমিক ১৯ ও ১০ দশমিক ৭০ শতাংশ। ডিসেম্বরে রফতানি প্রবৃদ্ধি কিছুটা ইতিবাচক ধারায় ফিরে হয়েছে ২ দশমিক ৮৯ শতাংশ।

## বস্ত্র-পোশাক রফতানিতে ১% বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তা ঘোষণা

টেরিটাওয়াল ও স্পেশালাইজড টেক্সটাইলের মতো বস্ত্রজাত সামগ্রী ও তৈরি পোশাক রফতানিতে ১ শতাংশ হারে বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তার ঘোষণা দিয়েছে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক। ২০১৯-২০ অর্থবছর থেকে জাহাজীকৃত পণ্যের ক্ষেত্রে এ সুবিধা মিলবে বলে জানিয়েছে কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংক।

সরকারি বাজেট বরাদ্দের বিপরীতে ছাড়কৃত তহবিল থেকে বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তা বাবদ দাখিলকৃত আবেদনের বিপরীতে সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যাংকের অনুকূলে এ অর্থ প্রদান করা হবে। সম্প্রতি এ-সংক্রান্ত নীতিমালা প্রজ্ঞাপন আকারে জারি করা হয়েছে।

প্রজ্ঞাপনে বলা হয়, বস্ত্র খাতে নগদ সহায়তা সুবিধা ও ডিউটি ড্র-ব্যাক, বন্ড সুবিধা সমানভাবে গ্রহণ না করার শর্ত প্রযোজ্য হবে না। ইইউ (ইউরোপিয়ান ইউনিয়ন), যুক্তরাষ্ট্র ও কানাডায় রফতানির ক্ষেত্রে বিশেষায়িত অঞ্চলে (ইপিজেড, স্পেশাল জোন-ইজেড) অবস্থিত টাইপ-সি (দেশীয় মালিকানাধীন) প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্যও এ সুবিধা প্রযোজ্য হবে।

নিজস্ব কারখানায় উৎপাদিত তৈরি পোশাক, বস্ত্রজাত সামগ্রী রফতানির ক্ষেত্রে নিট এফওবি মূল্যের ওপর ১ শতাংশ হারে উৎপাদনকারী-রফতানিকারক বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তা প্রাপ্য হবে বলে প্রজ্ঞাপনে উল্লেখ করা হয়।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের বৈদেশিক মুদ্রানীতি বিভাগের মহাব্যবস্থাপক মোহাম্মদ খুরশীদ ওয়াহাব স্বাক্ষরিত প্রজ্ঞাপনে নগদ সহায়তা প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে অনিয়ম হলে শাস্তিমূলক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের কথা জানানো হয়।

এতে বলা হয়, বিধিবিহীনভাবে বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তা পরিশোধ করা হলে পরিশোধিত অর্থ বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সঙ্গে রক্ষিত পরিশোধকারী ব্যাংকের হিসাব বিকলন পূর্বক আদায় করা হবে। সংঘটিত অনিয়মের সঙ্গে জড়িত ব্যাংক কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারীদের বিরুদ্ধে উপযুক্ত শাস্তিমূলক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।



## ২০১৯ সালে মূল্যক্ষীতি বেড়ে ৫.৫৯%, বিবিএসের পরিসংখ্যান

২০১৯ সালে মূল্যক্ষীতি বা জিনিসপত্রের দাম বৃদ্ধির হার আগের বছরের চেয়ে বেড়েছে। গেল বছর জানুয়ারি থেকে ডিসেম্বর পর্যন্ত গড় মূল্যক্ষীতি হয়েছে ৫ দশমিক ৫৯ শতাংশ। ২০১৮ সালে গড় মূল্যক্ষীতি ছিল ৫ দশমিক ৫৫ শতাংশ।

তবে গেল ডিসেম্বরে পয়েন্ট টু পয়েন্ট ভিত্তিতে মূল্যক্ষীতির হার আগের মাসের চেয়ে কমেছে। ডিসেম্বরে মূল্যক্ষীতি দাঁড়িয়েছে ৫ দশমিক ৭৩ শতাংশ, যা নভেম্বরে ছিল ৬ দশমিক শূন্য ৫ শতাংশ। নভেম্বরে মূল্যক্ষীতি ছিল গত বছরের মধ্যে সবচেয়ে বেশি। সম্প্রতি পরিকল্পনা কমিশনে একনেক বৈঠক শেষে আয়োজিত সংবাদ সম্মেলনে মূল্যক্ষীতির সর্বশেষ এ পরিসংখ্যান তুলে ধরেন পরিকল্পনামন্ত্রী এম এ মান্নান।

ডিসেম্বরে খাদ্য সূচকে মূল্যক্ষীতি হয়েছে ৫ দশমিক ৮৮ শতাংশ। নভেম্বরে এ সূচকে মূল্যক্ষীতি ছিল ৬ দশমিক ৪১ শতাংশ। তবে খাদ্যপণ্যে কমলেও খাদ্যবহির্ভূত পণ্যে মূল্যক্ষীতি কিছুটা বেড়েছে। খাদ্যবহির্ভূত সূচকে ডিসেম্বরে মূল্যক্ষীতির হার দাঁড়িয়েছে ৫ দশমিক ৫৫ শতাংশ, যা নভেম্বরে ছিল ৫ দশমিক ৪৭ শতাংশ। পয়েন্ট টু পয়েন্ট মূল্যক্ষীতি হচ্ছে আগের বছরের নির্দিষ্ট কোনো মাসের ভোক্তা মূল্যসূচকের তুলনায় পরের বছর একই মাসে ওই সূচক যতটুকু বাড়ে তার শতকরা হার। অন্যদিকে ১২ মাসের পয়েন্ট টু পয়েন্ট মূল্যক্ষীতির গড় হিসাব করা হয়ে থাকে **r**

## রপ্তানিতে নগদ সহায়তায় উৎসে কর কমলো

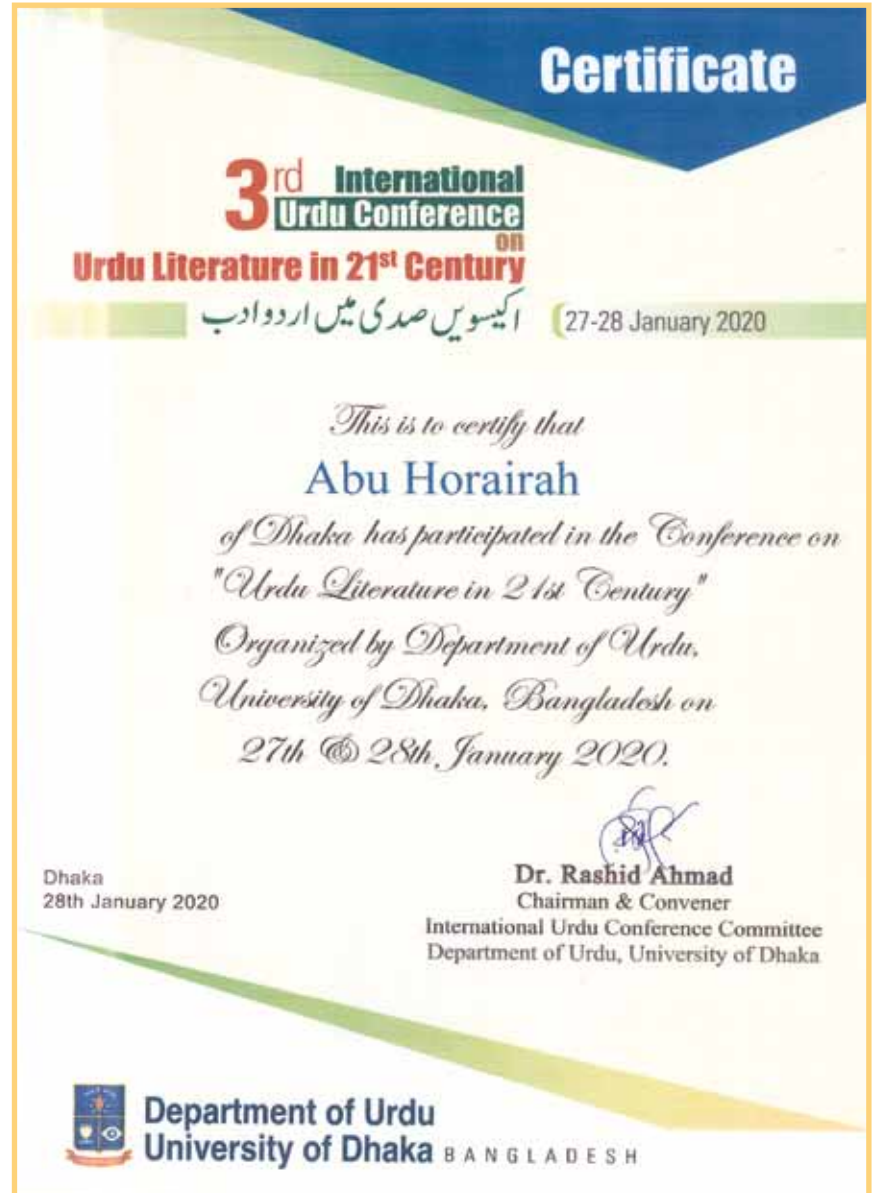
রপ্তানি আয় কমে যাওয়ায় এ খাতকে উজ্জীবিত করতে বিভিন্ন উদ্যোগ নিচ্ছে সরকার। এর অংশ হিসেবে এবার রপ্তানিতে নগদ সহায়তায় উৎসে কর কমিয়ে অর্ধেক করা হয়েছে। আগে রপ্তানিতে নগদ সহায়তার ওপর ১০ শতাংশ হারে উৎসে কর কাটা হতো। এখন এটি কমিয়ে ৫ শতাংশ করা হয়েছে। আগামী ছয় মাস এ সুবিধা বহাল থাকবে বলে সম্প্রতি অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগের (আইআরডি) এক প্রজ্ঞাপনে বলা হয়েছে। ওই দিন থেকে এ সিদ্ধান্ত কার্যকর হয়েছে। উৎসে কর কমানোর এ সিদ্ধান্ত রপ্তানিতে প্রতিযোগিতা সক্ষমতা বাড়াবে এবং আয়ে ইতিবাচক প্রভাব ফেলবে বলে মনে করছে সরকার। রপ্তানি উৎসাহিত করতে রপ্তানি আয়ের বিপরীতে নগদ সহায়তা দিয়ে আসছে সরকার। পোশাকসহ

বর্তমানে ২০ খাত প্রযোজ্য হারে প্রণোদনা সুবিধা পাচ্ছে। তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানিকারক মালিকদের সংগঠন বিজিএমইএ অভ্যন্তরীণ ও আন্তর্জাতিক পরিস্থিতি তুলে ধরে এনবিআরের কাছে নগদ সহায়তার ওপর থেকে কর আরোপ প্রত্যাহার চেয়ে আবেদন করে। এতে বলা হয়, প্রণোদনা দেওয়ার পরও বিশ্ববাজারে প্রতিযোগিতায় টিকে থাকা কঠিন হয়ে পড়েছে পোশাক খাতের। নগদ সহায়তায় মাত্রাতিরিক্ত কর আরোপ করায় এ খাতে খরচ বেড়ে গেছে। এ অবস্থায় নগদ সহায়তার ওপর কর সম্পূর্ণ প্রত্যাহারের

দাবি জানান তারা। পরে অর্থমন্ত্রীর সঙ্গে আলোচনার পর তা অর্ধেক করার সিদ্ধান্ত নেয় এনবিআর।

চলতি বছরের ৩০ জুন পর্যন্ত তা কার্যকর থাকবে। আগে নগদ সহায়তার ওপর উৎসে কর কাটা হতো ৩ শতাংশ। চলতি অর্থবছরে এটি বাড়িয়ে ১০ শতাংশ করা হয়। রপ্তানি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরোর (ইপিবি) তথ্য অনুযায়ী, চলতি অর্থবছরের ডিসেম্বর পর্যন্ত আগের বছরের একই সময়ের তুলনায় রপ্তানি আয় কমেছে প্রায় ৬ শতাংশ **r**

## MEMBERS' CORNER



\* Mr. Abu Horairah, is a member of DCCI and former Vice President.

## TRADE INFORMATION

10

January 2020

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

### FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS

#### Smap Expo Paris

Date: 29 May-01 June, 2020  
 Venue: Paris Expo Porte de Versailles, Paris, France  
 Organizer: Smap Events & Exhibitions Fz Llc  
 E-mail: info@smap.ae  
 Website: www.smapgroup.com/-PARIS-SMAPIMMO-.html

#### Plastic Closure Innovations

Date: 01 June-03 June, 2020  
 Venue: Melia Sitges, Sitges, Spain  
 Organizer: Applied Market Information Ltd.  
 E-mail: info@ami.international  
 Website: www.ami.international

#### Guangzhou International Lighting Exhibition

Date: 09 June-12 June, 2020  
 Venue: China Import and Export Fair(Canton Fair Complex), Guangzhou, China  
 Organizer: Oliver Kinross Ltd  
 Contact Person: Ms. Scarlet Mak  
 Mob: +85222389969  
 E-mail: light@china.messefrankfurt.com  
 Website: www.guangzhou-international-lighting-exhibition.hk.messefrankfurt.com

#### International Trade Fair of Organic Products and Agroecology

Date: 17 June-20 June, 2020  
 Venue: Anhembi Exhibition Park, São Paulo, Brazil  
 Organizer: Franca Feiras  
 E-mail: supervisao@musttour.com.br  
 Website: www.biobrazilfair.com.br

#### Africa's Big 7

Date: 21 June-23 June, 2020  
 Venue: Gallagher Convention Centre Johannesburg, South Africa  
 Organizer: dmg :: ems (Africa)  
 Contact Person: Sales Manager  
 E-mail: DaleMagaya@dmgevents.com  
 Website: www.africabig7.com

#### Texworld USA

Date: 21 Jul-23 Jul, 2020  
 Venue: Texworld USA  
 Organizer: Messe Frankfurt Inc.

Contact Person: Ms. Abbe Alexander, Junior Sales Manager  
 Mob: +1 6787322433  
 E-mail: abbe.alexander@usa.messefrankfurt.com  
 Website: www.texworld-usa.us.messefrankfurt.com

#### Malaysian International Food & Beverage Trade Fair

Date: 22 Jul-24 Jul, 2020  
 Venue: Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
 Organizer: Sphere Exhibits Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.  
 Contact Person: Mr. Peishan  
 E-mail: peishan@sphereexhibits.com.my  
 Website: www.mifb.com.my/myfoodtech

#### International Tourism & Travel Show

Date: 06 Nov-08 Nov, 2020  
 Venue: Place Bonaventure, Montreal, Canada  
 Organizer: Expo Media Inc  
 E-mail: info@expomediainc.com  
 Website: www.salontourismevoyages.com

#### International Apparel & Textile Fair

Date: 16 Nov-18 Nov, 2020  
 Venue: Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE  
 Organizer: Nihalani Events UAE  
 Contact Person: Ms. Sonia, Project Manager  
 E-mail: sonia@internationaltextilefair.com  
 Website: www.internationalappareltextilefair.com

#### The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

Date: 06 Nov-15 Nov, 2020  
 Venue: Exhibition Place, Toronto, Canada  
 Organizer: The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair Canada  
 Contact Person: Ms. Janet Scott  
 E-mail: jscott@royalfair.org  
 Website: www.royalfair.org

#### India International Trade Fair

Date: 14 Nov-27 Nov, 2020  
 Venue: Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, India  
 Organizer: India Trade Promotion Organization  
 Contact Person: Ms. Hema Maity  
 E-mail: hemamaity@itpo.gov.in  
 Website: www.indiatradefair.com

## Share Market Intelligence (as on 30 January, 2020)

### Top 5 Turnover Leaders

Dhaka Stock Exchange				Chittagong Stock Exchange			
Company	Close Price	% Ø Price	Turnover (BDT mn)	Company	Close Price	% Ø Price	Turnover (BDT mn)
BATBC	915.40	-5.39	582.37	ORIONPHARM	34.80	-9.61	69.28
SQURPHARMA	173.30	-7.03	161.68	BEXIMCO	13.50	-7.53	69.00
GP	250.10	-5.87	138.59	KPCL	43.50	-9.75	68.22
LHBL	36.30	-9.48	127.58	BEACONPHAR	57.60	-10.00	66.44
SEAPEARL	72.90	-0.82	105.44	KPPL	18.80	-9.62	61.69

### Top 5 Market Capitals

Dhaka Stock Exchange				Chittagong Stock Exchange			
Company	Close Price	% Ø Price	Turnover (BDT mn)	Company	Close Price	% Ø Price	Turnover (BDT mn)
GP	250.10	-5.87	337,710	GP	252.60	-3.99	341,086
BATBC	915.40	-5.39	164,772	BATBC	910.70	-6.04	163,926
SQURPHARMA	173.30	-7.03	146,307	SQURPHARMA	174.70	-5.47	147,489
UPGDCL	226.30	-5.40	119,206	UPGDCL	221.80	-7.20	116,888
RENATA	1021.30	-3.87	90,476	BERGERPBL	1,311.70	-3.32	60,834

## Share Market Intelligence (as on 30 January, 2020)

Currency	Buying	Selling
US\$	86.20	87.00
EUR	94.20	97.00
GBP	110.20	113.60
AUD	59.00	61.00
YEN	0.75	0.77
Saudi Riyal	22.50	23.20
S'pore\$	62.65	64.00

Source : The Financial Express & The New Age



DCCI President Shams Mahmud (second from right) presenting DCCI's publication 'Commercial History of Dhaka (Bangla Version)' to Principal Secretary to the Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Ahmad Kaikus (third from right) on January 27. DCCI Senior Vice President N.K.A. Mobin, FCA, FCS (second from left), Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (right) and Secretary Md. Joynal Abdin (left) are also seen in the picture.

DCCI President Shams Mahmud (centre), Senior Vice President N K A Mobin, FCA, FCS (fifth from left), Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (seventh from right) and Members of the Board were present at the 2nd Board Meeting of DCCI held on January 25.



DCCI Former Presidents M A Sattar, Mahabubur Rahman, Aftab Ul Islam, FCA, Fazle R M Hasan, FCA, Benajir Ahmed, Abul Kasem Khan, Asif Ibrahim, Osama Taseer, President Shams Mahmud, Senior Vice President N K A Mobin, FCA, FCS and Members of the Board of Directors were present at the Coordination Meeting held on January 25.



*DCCI former President Aftabul Islam, FCA (left) seen administering the oath taking ceremony of the newly elected President Shams Mahmud (right) on January 25.*

*Newly elected President of DCCI Shams Mahmud (third from right) seen administering the oath taking ceremony of the newly elected Members of the Board of Directors on January 25.*



*DCCI President Shams Mahmud (sixth from left), Senior Vice President N.K.A. Mobin, FCA, FCS (fifth from left), Director Andaleeb Hasan (third from left) and former Senior Vice President Kh. Atique-e-Rabbani, FCA (fourth from left) and members of Access to Information (a2i), GoB are seen in a group photo session on January 30.*



DCCI President Shams Mahmud (fifth from right) seen receiving bouquet from 2019 National Executive Vice President of Junior Chamber International Bangladesh (JCI) Sarah Kamal (fifth from left) on January 6. DCCI Senior Vice President N.K.A. Mobin, FCA, FCS (fourth from left) and members of the JCI delegation were present.

DCCI President Shams Mahmud (second from right) seen receiving bouquet from representatives of Shahjalal Islami Bank Securities Limited on January 20.



On behalf of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, its Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (fourth from right), Director Md. Shahid Hossain (fifth from right) and former Vice President Hossain A Sikder (third from right) handed over warm cloths/blankets to the cold-hit people of Keranigonj area of Dhaka District.



*On behalf of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry warm cloths/blankets were distributed to the distressed rickshaw puller in Dhaka city by its Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (seventh from right) and former Vice President Hossain A Sikder (sixth from right).*

*DCCI President Shams Mahmud (center), Senior Vice President NKA Mobin, FCA, FCS (sixth from right), Vice President Mohammad Bashiruddin (fifth from right), Director S.M. Zillur Rahman (fourth from right) had a meeting with the representatives of Bangladesh Merchant Bankers Association held on January 12.*



*DCCI President Shams Mahmud (right) seen receiving a publication form General Secretary of Economic Reporters Forum (ERF) S M Rashidul Islam (left) on January 6.*

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- 2** Procurement Strategies for Competitiveness • 5,500/- • 03-04 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 3** Finance for Non-Finance Managers • 5,500/- • 10-11 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 4** Documentation for Export & Import Business • 5,500/- • 10-11 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 5** Bangladesh Labour Act as amended upto 2018 and Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015 • 5,500/- • 17-18 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 6** Brand Marketing in the Age of Social Media • 5,500/- • 17-18 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 7** Clearing & Forwarding (C&F) Process Management • 5,500/- • 24-25 April (Friday & Saturday)
- 8** Leadership Development Techniques • 5,500/- • 24-25 April (Friday & Saturday)

**Registration Deadline : at least 3 days before starting date**

**Discount : 10%** for DCCI Members, Women Participants, Graduate Students, 3 or more participants from one organization for same course and Early Bird Package (at least 5 days before deadline)

**Contact :** DBI, 65-66 Motijheel C/A, (11th fl), Dhaka-1000  
**Cell :** 01718-972656, 01913-756587 & 01913-745062  
**Phone :** 9552562 Ext. 281, 124 & 137  
**E-mail :** dbi@dhakachamber.com  
**Website :** www.dcci-dbi.edu.bd

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