

# NEWS BULLETIN

We make business work for everyone, everyday, everywhere

A Quarterly Newsletter of ICC Bangladesh

Volume 26 > Issue 103

July-September 2023



**Climate resilient agriculture  
for sustainable development**

## About ICC Bangladesh

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), *The world business organization*, with its headquarters in Paris, celebrated its Centenary world over in 2019. ICC, with physical presence in more than 100 countries, represents 45 million companies and more than 1 billion workers worldwide. One in every three worker depend on ICC Members for their livelihood.

ICC was founded in 1919 in the aftermath of the First World War when no world system of rules governed trade, investment, finance or commercial relations. ICC's founders, referred to as "The Merchants of Peace", acted on their conviction that building stronger trade relations between nations would reduce the risk of war and armed conflict. ICC, is the largest and the only private sector non-sovereign organization, which was granted Status of a Permanent Observer at the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 2016.

ICC works in close cooperation with national governments and multi-national institutions such as G-8/G-20, World Bank, WTO, Asian Development Bank, UNCTAD, OECD and several UN agencies for promotion, protection and development of world economy.

Bangladesh National Committee of ICC, founded in 1994, is comprised of trade organizations, national and trans-national corporations, who represent almost 80% Bangladesh economy.

The activities of ICC Bangladesh include promotion of foreign trade and investment, trade policy reviews, business dialogues, seminars & workshops both at home and abroad on related policy issues, harmonization of trade law & rules, legal reforms, updating businesses with the ICC rules & standards for cross border business transactions. ICC Bangladesh has so far organized following regional & international conferences.

- 10-11 November 2000: ICC Asia Conference on "[Investment in Developing Countries: Increasing Opportunities](#)" organized in Dhaka was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and attended by a number of high profile dignitaries including the Thai Deputy Prime Minister & WTO Director General Designate, ADB President, UN-ESCAP Executive Secretary and Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Trade & Economic Cooperation. More than 250 participants from 24 countries participated in this event.
- 17-18 January 2004: International Conference on "[Global Economic Governance and Challenges of Multilateralism](#)" was held in Dhaka, coinciding with 10th Anniversary of ICC Bangladesh. The Conference was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Thai Prime Minister was the Keynote Speaker. WTO Director General, EU Commissioner for Trade, UNESCAP Executive Secretary, Governor of Japan Bank for International Cooperation, six Ministers from three continents, Bangladesh Ministers, ICC Chairman, ICC Vice Chairman, ICC Secretary General and more than 500 participants from 38 countries attended this event.
- 27-28 September 2005: Regional Seminar on "[Capital Market Development: Asian Experience](#)". The Seminar held in Dhaka was inaugurated by the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and attended by Chairmen/CEOs of securities & exchange commissions, stock exchanges, capital market operators, financial institutions and investors from 15 Asian countries.
- 13 April 2010: Conference on "[Energy for Growth](#)" was held in Dhaka coinciding with the 15 years of ICC's presence in Bangladesh. The Conference was inaugurated by the Finance Minister of Bangladesh and attended by ICC Global Chairman, Minister for Commerce of Bangladesh, Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark and Adviser to the Bangladesh Prime Minister for Energy & Mineral Resources. Some 800 delegates from home and abroad including energy experts and international financiers from Australia, China, Denmark, India, Germany, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, UK and USA attended the event.
- 25-26 October 2014: International Conference on "[Global Economic Recovery: Asian Perspective](#)", was in held in Dhaka coinciding with the 20 years of ICC's presence in Bangladesh. The Conference was inaugurated by the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Minister for Finance & Minister for Commerce of Bangladesh, UNCTAD Secretary General, Ministers from Myanmar and Nepal; ICC Vice Chairman; ICC Secretary General; ICC Research Foundation Chairman; Director of ICC National Committees and more than 500 participants attended this event.
- 8-9 February 2017 : The first ever "[UNESCAP Asia Pacific Business Forum: Regional Integration to Achieve Sustainable Development](#)" was organized by ICC Bangladesh jointly with UNESCAP under the patronage of the Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh. The Forum was inaugurated by the Hon'ble President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Ministers from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, UNESCAP Under Secretary General, UNCTAD Secretary General, business leaders and some 600 delegates from home and abroad attended the Forum.
- 10-12 December 2019 : "[The Asia Pacific Conference on Financing inclusive and Sustainable Development](#)" was organized by ICC Bangladesh jointly with UNESCAP, ADB and LIBF (The London Institute of Banking & Finance) under the patronage of the Financial Institutions Division (FID), Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh to celebrate 100 years of ICC and 25 years of ICC Bangladesh. The Hon'ble President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh inaugurated the Conference. Video Messages from UN Secretary General Mr. AntónioGuterres and 8th former United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban-Ki moon were also played during the inauguration. Ministers from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Maldives and Sri Lanka, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Central Bank Governors, Business Leaders, Policy Makers, Experts and some 800 delegates from home and 30 foreign countries attended the Conference.

As part of its activities, ICC Bangladesh has been organizing Workshops/ Seminars on International Trade Finance, mainly for bankers, within Bangladesh and in various countries. Since 2014, the National Committee has organized workshops in Kuala Lumpur (April 2014); in Colombo (February 2015); in Kunming (August 2015); in Yangon (November 2015); in Hanoi (April 2016); in Bangkok (December 2017) and in Phnom Penh (April 2018).

The National Committee also arranged participation of Bankers from Bangladesh at ICC Annual Banking Meetings held in Singapore (April 2015), in Jakarta (April 2017) and in Beijing (April 2019). Besides, ICC Bangladesh arranged participation of Bankers at ICC Austria Global Trade Conference held in Vienna in May 2017, June 2018 and May 2019, FCI Annual Meeting in Vietnam (June 2019), ICC Academy 8th Supply Chain Summit in Singapore (February 2019), International Financial Crime Forum in Kuala Lumpur (July 2019), World Conference on Banking Institutions (WCBI) organized by London Institute of Banking and Finance (LIBF) in London (September 2019), ICC 12th World Chambers Congress in Dubai (November 2021) and ICC Global Trade Facilitation Summit in Dubai (March 2022), Webinar on ICC Court Centenary (March 2023).

For professional development of bankers, ICC Bangladesh also organizes Certified Documentary Credit Specialist (CDCS) and Certificate for Specialists in Demand Guarantees (CSDG) Examinations in Dhaka, conducted worldwide every year by LIBF (London Institute of Banking and Finance) and endorsed by ICC Paris.

ICC Bangladesh participates at World Chambers Congress of ICC and World Chambers Federation (WCF), ICC World Council, WTO Ministerial Meetings, Meetings of ICC Permanent Heads, ICC Banking Commission and ICC Asia Pacific Regional Consultative Group Meetings. The National Committee also arranges visit by Bangladesh Business delegation to different countries for promotion of trade and investment.

### International Chamber of Commerce

**National Secretariat:** ICC Bangladesh, Rangs FC Square (5th Floor), Plot- 6A, Road- 32, Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh. Tel: +8802-58810658-9, +8809639112021, Email: [info@iccbangladesh.org.bd](mailto:info@iccbangladesh.org.bd), Website: [www.iccbangladesh.org.bd](http://www.iccbangladesh.org.bd)

**International Headquarters:** ICC, 33-43 Avenue President Wilson, 75116 Paris, France, Tel: +33 1 49 532828, Fax : + 33 1 49 532859, Website: [www.iccwbo.org](http://www.iccwbo.org)



## The Executive Board

### President

**Mahbubur Rahman**

Chairman & CEO, ETBL Holdings

### Vice Presidents

**A. K. Azad**

Managing Director, Ha-Meem Group

**Naser Ezaz Bijoy**

President, FICCI

### Members

**Abdul Hai Sarker**

Chairman, Purbani Group

**Aftab ul Islam**

Chairman, IOE (Bangladesh)

**Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez)**

Managing Director, Evince Group

**Faruque Hassan**

President, BGMEA

**Kutubuddin Ahmed**

Chairman, Envoy Group

**Mahbubul Alam**

President, FBCCI

**Md. Fazlul Hoque**

Managing Director, Plummy Fashions

**Md. Saiful Islam**

President, MCCI

**Md. Sameer Sattar**

President, DCCI

**Mir Nasir Hossain**

Managing Director  
M/S. Mir Akhter Hossain

**Mohammad Ali Khokon**

President, BTMA

**Mohammad Hatem**

Executive President, BKMEA

**Omar Hazzaz**

President, CCCI

**Sheikh Kabir Hossain**

President, BIA

**Simeen Rahman**

CEO, Transcom Group

**Tapan Chowdhury**

Managing Director, Square Group

### Editor

**Ataur Rahman**

Secretary General

### Editorial Associate

**Syeda Shahnewaz Lotika**

Deputy General Manager

## Contents

ICC Bangladesh News	2
ICC HQs News	13
Bangladesh Economy	18
Global/Regional News	36
WTO News	45

## Editor's Note

### Climate resilient agriculture for sustainable development

Climate change reduces agricultural productivity and leads to greater instability in crop production, disrupting the global food supply and resulting in food and nutritional insecurity. Climate change increases the risk for the most vulnerable countries and people by affecting livelihoods and income in rural areas; marine, coastal terrestrial and inland ecosystems.

The negative impacts of climate change are already being felt, in the form of increasing temperatures, weather variability, shifting agro-ecosystem boundaries, invasive crops and pests, and more frequent extreme weather events.

Agriculture is a major part of the climate problem. Climate change is reducing crop yields, the nutritional quality of major cereals, and lowering livestock productivity. The most significant adaptation investment is needed in agriculture. Agriculture is highly sensitive to temperature changes and extreme weather events, so even a limited temperature rise (1.5°C) will have a big impact.

According to World Bank 2020 Report nearly 690 million people-or 8.9 percent of the global population-are hungry, up by nearly 60 million in five years. The food security challenge will only become more difficult, as the world will need to produce about 70 percent more food by 2050 to feed an estimated 9 billion people.

According to ADB, climate change is already impacting markedly on agriculture and food production in developing countries of Asia and the Pacific. Rising temperatures, flooding rivers, melting glaciers, and other extreme weather events will greatly challenge regional food security. Climate change will place an additional burden on the region, which can easily undermine development and impair progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Overall, the world has made little progress in providing safe, nutritious, and adequate food for all. Conflict, climate change, extreme weather events and economic slowdowns are the biggest obstacles to progress, especially in regions with high levels of inequality. The gap is widening due to COVID-19 pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war.

Food system sustainability can be addressed by adopting sustainable agricultural systems, shifting the focus to sustainable diets, and finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at different levels of the food production supply chain.

The agriculture sector is one of the key economic pillars of Bangladesh. Its share of GDP in FY22 was 11.50 percent. The farming sector has individually employed around 41 percent of the people, either directly or indirectly. Given the current trajectory, the rapidly changing climate conditions will trigger annual GDP losses, in the range of 1 to 2%. According to analysts agricultural productivity in Bangladesh remains the lowest among nearby countries in South Asia and beyond.

However, Bangladesh is responsible for only 0.4 percent to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which is insignificant compare to other mega industrial economies, but Bangladesh is high on the list of countries most vulnerable to climate change. High population density, poverty and reliance on climate-sensitive sectors for water and food security, particularly water resources, agriculture, fisheries and livestock, increase its vulnerability to climate change.

According to a recent study by Standard Chartered Bank, the critical need for adaptation investment in 10 of its markets, where action matters most are : Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, UAE and Vietnam. These markets across Asia and Africa are being disproportionately impacted by the physical risks of climate change, but also have the greatest opportunities to build this new economy.

The report reveals that, by investing USD1.2 billion in adaptation by 2030, Bangladesh could prevent projected damages and lost GDP growth of USD11.6 billion – nearly 10 times that amount. According to the study, without a minimum investment of USD30 billion, the 10 featured markets face projected damages and lost GDP growth of USD377 billion.

Therefore, promoting the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices for Bangladesh is crucial to improve smallholder farmers' capacity to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact as well as help to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

## ICC Bangladesh News

### Roundtable on Climate Adaptation: Opportunities for Bangladesh in Development of Agro-based Industries

The climate change impact is posing a severe threat to Bangladesh's agriculture as well as to the overall economy. As a result, annual GDP is likely to shrink by 1.0 to 2.0 per cent. Required investment is crucial

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin, M. P. as the Special Guest.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman in his welcome

security due to the loss of arable land (up to 1.75 per cent every year), for education due to the breakdown of school infrastructure, for health due to high salinity and water logging, and for livelihood due to loss of



*Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, M.P. delivering his speech as Chief Guest at the Roundtable held in Dhaka on 2 August.*

as investment of US \$ 1.2 billion within 2030 could save \$11.6 billion by 2030, while the savings will be \$59 billion by 2050. These observations were made by the speakers at the Roundtable on Climate Adaptation: Opportunities for Bangladesh in Development of Agro-based Industries organized jointly by the International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh (ICCB), the Standard Chartered Bank and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Dhaka on 2 August.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman Chaired the Roundtable, while Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, M.P. attended as the Chief Guest,

remarks emphasized on the dynamic expansion of a sustainable agro-processing industry to keep economy as well as agriculture vibrant in a changing climatic condition. He said Bangladesh is responsible for only 0.4 percent to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which is insignificant compared to other mega industrial economies, but Bangladesh is high on the list of countries most vulnerable to climate change.

Given the current trajectory, the rapidly changing climate conditions will trigger annual GDP losses, in the range of 1.0 to 2.0 per cent. Beyond these macro implications, there are lasting consequences for food

income and assets, said Mr Rahman.

He also mentioned that the agricultural exports from Bangladesh have been growing over 18 per cent for the last five years. The global demand for agricultural product is also expected to grow by 15 per cent between 2019-2028 which provides a great opportunity to the Bangladesh processed food industry to expand its exports and help the country in its effort to diversify export, he said.

ICCB President said that International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), HQ in Paris has established Agri-Food Hub (AFH), a collaborative ecosystem within the ICC network, bringing together

businesses, institutions, experts, and academia in the agribusiness sector. It promotes multilateralism, sustainable development, and responsible practices to enhance global trade in the agri-food industry.

Mr. Rahman said that the AFH has been established ICC in partnerships with renowned institutions, including the FAO, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Farmers Organization (WFO), World Food Programme (WFP), and Inter-American Institute for Agriculture Cooperation (IICA). These partnerships further enhance the AFH's ability to facilitate connections and provide valuable resources to its members.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Razzaque, M.P. in his address as Chief Guest, pointed out that a vast area of the country might unfortunately be inundated by sea water within next

food processing industries based on climate sensitive crop-zoning as a core intervention area. "Promotion of mini-processing factories close to the production area, will contribute to building the capacity of our large majority of small holder farm men and women, promote local agri-food value chain development and contribute to lowering the global carbon footprint," said the Minister.

Use of digital technology in all stages of the agri-food value chain from production to post harvest management will help to enhance efficiency. The use of ICT for agriculture and market linkages is being expanded to enable critical flow of information and advisory services to farmers in rural and urban areas for fair price with profit margin, Dr. Razzaque said.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md Shahab Uddin, M. P. in his address as Special Guest

soil health, and reducing the impacts of natural disasters. "Our emphasis on research and technological innovations for agriculture and renewable energy is crucial in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change." "Incorporating agroforestry practices into our agricultural landscape can promote resilience and sustainability," he added.

The environment minister said the National Adaptation Plan emphasizes the importance of private sector engagement in agriculture and food systems, research and technological innovations for agriculture and renewable energy, agroforestry, agro-met forecasting and resilient infrastructure.

As the country moves forward, a close collaboration among the private sector, civil society, and international development partners



ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman delivering his welcome address at the Roundtable held in Dhaka on 2 August.

few decades. He said the National Adaptation Plan of Bangladesh 2023-2050 lists development of agro

said agroforestry plays an essential role in climate adaptation by promoting biodiversity, enhancing

to achieve climate adaptation goals is essential, the Environment Minister added.



Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, Chief executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank, in his welcome address said it is critical for the world to come together to contain the temperature increase to 1.5 Celsius and also adopt net zero transition plan to address the impact of climate change. “But we need to prepare ourselves, as the impact will be on our shores.”

Two approaches to address climate change are mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation addresses the causes of the climate change and adaptation addresses the impact. Mitigation reduces the emission (Energy efficiency/ renewable/ Electric Vehicles/ Circularity/ emission tax etc) while Adaptation reduces vulnerability, secured infrastructure/cyclone shelter/re-forestation/flexible agriculture, said SCB CEO.

While mitigation is being widely talked about, adaptation is less talked about topic. That does not mean that Government of Bangladesh is not doing work on adaptation, on the contrary - Bangladesh has been highly respected for Govt's disaster response preparedness especially against cyclone shelters in coastal areas and also response to flood. But time has come that this requires public private partnership, because need is not only significant but also changing, he added.

SCB CEO said, “As per the government's National Adaptation Plan, the funding required in this area is USD 230 billion. This investment cannot be done by the government and multilaterals alone. There is need for close partnership with the private sector, and also the capital market to leverage this and ensure that we have adequate funding early, to have the biggest the benefit of that. That's why I think it is important we have this conversation now, so that we can address future problems ahead of time.”

Acting Representative of FAO Mr. Nur Khondaker delivering his welcome address said stepping up from subsistence agriculture, Bangladesh is desperately looking for entering into the commercialization stage of agriculture transformation. “There are multiple routes for that, where sustainable agro-based industry development is essential, and agro-processing is one of these.” He also said that FAO is supporting the Ministry of Agriculture on development of this sector. ‘Strategic roadmap of agro-processing sector development in Bangladesh’ has been drafted through extensive consultation with stakeholders, he added.

Ms. Bitopi Das Chowdhury, Head of Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) Corporate Affairs, Brand and Marketing presented highlights of a study conducted by SCB titled “The Adaptation Economy”, which examined climate change adaptation in key emerging and fast developing markets. The study focused on 10 countries, – Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the UAE and Vietnam.

Ms. Chowdhury mentioned that early investments can provide higher cost avoidance in future. She highlighted the value of early investments for future cost avoidance. She emphasized a dual approach to climate change: reducing carbon emissions for mitigation and adapting to protect against severe weather and biodiversity loss. While finance has focused on mitigation, the Adaptation Economy underscores the neglected importance of adapting to climate realities. The presentation evaluated adaptation investment needs in the 10-emerging markets through an economic model, quantifying inaction's economic cost. According to the study, 10

markets demand attention due to their contributions to the global economy and climate risk. A survey of 150 financiers gauged interest in funding adaptation. Findings stress adaptation's urgency. Failure to invest \$30.4 billion this decade could cost \$376.6 billion by 2030 in these markets. Every \$1 in adaptation generates \$12 in economic benefit on average this decade. \$1.2 billion investments by 2030 could save \$11.6 billion by 2030 and \$59 billion by 2050, said Ms. Bitopi referring to the suggestions made in the SCB study.

Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture Dr. Ruhul Amin Talukder presented the Keynote Paper. He outlined the plan of the Agriculture Ministry for the development of agro-based industries in Bangladesh.

The panel speakers at the Roundtable were: Mr. Md. Khurshid Alam, Executive Director-Bangladesh Bank; Dr. T. S Amjath Babu, Agricultural Economist-CIMMYT; Dr. F.H. Ansarey, Managing Director and CEO - ACI Agrolink Limited, Mr. A.F.M. Asif, CEO -Bengal Meat; Dr. Md. Abdul Kader, Lead National Agronomist at FAO.

The roundtable discussions provided valuable insights into the dire need for collaboration between the public and private sectors to effectively combat the impending climate crisis. Recognizing the interdependence between these sectors, the speakers emphasized the importance of formulating policies that secure the nation's future food security while ensuring economic sustainability. Besides, close collaboration between private and public sectors is also needed to formulate policies to combat the impact for ensuring the country's future food security.

The roundtable was also attended, among others, by ICC Bangladesh

Vice President A. K. Azad and Executive Board Members Abdul Hai Sarker, Kutubuddin Ahmed and Md. Fazlul Hoque, ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman, Green Delta Insurance Company Ltd CEO Farzanah Chowdhury, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Country Director Edimon Ginting, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Resident Representative Jayendu De,

World Bank Senior Environment Specialist EunJoo Allison Yi, CIRDAP Director General Dr. Cherdsak Virapat, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Prasenjit Chakma, IFAD Programme Officer Dr. Shantonu Abe, UNICEF Bangladesh WASH Specialist Raphael Nwozor, BIBM Supernumerary Professor Md. Ahsan Ullah, Pubali Bank Former Managing Director Helal Ahmed

Chowdhury, NCC Bank Managing Director and CEO Mohammad Mamdudur Rashid, Eastern Bank Limited Additional Managing Director Ahmed Shaheen, A.K. Khan and Company Ltd Chief Executive Officer K. A. M. Majedur Rahman, Arlinks Limited Managing Director Imran Faiz Rahman and Nippon Express Bangladesh Managing Director Kazuhiro Kobayakawa.

## Australian High Commissioner discussed bilateral issues with ICC Bangladesh President and Executive Board Members

High Commissioner of Australia to Bangladesh H. E. Mr. Jeremy Bruer attended a meeting with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman and Members of the Executive Board at ICC Bangladesh Secretariat on Wednesday 23 August. The High Commissioner was accompanied by Mr. Duncan Mc Cullough, Second Secretary (Economic & Commercial Diplomacy) and Mr. Mostafizur Rahman, Director, Trade & Investment.

ICC Bangladesh Executive Board Members, namely, Abdul Hai Sarker, Aftab Ul Islam, Anwar-ul-Alam

Chowdhury (Parvez), Mahbubul Alam, Md. Fazlul Hoque, Mir Nasir Hossain, Mohammad Hatem, Naser Ezaz Bijoy, Sheikh Kabir Hossain and Simeen Rahman; Former DCCI President A. K. Khan, ICC Bangladesh Banking Commission Chairman & BIAC Vice Chairman Muhammad A (Rume) Ali, ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman and CEO of Bangladesh International Arbitration Centre (BIAC) Kaiser A Chowdhury attended the meeting.

ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman, welcoming High Commissioner Mr. Bruer said

that bilateral trade has grown six times over the past decade, reaching to US\$2 billion. However, he pointed out that Bangladesh has immense opportunity to increase its export as Australia's total annual imports is US\$275 billion.

He mentioned that Bangladesh exports readymade garment (RMG), home textile, leather and leather goods, footwear, jute and jute goods, pharmaceuticals, frozen foods, crustaceans and plastics items etc. to Australia. On the contrary, Bangladesh's import items from Australia are agricultural products (cotton, wheat, edible vegetables,



H. E. Mr. Jeremy Bruer, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh attended a meeting with ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman and Members of the Executive Board at ICCB Secretariat Gulshan on Wednesday 23 August.

oilseeds, lentil and pulses), minerals and metals (copper, zinc, lead), milk cream and other dairy products, scraps and other industrial raw materials. As Australia has assured the continuity of duty free facility for Bangladesh's exports even after graduation out of LDC in 2026, there is ample scope for increasing export to Australia. Mr. Rahman mentioned about a 18 member delegation led by him to attend the World Chambers Council held in Sydney on September 2017. The Delegation also held a meeting with Austrade and discussed about opportunities for expansion of trade and investment between the two countries.

ICCB President said that exploration and production of natural gas both on shore and off-shore have attracted many international oil companies. Currently 12 of the country's 23 exploration and production blocs are operated jointly by global concerns. In this regard he referred the investment by Santos, an Australian Oil and Gas Company in this sector and hoped that more Australian companies would consider investing in exploration of natural resources in Bangladesh.

Mr. Mahbubur Rahman suggested continuation of Australian support for inclusive education, skills development, poverty alleviation, social protection and private-sector engagement as well as providing economic opportunities for the most disadvantaged and marginalized,

including women and girls and people with disabilities.

Australian High Commissioner Mr. Bruer thanked ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman for inviting him and giving him the opportunity to learn about ICC activities as well as discuss bi-lateral issues with the leading business leaders and members. He said that Australia is supporting a range of development investments to support Bangladesh's transition to a middle-income country. This includes support for inclusive education, skills development, poverty alleviation, social protection and private-sector engagement. Supporting and providing economic opportunities for the most disadvantaged and marginalized, including women and girls and people with disabilities.

The High Commissioner mentioned that Australia is keen on furtherance of trade and investment between the countries. He said that Australia would continue duty free facility for Bangladesh's exports even after graduation out of LDC in 2026 in order to create scope for increasing export to Australia. He also said that recently a delegation from Bangladesh RMG sector visited Australia for promotion garment export to Australia.

In response to the suggestions regarding setting up LNG, the High Commissioner said that in Australia LNG companies are all in the

private sector and as such it is up-to them to decide where they would like to invest. About supporting development of Logistics sector, he mentioned that recently a high level delegation visited Canberra and had discussions regarding assistance from the Australian Government for development of the sector in Bangladesh.

Earlier ICC Bangladesh Members suggested that Australian companies can be attracted to invest in various sectors, including off-shore and on-shore natural gas/oil exploration, LNG, infrastructure, logistics, production of various solar parts to reduce cost of production, pharmaceuticals, ICT, healthcare and development of light engineering. They also suggested technical assistance for development of appropriate need based courses and train professionals to conduct these courses for managerial/technical skill development of Bangladeshis.

ICC Bangladesh President thanked the High Commissioner for accepting the invitation to visit and joining the meeting with the Members. He hoped to continue the dialogue in future in order to increase trade and investment by the businesses of the two countries. He appreciated Australia's extending development investments in a number of areas to support Bangladesh's transition to a middle-income country.

## ICC Bangladesh Secretary General attended virtually ICC Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting held in Jakarta

The 2nd ICC Regional Asia-Pacific Consultative Group Meeting 2023 was held in Jakarta on 5 September. The Meeting Chaired by ICC RCG Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator Mrs. Shinta W. Kamdani was attended by ICC Secretary General John W.H.

Denton AO. The representatives from ICC Australia, Indonesia and Thailand attended physically. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman and representatives of ICC National Committees from China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea,

Macau, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and Sri Lanka attended virtually.

Mrs. Kamdani welcoming the Members at the Meeting briefed about numerous challenges faced



by the Region in recent years, including environmental, financial, social and geopolitical pressures that have converged to create new and complex issues. She thanked the NC delegation for attending the meeting and hoped to continue to work together to promote the ICC activities in the Region.

ICC Secretary General John Denton informed about the activities of ICC HQ and emphasized the need for NCs to work together to take forward ICC's five key strategic themes, enable global trade, promote access to justice, integrity and respect for the rule of law, accelerate sustainability and action on climate and ensure legal enforcement of



ICC Asia-Pacific Regional hybrid Meeting held in Jakarta on 5 September

digital negotiable instruments. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Ataur Rahman and the National Committee

representatives presented brief report about their activities during 2023 and the proposed future plan.

## ICC Bangladesh Executive Board elected a new Vice President

The 92nd Meeting of the Executive Board of ICC Bangladesh was held on Wednesday, 23 August at ICC Bangladesh Secretariat. The Meeting presided over by ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman was attended by the following Board Members : Abdul Hai Sarker, Aftab Ul Islam, Mahbubul Alam, Fazlul Hoque, Mir Nasir Hossain, Mohammad Hatem, Naser Ezaz Bijoy, Sheikh Kabir Hossain, Simeen

Rahman and Secretary General Ataur Rahman. The other members could not attend due to prior engagements.

At the beginning of the Meeting ICC Bangladesh President congratulated Mr. Mahbubul Alam for being elected unanimously as the President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) for a two-year term. Mr. Alam thanked ICC Bangladesh President

and Members of the Executive Board and assured his full cooperation and support in carrying out activities of ICC Bangladesh. He hoped to get full cooperation of the members in strengthening the functioning of FBCCI and promoting trade and investment in Bangladesh.

The Executive Board unanimously elected Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, President of the Foreign Investors'



92nd ICC Bangladesh Executive Board Meeting in progress

Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) as a Vice President of ICC Bangladesh which fell vacant at the sad demise of Mrs. Rokia Afzal Rahman. Mr. Bijoy thanked the Members for electing him as ICC Bangladesh Vice President representing organization group Member of ICC Bangladesh and

assured his full cooperation to the National Committee.

The Executive Board was briefed about the activities of the National Secretariat during May-August, including ICC Roundtable on Investment for Infrastructure Development in Dhaka on 27 May, ICC Bangladesh Annual Council

2022 on 10 June, Roundtable on Climate Adaptation: Opportunities for Bangladesh in Development of Agro-based Industries on 2 August and Workshop on Managing Trade Payment and Trade Finance Risk – Operations, Compliance & Legal Analysis for the bankers in Dhaka on 22 July.

## ICC Workshop on Managing Trade Payment and Trade Finance Risk – Operations, Compliance & Legal Analysis

ICC Bangladesh organized a day-long Workshop on Managing Trade Payment and Trade Finance Risk - Operations, Compliance & Legal

for the Bankers. He said that export from Bangladesh is projected to reach \$80 billion by 2024. Bangladesh is going to lose certain

He also thanked Eastern Bank for arranging participation by commercial officials of a number of their corporate clients.



Group picture of the workshop participants with ICCB Banking Commission Chairman Muhammad A. (Rumee) Ali (2nd from left), Former Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank Md. Ahsan Ullah (extreme left), ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman (centre), SVP of Mutual Trust Bank & Workshop Resource Person ATM Nesarul Hoque (2nd from right) and ICCB General Manager Ajay B. Saha (extreme right).

Analysis in Dhaka on 22 July. Mr. A.T.M. Nesarul Hoque, Senior Vice President of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd conducted the Workshop. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Ataur Rahman in his inaugural address explained about the purpose of organizing the day-long workshop

benefits with graduation to a middle-income country by 2026. Therefore, it is essential for the bankers and exporters to understand and manage international trade most efficiently following all international rules. He thanked Banks for nominating their officials to attend the workshop.

ICC Bangladesh Banking Commission Chairman Muhammad A. (Rumee) Ali, Supernumerary Professor of BIBM & Former Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank Md. Ahsan Ullah and ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Ataur Rahman attended the closing



ceremony and distributed certificates among the participants.

Mr. Ahsan Ullah in his remarks emphasized the need for the bankers to be careful in operation of international trade in order to reduce the risk of non-payment. In view of the present foreign exchange volatile situation the bankers need to know their customers as well as the foreign buyers and importers about their

performance before opening letters of credit.

Chairman Ali observed that banks must have appropriate risk management guidelines to ensure good governance. It is also essential to have well trained staff to avoid the risk in international trade. He said that good governance requires policy to manage risk, appropriate organizational structure with right

kind of staff and lastly the purpose with the appropriate system flow to ensure smooth operation of an organization.

A total of 105 participants including 82 officials from 26 commercial banks, 17 officials of Eastern Bank corporate clients and 6 participants from KAFCO attended the workshop.

## ICC Workshop on Combating Financial Crimes: Means, Ways & Redress

ICC Bangladesh organized a day-long Workshop on Combating Financial Crimes: Means, Ways & Redress in Chattogram on 23 September. ICC Bangladesh Secretary General Aatur Rahman in his welcome address at the beginning of the workshop informed the participants about various activities of ICC Bangladesh and plan for next year. He mentioned that financial crime is a major concern of national and international regulators because of its overwhelming dominance over the world economy. It diminishes the geopolitical landscape and

entails the formation of an informal economy which also leads to various types of non-financial crime like terrorist attacks and centralization of wealth. Financial crimes happen not only through the banks and NBFIs but also from international and domestic business activities. For that reason, a mere understanding of trade-based money laundering is not enough to combat financial crime. Looking beyond trade-based money laundering is the demand of the time to acquire holistic knowledge of financial crime. The Workshop has therefore been designed not

only to discuss trade-based money laundering but also about different strata of financial crime held in day-to-day financial transactions, he added.

The Workshop was conducted by Mr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam,, Vice President, Trade Service Division of Prime Bank Limited. A total of 58 participants including 50 officials from 20 commercial banks, four commercial official of Eastern Bank corporate clients and four from KAFCO attended the workshop.



Group picture of the Workshop participants with ICCB Secretary General Aatur Rahman and Workshop Resource Person & Vice President of Prime Bank Mohammad Rafiqul Islam.



## Congratulations

 <p><b>Md. Jashim Uddin</b></p>	<p><b>President of SAARC Chamber</b></p> <p>Mr. Md. Jashim Uddin, Immediate Past President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) has become the President of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), the apex trade body of the South Asian Region. He will be serving the SCCI as its President for the term 2023-24. Mr. Jashim Uddin, a prominent business personality of the country, is also the founding Chairman of Bengal Commercial Bank and Vice Chairman of Bengal Group, a leading corporate house of Bangladesh.</p>
 <p><b>Mahbubul Alam</b></p>	<p><b>Mahbubul Alam elected President of FBCCI</b></p> <p>Mr. Mahbubul Alam, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) was elected unopposed as the President of The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce &amp; Industry (FBCCI), the apex trade body of the country for the term 2023-2025. Mr. Alam, founding Vice Chairman of Bengal Commercial Bank, is having his businesses in diverse sectors including commodity trading, banks &amp; financial services, tourism, and investment groups.</p>
 <p><b>Naser Ezaz Bijoy</b></p>	<p><b>Naser Ezaz Bijoy elected as a Vice President of ICC Bangladesh</b></p> <p>Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, President of Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has been unanimously elected as a Vice President of ICC Bangladesh during ICC Bangladesh Executive Board Meeting held on 23 August. Since November 2017, Mr. Bijoy has been serving as the Chief Executive Officer, Standard Chartered Bank-Bangladesh. The post of Vice President of ICC Bangladesh became vacant with the sad demise of Mrs. Rokia A. Rahman on 5 April 2023.</p>
 <p><b>Zaved Akhtar</b></p>	<p><b>Zaved Akhtar elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of Unilever Bangladesh</b></p> <p>Mr. Zaved Akhtar has been unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Unilever Bangladesh Limited as well as a Member of the Unilever South Asia Leadership Team. He will continue to lead the Bangladesh business as managing director while assuming his new role as Chairman of the six-decade-old company. In July 2021, Mr. Akhtar was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer, Unilever Bangladesh and became the first Bangladeshi to take over the top position of the country's leading fast moving consumer goods company.</p>
 <p><b>M. A. Jabbar</b></p>	<p><b>Global SDG Pioneer Award to DBL Group Managing Director M.A. Jabbar</b></p> <p>Mr. M. A. Jabbar, Managing Director, DBL Group has been recognized as a 2023 SDG Pioneer from Asia-Oceania for large National and Multinational companies by the UN Global Compact. Every year, the UN Global Compact celebrates a group of SDG pioneers - 12 business leaders who are doing an exceptional job in advancing the Global Goals through the implementation of the Ten Principles. Mr. Jabbar was chosen after a rigorous and competitive selection review of many applications received from various regions of the world by a diverse multi-stakeholder group, including representatives from the United Nations, Global Compact Board, Academia, and previous SDG Pioneers.</p>

## From The Album



Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Md. Shahab Uddin, M.P. is addressing at the Roundtable on Climate Adaptation : Opportunities for Bangladesh in Development of Agro-based Industries as a Special Guest organized jointly by the International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh (ICCB), the Standard Chartered Bank and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Dhaka on 2 August.



Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, M.P.(4th from right) & ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman (5th from right) are seen with ICC Bangladesh Vice President A.K. Azad (extreme right); ICC Bangladesh Executive Board Member Kutuuddin Ahmed (2nd from left); Standard Chartered Bank CEO Naser Ezaz Bijoy (5th from left), Md.Khurshid Alam Executive Director, Bangladesh Bank (4th from left); Md. Ahsan Ullah, Supernumerary Professor, BIBM(3rd from left), Helal Ahmed Chowdhury, Former Managing Director, Pubali Bank Limited(extreme left),ICCB Secretary General Aatur Rahman (3rd from right) and Bitopi Das Chowdhury, Head of Corporate Affairs, Standard Chartered Bank (2nd from right).



Mr. Naser Ezaz Bijoy, Chief executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank delivering his welcome address at the Roundtable on Climate Adaptation : Opportunities for Bangladesh in Development of Agro-based Industries.

## ICC Academy & LIBF Online Professional Qualifications Courses



ICC Academy offering the following categories professional certification programmes:

### Trade finance

- Global Trade Certificate (GTC)
- Certified Trade Finance Professional (CTFP)
- Certificate in Digital Trade Strategy

### International business

- Export/Import Certificate (EIC)
- Incoterms® 2020 Certificate (INCO)
- Free Trade Agreement Certificate (FTAC)
- E-Invoicing Solutions Certificate (ESC)
- Microfinance Associate Certificate (MAC)

### Regulation and compliance

- Certificate on the Common Reporting Standard (CCRS)
- IMB NVOCC Bill of Lading Certificate (NBL)
- Ethical Marketing and Advertising (EMA)

## The London Institute of Banking & Finance

LIBF offering the following professional qualifications certificate courses:

- Certificate for Documentary Credit Specialists (CDCS)
- Certificate for Specialists in Demand Guarantees (CSDG)
- Certificate in International Trade and Finance (CITF)
- Certificate in Trade Finance Compliance (CTFC)
- Certificate in Supply Chain Finance (CSCF)
- Certificate in Principles of Payments (CertPAY)

**For registration, please contact:**

**ICC Bangladesh**

Telephone: +8802-58810658-9, +88-09639112021

Email: [info@iccbangladesh.org.bd](mailto:info@iccbangladesh.org.bd)

## New Edition of International Standard Banking Practice (ISBP) 2023



**For your copies  
please contact:**

**ICC Bangladesh**

Telephone: +8802-58810658-9, +88-09639112021

Email: [info@iccbangladesh.org.bd](mailto:info@iccbangladesh.org.bd)

Since its initial publication in 2002 (Publication 645), International Standard Banking Practice (ISBP) has become an invaluable aid to trade finance professionals when creating documents for presentation under, or for the examination of documents presented under, a documentary credit.

### New Edition

The 2023 edition of ISBP covers, practices identified from Opinions approved by ICC national committees since 2013, and clarifies amongst others:

- Terminology
- Preliminary conditions
- Signatures and signs
- Multimodal transport document
- Insurance documents

International Standard Banking Practice — 2023 edition is the most up to date guide for the examination of documents under documentary credits reflecting practices agreed by ICC national committees. It also serves as an aid to a beneficiary of a documentary credit in its creation and presentation of documents to a nominated bank or issuing bank. The publication should always be read in conjunction with UCP 600.

### Authors:

- Gary Collyer, Collyer Consulting
- Manuel José Gao Sánchez, Banco Santander
- Mohammad Imam, Jordan Islamic Bank
- Birgit Karpp, LBBW
- A. T. M. Nesarul Hoque, Mutual Trust Bank
- Glenn Ransier, Wells Fargo
- Kim Sindberg, Nordea



## ICC HQs News

### ICC reaches arbitration milestone with case 28,000

The ICC International Court of Arbitration has registered the 28,000th case under the ICC Arbitration Rules, marking a significant milestone in its centenary year.



The 28,000th registered dispute concerns a major FIDIC infrastructure project that

experienced delays due to COVID-19. The case involves a total of four parties, located in North and South Asia. The arbitration is administered by ICC's case management office in Singapore, which celebrates its fifth anniversary this year. As in previous years, 25% of the parties in ICC cases came from Asia and the Pacific. In 2022, construction and energy disputes accounted for 45% of registered cases.

In line with ICC's reputation as the world's preferred arbitral institution, the majority of ICC arbitrations involve cross-border and cross-regional disputes. The reopening of the ICC Hearing Centre in Paris in 2024 signals the ICC Court's commitment to remaining the leading arbitral centre and support

to Paris as a place of arbitration. The ICC Court has a strong presence in Asia and the Pacific region. It is the only arbitral institution with two case management teams in and from Asia and the Pacific, one in Singapore and one in Hong Kong which marks its 15th anniversary this year.

The ICC Court continues to pioneer thought leadership, knowledge sharing and outreach initiatives in the region through the work of ICC Dispute Resolution Services offices in Singapore and Shanghai. The annual ICC APAC Conference on International Arbitration has consistently garnered interest from the APAC region and beyond in line with the purpose and mission of the ICC Court in its centenary year.

### Takeaways of B20 Summit

The 2023 edition of the official G20 dialogue forum with the global business community took place in New Delhi from 25-27 August. The Business 20 (B20) summit hosted by India, was under the theme of 'RAISE', an acronym for Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable and Equitable Businesses.

ICC Secretary General John W.H. Denton AO took part in the panel "Balancing Growth and Inclusivity" to discuss strategies for sustained and inclusive economic growth with a focus on empowering enterprises.

*Here are our key takeaways from the summit:*

**Trade still matters to the global economy**

Particularly to those at the bottom of the pyramid. G20 governments

must prioritise measures that maximise trade's potential to generate prosperity and opportunity for everyone. The resurgence of protectionism in the global economy has restricted opportunities for businesses and families to benefit from global commerce.

It's time for the G20 to address the challenge faced by small businesses in

accessing trade finance, particularly in emerging markets. This requires conducting a thorough examination of how global macro-prudential regulation standards affect the availability of trade credit for the businesses that need it the most.

G20 leaders should provide a new surveillance mandate to the WTO to report annually on trade restrictions.



This would include shedding light on the emerging, “murky” forms of protectionism that impede business expansion and job opportunities.

### Multilateral solutions to global challenges

Ahead of the upcoming G20 leaders summit in New Delhi, global

business is calling for time-sensitive deliverables:

A pledge from heads of state and government to pursue significant reform of the WTO at its upcoming ministerial conference. A commitment in support of achieving global net-zero emissions by 2050 and ensuring that COP28

works to accelerate the action and finance needed to deliver the Paris agreement. A clear endorsement for reaching a multilateral agreement to modernise the global tax system, with the OECD as the guiding body. A roadmap for tackling the debt and liquidity crisis faced by a growing number of emerging markets.

## ICC and Swift unveil first API standards for guarantees and standby letters of credit

ICC and Swift, the global leader in secure financial messaging services, have released the first application programming interface (API) industry standards for bank guarantees and standby letters of credit.

The collaboration brings together ICC and Swift members, including banks, corporates, fintech platforms, and service providers to create market-leading industry standards to streamline the entire life cycle of financial instruments, including issuance, advising, amendments, cancellations and claims.

In addition to providing a light footprint, APIs will help in providing standardization and real-time visibility which will enhance interoperability, operational efficiency and enable seamless integration of banking capabilities into corporate treasury, enterprise resource planning systems and third-party platforms, specifically for guarantees and standby letters of credit.

The API model is now ready for testing, implementation and

adoption by the industry. It aligns with SWIFT Message Types (MT) standards and future ISO 20022 compliance to minimise disruption to existing trade systems. This approach ensures a future-proof implementation and addresses the urgent need for standardisation in the trade API space.



## Mid-year IMB report reveals rise in maritime piracy and armed robbery

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has raised concern on the resurgence of reported incidents in the Gulf of Guinea waters and the increase in incidents in the Singapore Straits in its mid-year report for 2023, released on 11 July. Sixty-five incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were recorded in the first half of 2023, an increase from 58 incidents for the same period in 2022.

Of the 65 incidents reported, 57 vessels were boarded, four had attempted attacks, two were hijacked and two were fired upon. Perpetrators successfully boarded

90% of targeted vessels. Violence towards crew continues with 36 taken hostage, 14 kidnapped, three threatened, two injured and one assaulted.

### Mounting concerns for crew in the Gulf of Guinea

The Gulf of Guinea witnessed a concerning surge in maritime

incidents between Q1 and Q2 of 2023, with five incidents in the first quarter and nine in the second quarter. Out of these, 12 were classified as armed robberies and two as piracy, predominantly targeting anchored vessels in the region.

Fourteen crew were kidnapped, of which eight crew members were taken from vessels anchored within territorial waters. Additionally, in two separate hijackings, 31 crew members were held hostage, communication and navigation equipment were destroyed, and partial cargoes were stolen. One of



these incidents also involved the abduction of six crew members. The IMB warns of the rise of incidents and violence on crew, highlighting the urgent need for measures to address the safety and security of innocent seafarers.

### South and Central America account for 14% of global incidents

In South and Central American ports, which accounted for 14% of global incidents, there were 13 reported incidents, including

attempted boardings, hostage situations, and crew assaults and threats at Callao Anchorage in Peru, Colombia, Macapa Anchorage in Brazil, and Panama.

## Financial crime risk controls - Price checking of goods and services in trade transactions

ICC aims to provide an updated discussion on the implementation of controls related to price misrepresentation risks in trade finance, addressing the challenges



faced by financial institutions in identifying and mitigating financial crime risks. ICC recognises the challenges faced by financial institutions in identifying and mitigating risks associated with financial crime, such as money laundering typologies involving the misuse of trade finance to disguise fund transfers through price misrepresentation.

These risks require robust controls and identification methods. In line with regulatory emphasis on

appropriate measures, ICC aims to provide an updated discussion on implementing controls related to price misrepresentation risks in trade finance as well as addressing the plausibility of price checking in trade finance.

This ICC paper explores the prevalent industry-wide approach to price checking, assesses the feasibility of potential controls, and summarises best practices and recommendations tailored to financial institutions engaged in trade finance. It is important to note that this discussion aligns with the ICC's comprehensive analysis on dual-use goods in trade finance, offering a holistic perspective on risk management and controls in the financial services industry.

### Key points:

Understanding the risk: We delve into the existing body of discussion and guidance literature on the

misuse of trade finance for money laundering and emphasise the need for financial institutions to be aware of the risk.

**Feasibility of price checking controls:** Our guidance paper assesses the feasibility and effectiveness of various price checking controls, including the use of vessel tracking and independent document verification, to enhance the detection of price misrepresentation.

**Best practices and recommendations:** Recognising the individual circumstances of financial institutions, we summarise best practices and provide recommendations tailored to trade finance activities. We emphasise that there is no one-size-fits-all solution and encourage financial institutions to adopt approaches that align with their specific needs.

ICC is committed to supporting financial institutions in addressing the challenges associated with price misrepresentation risk in trade finance.

## ICC response to European Commission's Green Claims Directive

ICC supports the aims of the proposed European Commission's Green Claims Directive but considers the proposed approach to be misguided. Our feedback has been prepared through an open consultative process with members from our global network

with comments accessible in this document.

Ensuring responsible marketing practices worldwide has been a long-standing ICC commitment. We will continue to work with self-regulatory agencies and businesses

to enforce advertising standards through adherence to both the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code and the specific rules and guidelines set out in the ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communications.



ICC reiterates the importance of a harmonised view on how to substantiate environmental claims and has long standing expertise in helping marketers craft environmental messages that adhere to the basic global principles of truthful, honest and socially responsible communications. To that end, ICC agrees with the overarching aims of the EC's Directive, i.e., the importance of accelerating the green transition and the need to ensure that environmental claims are well-substantiated to avoid greenwashing and empower consumers to make environmentally sound choices.

It is concerning that the EC's Directive proposal does not at all consider existing self-regulatory measures by industry, such as the ICC Advertising and Marketing Communications Code, and the specific rules and guidelines set out in the ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communications. Moreover, ICC's re-branded Environmental Claims Checklist of the Environmental Framework is an additional resource

to help marketers identify when they are making an environmental claim,



offering guidance on questions about such claims in an easy-to-follow format. Not only are the ICC Marketing Code provisions and interpretations applied by self-regulatory organisations, they are also recognised by and have inspired national marketing legislation and self-regulatory initiatives across the globe. Aligning the proposal with the rules of the ICC Code not only secures a high ethical standard, but also counteracts regulatory fragmentation at an international level.

ICC believes that the proposed Directive is likely to add costs and

complexity, rather than taking into account the important role served by self-regulation. The additional time and expense are likely to result in companies avoiding environmental messaging, which could further lead companies to reduce their environmental efforts, as the costs of marketing environmental initiatives may outweigh the potential benefits.

As a leader in responsible marketing worldwide, ICC intends for its ICC Marketing Code and the Environmental Framework to serve as key practical resources for practitioners developing environmental claims and campaigns. In this sense, ICC advocates for a constructive dialogue between our organisations to ensure the practicality and effectiveness of the Directive, drawing upon ICC's extensive experience in promoting sound marketing and advertising practices.

## Digitalisation for People, Planet and Prosperity

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) and digital technologies have a catalytic power to drive economic and social progress across areas as diverse as education, healthcare, governance, agriculture, finance, and environmental sustainability. Needling business innovation together with enabling policy and regulatory measures are a prerequisite to reap the full potential of digitalisation and ensure an equitable and sustainable future for everyone, everywhere.

While the global community is falling short of our shared and universal commitment

to deliver on 17 ambitious goals for people, planet and prosperity by 2030, growing digital adoption presents as an ally in transforming quality of life globally, providing access to

information, revolutionising various sectors of industry and unlocking new avenues for sustainable development.



ICC firmly believes in this unique potential of ICTs and digital technologies to foster sustainable development. As the world's largest business organization, ICC draws on the experience and evidence of businesses of all sizes and sectors to assess how digitalisation efforts driven by the private sector contribute to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Based on business case studies, this paper explores

how investment, innovation, and capacity-building projects by private companies to deliver digital infrastructure, services and skills enable:

Digitalisation for people by expanding meaningful connectivity, providing access to essential applications, content in local languages and services from health and education to social services and financial inclusion, and equipping populations with skills, with special focus on gender inclusion to use the Internet safely and productively.

Digitalisation for the planet by driving green transition through

innovative digital services, aiming to reduce carbon emissions and preserve biodiversity and climate. Digitalisation for prosperity by bridging digital divides to enable inclusive growth, incentivise job creation and entrepreneurship and fuelling innovation.

The paper identifies barriers that might stand in the way of achieving these objectives and offers concrete recommendations on how to address them, as well as a comprehensive model for holistic policymaking.

In order to drive sustainable development through the catalytic power of ICTs and digital

technologies, ICC encourages policymakers to:

- Mainstream digitalisation as part of the broader development agenda
- Facilitate investment across the entire digital value chain
- Improve broadband and telecommunication infrastructure and effectively manage spectrum
- Enable, and foster trust in, the cross-border flow of data and digital technologies
- Ground policies in evidence and data
- Embrace multistakeholder policymaking
- Promote international cooperation

## New report and guide to drive thought leadership in dispute prevention and resolution

New ICC ADR report and guide aim to prevent disputes and preserve relationships for all businesses and states.

Released on 18 July, the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR's latest report and guide will increase awareness of different dispute resolution techniques and on how to facilitate settlement of disputes in international arbitration.

Marking the Centenary of the ICC International Court of Arbitration®, the latest publications deliver on a pledge set out in the ICC Centenary Declaration on Dispute Resolution to drive thought leadership in dispute prevention and resolution through innovative services, best practices and standards that meet the evolving needs of an ever-wider range of businesses and markets.

The Guide on Effective Conflict Management offers guidance in selecting the most appropriate ADR technique and explains how

to efficiently use them to avoid escalation, resolve disputes and reduce the cost of unavoidable disputes, before and after the commencement of arbitration proceedings. It describes the available ICC Dispute Resolution Services and gives examples of how

disputes even once arbitration has begun, thereby preserving business relationships.

Driven by the needs of businesses, both publications target a wide range of businesses, from SMEs to multinational corporations, as well as states, external counsel using ICC dispute resolution services, alongside arbitrators, mediators and other ADR service providers. The publications are the work of the ICC Task Force on ADR and Arbitration, created by the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR, as highlighted by Chiann Bao, Co-Chair of the Task Force:



they can be used either as standalone mechanisms or combined.

The Report on Facilitating Settlement in International Arbitration proposes ways allowing parties to settle

“The guide and the report are the product of a task force comprised of experienced practitioners, including external counsel, arbitrators and mediators and, importantly, the representatives of corporates and states themselves.”

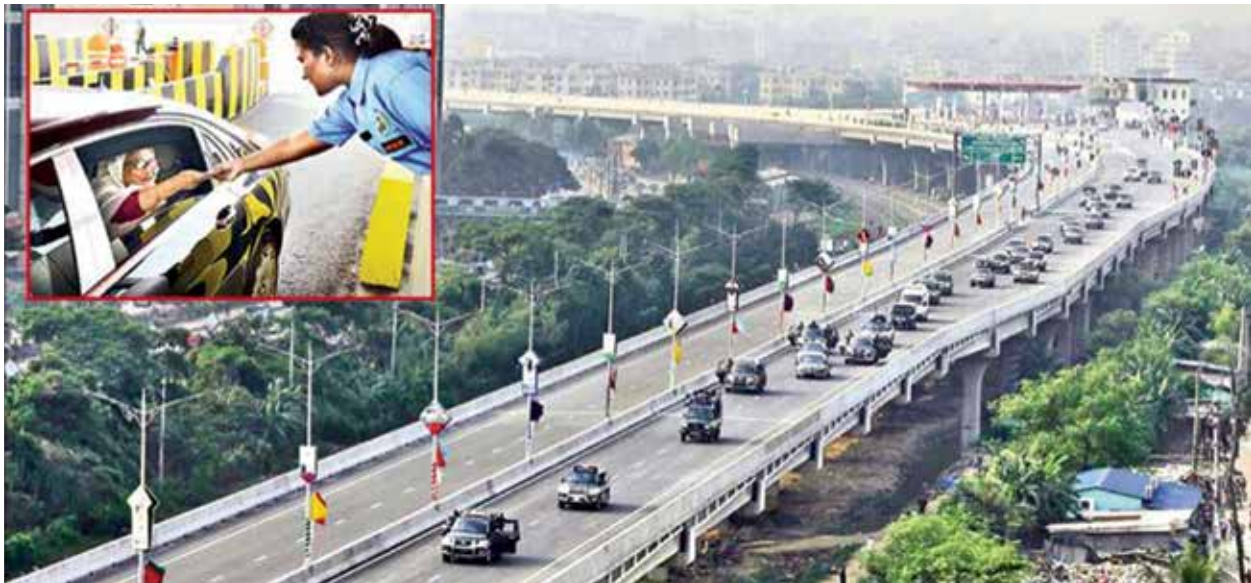
## Bangladesh Economy

### PM inaugurated first Dhaka Elevated Expressway

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 2 September inaugurated the much-awaited 11.5-km Dhaka Elevated Expressway's Hazrat Shahjalal

Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader received Sheikh Hasina and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana on their arrival.

Tejgaon, spanning 11.5 km. Boosting 15 ramps, it streamlines traffic flow, bypassing congestion and ensuring swift entry and exit.



International Airport-Farmgate section for traffic that is expected to significantly reduce the city's traffic congestion. She unveiled the nameplate of the expressway at Kawla end of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. A munajat was later offered seeking welfare of the country and its people.

Earlier, the Prime Minister paid the toll at Kawla end where Road

Executive Director of the Bangladesh Bridges Authority and Secretary of the Bridges Division Md. Monjur Hossain gave a brief description of the project.

The first Dhaka Elevated Expressway, a PPP Project partially opened on September 2, 2023. It connects Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport to Farmgate via key points such as Kuril, Banani, Mohakhali and

Constructed with foreign investment totaling USD1.13 billion, the project follows the Public-Private Partnership model. This Expressway is part of a 19.73 km through fare reaching Kutubkhali, with the aim of completion by June 2024, enhancing accessibility to the airport and highways. The project underscores Dhaka's progress promising a brighter future through improved connectivity, albeit with tolls and certain vehicle restrictions.

### Global warming impact Bangladesh may lose 1.7pc GDP yearly by 2037

Bangladesh may lose 1.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually by 2037 if it fails to adapt to the effects of a 3°C global warming, according to a new report released on 19 July. In addition, in the long run, GDP may decline by 7.6 per cent every year as a result of not being able to adapt to this climate-change impact.

Labour supply and productivity are estimated to decline by 46 per cent by 2080 in the country unless workers and employers are able to fully adapt to the changing climate. The report by Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change, and the Environment and Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy authored by Lucia Letsch, Shouro

Dasgupta, and Elizabeth Robinson, analysed the impact of climate change on working conditions in





Bangladesh and provided some concerning predictions.

Though adaptation options exist, and while there are several policies and frameworks for labour protection in place, their enforcement is currently weak, due in part to a lack of transparency, inefficient institutions, and corruption, it said.

The report highlights that in June 2023, Bangladesh experienced its longest heatwave since records began in 1971, with temperatures above 40°C in many parts of the country.

Excessive exposure to heat has adverse effects on health, leading to organ damage, heat stroke, and even death in the worst-case scenario. Slowing down their work, taking more breaks, having impaired mental capacity, making errors more frequently, and reducing the capability of workers to carry out physical work, are all ways that heat stress can negatively affect productivity.

Both economic output and individual wages can be affected by productivity loss, harming local economies and communities.

This will have negative effects on Bangladesh's national output, on individual incomes, and on efforts to attain Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the report further predicted. Hence, without just transition policies in place, there is a high risk that unemployment will rise and that poverty and inequality will increase. Measures to ensure that the transition to a low-carbon economy is just may include creating new job opportunities, retraining workers, and ensuring the protection of the labour force, including migrant workers and informal workers.

## Hasina - Modi look forward to CEPA as next step up in ties

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi have said they look forward to getting negotiations going on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) for their two countries, covering trade in goods, services, and protecting and promoting investment.

Expressing satisfaction at the implementation of development cooperation projects, they looked forward to the joint inauguration of three projects (Agartala-Akhaura Rail Link, Unit-II of the Maitri Power Plant, and Khulna-Mongla Rail Link) at a convenient date later.

The two leaders had a bilateral meeting in New Delhi on 8 September. PM Hasina visited India as its guest country to participate in the G-20 Leaders Summit on 9-10 September 2023.

With regard to the regional situation, Prime Minister Modi expressed appreciation of the burden shouldered by Bangladesh in hosting over a million persons displaced from Rakhine State in Myanmar and conveyed India's constructive and positive approach to support solutions towards safe

and sustainable repatriation of the refugees.

The Indian side welcomed the Indo-Pacific Outlook announced by Bangladesh recently, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (Indian Foreign Ministry). The

cooperation in the multilateral fora were also discussed.

They welcomed the operationalization of the Agreement on the use of the Chattogram and Mongla Ports and the commissioning of the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline.



leaders agreed to continue working together to intensify their wide-ranging engagement.

The two leaders discussed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation, including political and security cooperation, border management, trade and connectivity, water resources, power and energy, development cooperation, cultural and people-to-people ties. Current developments in the region and

They also expressed appreciation for the operationalisation of the settlement of bilateral trade in INR (rupee) and encouraged the business community on both sides to utilise the mechanism.

Hasina thanked Modi for the hospitality of the government and people of India, as the two leaders looked forward to continuing interactions at all levels.

## Bangladesh sets \$72b export target with 11.52pc growth for FY24

The Ministry of Commerce has set an export target of \$72 billion with 11.52 per cent growth for FY24. Export target for goods has been set at \$62 billion while for the service sector, the target was set at \$10 billion. Export target achieved in FY 23 was \$64.55 billion, which saw a growth of 5.88 per cent.

Goods worth \$55.55 billion and services worth \$9 billion were exported in FY 23, and the growth were 6.67 per cent and 1.25 per cent respectively. Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi on 12 July made the announcement of the export target and achievements in the previous fiscal in a press conference at the ministry.

Prior to the announcement, the minister met with leaders of different

business organizations and ministry officials. Business leaders at the meeting urged the government to ensure uninterrupted gas and electricity supply to industries at affordable rates. Otherwise, exports would be negatively impacted, they told the minister.

While announcing the new export target, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said the global economic slowdown has been considered when setting the new target. Gas and power crises have also been considered while setting the target, the minister said. While replying to a query, the minister said

Bangladesh has some advantages including trained labour force, and affordable cost of products.



Besides, global entrepreneurs are relocating industries from China due to geo-political reasons, and Vietnam has a labour crisis, the minister said. If Bangladesh can utilize these opportunities, exports can go beyond the target, the commerce minister said.

## Export earnings fetch record \$55.55b in FY23

The country's export earnings has fetched a record height of \$55.55 billion during FY23 despite the unstable global economic situation due to Ukraine-Russia conflict. According to the latest statistics of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), the country's export earnings witnessed 6.67 percent growth in the last fiscal year compared to \$52.08 billion in the same duration of FY22.

Apparel exports in July-June of FY23 grew by 10.27 percent to \$46.99 billion from \$42.61 billion in the same period of FY22, according to EPB. Out of the overall exportable items, the export earnings from knitwear were \$25.73 billion which is 10.87 percent higher than the previous fiscal. The export earnings

from woven garments totaled \$21.25 billion with a growth of 9.56 percent.



The performances of other major exportable items during the fiscal were plastic products \$20.98 crore, leather and leather products \$122.36 crore, fish \$42.22 crore, agriculture product \$84.30 crore, jute and jute goods \$91.22 crore and chemical products \$30.30 crore.

The country's economy has been under pressure due to the dollar crisis.

And the main two sources of foreign exchange income are expatriate income remittances and the export of goods. Foreign exchange inflows from both sources fell slightly late last fiscal year due to the Russia-Ukraine war. But later it turned around again.

In FY23, remittances received were \$21.61 billion, which saw an increase of 3 percent compared to the previous FY22.

## Exports to Asian region rise by 14pc in FY23

Bangladesh's exports to the Asian region in FY23 grew by nearly 14

per cent due mainly to an increased shipment of readymade garments

to Japan, India and South Korea. According to Export Promotion

Bureau data, Bangladesh's exports to 30 Asian countries in FY23 increased



by \$826.88 million to \$6.76 billion compared with those of \$5.94 billion in FY22.

Exporters said that under the initiative of exploring new markets they were putting an emphasis on Asian markets and getting positive

results. Exporters, especially RMG makers, see the Asian region as a future promising market for Bangladesh.

The EPB data showed that Bangladesh's exports to India in FY23 increased by 6.93 per cent to \$2.13 billion compared with \$1.99 billion in FY22. The country's RMG exports to India in FY23 grew by 41.58 per cent to \$1.01 billion compared with those of \$715.41 million in FY22. Bangladesh's exports to Japan in FY23 stood at \$1.90 billion with a 40.45-per cent growth from \$1.35 billion in FY22.

The country's apparel exports to Japan in FY23 grew by 45.62 per cent to \$1.60 billion compared with those of \$1.10 billion in FY22. Bangladesh's exports to South Korea in FY23 increased by 17.64 per cent to \$623.78 million compared with those of \$530.25 million in the previous financial year.

The country's export earnings from China in FY23, however, decreased to \$677.35 million from \$683.43 million in FY22. Bangladesh's exports to Malaysia in FY23 increased by 10.08 per cent to \$371.85 million compared with those of \$337.81 million in FY22.

## Bangladesh expected to be largest cotton apparel exporter: USDA

Bangladesh's cotton consumption is forecast to reach 8 million bales in 2023-24, driven by growing apparel exports. Apparel exports were \$47 billion in FY23, with a goal of \$50 billion in FY24. Global cotton consumption is forecast to grow 5.8 per cent.

Bangladesh's cotton consumption for 2023-24 is forecast to increase by 800,000 bales to 8 million, driven by burgeoning apparel exports, according to the latest USDA Cotton World Markets and Trade report. The country is close to surpassing China as the world's largest cotton apparel exporter, with stronger demand prospects expected to drive cotton consumption even higher.

Practically all cotton yarn, which accounts for the nation's cotton consumption, is sold domestically

to Bangladesh's robust fabric and apparel sectors. Apparel exports have been vital for Bangladesh's economic growth and stabilising its domestic currency by obtaining US dollars through foreign sales.



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) reported that apparel accounted for over 80 per cent of the country's total exports in the fiscal 2023 (FY23) (June 2022–

July 2023), amounting to roughly \$47 billion. This value is more than double the figure from a decade ago and surpasses the previous year's record, reflecting global importers' increasing preference for Bangladesh's cotton products.

Exports of knit apparel have been essential to this growth, with the value nearly tripling over the past decade. Local textile mills meet 85 per cent of the demand for knit fabrics and about 40 per cent for woven fabric, mainly imported from China. Knitted cotton shirts and sweaters have been the significant products contributing to the recent record values, as per USDA's report.

## Mirsharai Bangabandhu Shilpa Nagar 21 more factories set to go into production

Another 21 factories, already set up in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib

Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN) in Mirsharai upazila of Chattogram are set to go

into commercial production from September. Up until now, four



companies have gone into production in the industrial enclave, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister on November 20, 2022. So far domestic and foreign investment proposals at the BSMNS stand at around \$19 billion centering the huge industrial hub which were already approved. On 21 July, Shaikh Yusuf Harun, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), inaugurated the construction of roads and drains for a “BGMEA Garment Palli” at BSMSN.

Two-lane roads of 23 kilometers and 29 kilometers of drains will be

constructed at a cost of Tk 450 crore in the area for industrial units of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

Although there are many challenges in providing services to investors in economic zones, BEZA has ensured water, gas and electricity connections through coordination with all government agencies. Beza is working with various

development partners to ensure international service standards in the economic zones by setting up effluent treatment plants centrally.

	Bangabandhu Shilpa Nagari is being constructed on 30,000 acres of land
	Location: Mirsarai and Sitakunda upazilas of Chattogram and Sonagazi upazila of Feni
	Asian Paints Bangladesh and Nippon-McDonald Steel already began production
	McDonald delivered first consignment of 20 tonnes of steel to Bangladesh Bridge Authority on 23 March
	Samuda Food Products and Modern Syntex are gearing up for production next year

## Country's first undersea crude oil pipeline commissioned

A 110km pipeline to transport crude oil and diesel from a deep-sea mooring, 16km off the Maheshkhali coast, to Eastern Refinery Ltd in Chattogram's Patenga has been commissioned on 2 July.

With the commissioning of the country's first undersea pipeline, lighter vessels will no longer be required to unload petroleum products from large tankers and carry those to the refinery. This will save time and about Tk 800 crore a year, according to Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation.

Under the Single Point Mooring (SPM) project, two parallel pipelines



have been installed -- one for crude oil and the other for diesel. Pipeline

will cut transportation time by 8 days. It will also not affect unloading oil in bad weather. According to the BPC, the pipes from the storage facility to the Eastern Refinery are 18 inches in diameter. About 65km of these are under the sea.

BPC, with the funding of the Exim Bank of China, has implemented the project at a cost of Tk 7,124 crore.

Source : The Daily Star

## \$21.61b Remittance by migrant workers in FY23

Migrant workers sent \$21.61 billion to home in FY22 as remittance rebounded on the back of higher flow on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha and a record outflow of labourers, according to official figures on 2 July. They remitted about \$2.2 billion in

June, lifting the overall inflow for the entire 2022-23, according to the Bangladesh Bank.

This is the highest single-month high since July 2021 when \$2.6 billion entered the country. June's takings were up nearly 20 per cent compared to the same month of 2022 whereas last fiscal year's total earnings beat the central bank's forecast by a small margin.

The central bank had projected a 2 per cent year-on-year

growth in FY23 but it stood at 2.75 per cent finally. Some \$21.03 billion was remitted in FY22. Remittance flow usually goes up ahead of major occasions such as Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha as remitters send a higher amount to help their families celebrate the festivals.

The latest increase in remittance comes as more than 10.74 lakh migrant workers left Bangladesh for jobs abroad in the last fiscal year, the highest in a single year. In 2021-22, some 9.07 lakh workers went



abroad. But the funds transferred by the labourers have not surged proportionately since remitters preferred the hundi cartel, an illegal cross-border financial transaction system, owing to the better rate of the US dollar offered by the unofficial channel.

About half of all remittances entered the country through unofficial platforms even before the coronavirus pandemic. A wide gap in formal and

informal exchange rates has been one of the factors behind the sharp fall in the foreign exchange reserves in Bangladesh as it shifts remittances from official channels to unofficial routes and impedes repatriation of export proceeds, according to World Bank.

In order to encourage the use of formal channels, the government provides a 2.5 per cent incentive and has introduced remitter-friendly

processes. Currently, there are different exchange rates of the US dollar for exporters, importers, and remitters. At present, more than 1.49 crore Bangladeshi migrants are working in 176 countries. Remittance flow would grow by 10 per cent to \$23.6 billion in the current fiscal year, according to the forecast of the BB.

Source : The Daily Star

## Bangladesh's dev model can inspire others: WB

World Bank (WB) Executive Director Parameswaran Iyer said on 10 August that developing countries can follow Bangladesh's development model, he paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official Ganabhaban residence in Dhaka.

"Bangladesh made a phenomenal transformation in development with specific plans under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's prudent leadership. Other developing countries can follow Bangladesh's development model," PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim quoted Iyer in a media briefing after the meeting.

According to Karim, the prime minister apprised the WB official of her government's upscale programmes to ensure Bangladesh's overall development. Bangladesh witnessed huge development as her government and party do everything

after formulating specific plans, Sheikh Hasina said. "Our main target is to alleviate poverty as we want to ensure a better life for every person," she added.



The WB executive director assured Bangladesh of extending cooperation in its infrastructure development in the next phase of advancement. He said his organisation has already provided \$ 700 million for the relocation of the Rohingyas. The prime minister said the Rohingyas will have to return to their homeland Myanmar.

About climate change, she said Bangladesh has suffered badly from the adverse impact of climate change despite not being responsible for carbon emissions. Iyer, however, told the premier that the WB will assist Bangladesh in implementing its Delta Plan-2100. Sheikh Hasina said the WB is lending technical assistance for ecological restoration and ensuring navigability of rivers surrounding Dhaka city with a view to making the city more livable under an umbrella investment programme.

Alternative Executive Director of the WB Dr Ahmad Kaikaus, Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Secretary Mohammad Salahuddin and Economic Relations Division Secretary Sharifa Khan, were present, among others, at the meeting.

## WB approved \$902m during July-Sept'23

The World Bank on 28 July approved \$300 million to help Bangladesh improve the efficiency of gas distribution and end-use through pre-paid metering systems for residential and industrial consumers and reduce methane emissions along the natural gas value chain.

The money will be spent on implementing the Gas Sector Efficiency Improvement and Carbon Abatement Project, addressing natural gas leakage and losses along the gas transmission and distribution network, reducing waste in use by residential and industrial users, and strengthening network monitoring

capabilities. It will install more than 1.2 million prepaid gas meters in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions.

Among these, 1.1 million prepaid meters will be deployed in greater Dhaka, covering 54 per cent of residential customers of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution

Company Limited, and 1,28,000 prepaid meters in Rajshahi division, covering the entire residential customer base of Pashchimanchal Gas Company Limited.

Natural gas accounted for 68 per cent of the country's primary energy consumption in 2021. Methane leakages in the oil and gas value chain, which are 25 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> at trapping heat in the atmosphere, amount to an estimated 257 kilotons, which is roughly equivalent to 7.7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The World Bank will provide \$300 million loans for training up some 0.9 million Bangladeshi rural youth with skills and alternative education to attain employment and create entrepreneurship. The Bangladesh government and the WB signed a loan deal on 27 August in Dhaka. WB Country Director Abdoulaye Seck and Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Sharifa Khan signed the agreement.

The \$300 million credit from the WB's International Development Association (IDA) has a 30-year term, including a five-year grace period. The Bank will charge

1.75 per cent interest rate. Under the Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project, the Department of Youth and Sports will train the manpower for making them employable.

The Bank approved US\$ 200 million in loan for dengue prevention and treatment in Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations as well as Savar and Tarabo municipalities amid higher prevalence of infected patients in these areas. The fund will also be utilised for developing primary healthcare facilities there, especially for women and children. The board of the Washington-based global lender approved the \$200 million loan on August 31.

The \$200 million loan under the Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project will be utilised to establish a network of primary health centres. It will offer a broad range of health, nutrition and population services along with a direct referral system with secondary and tertiary-level facilities.

Besides, about 2.5 million children under five years of age in the four urban areas will receive the healthcare services. It will also

support hypertension screening and follow-up of about 1.3 million adults. To prevent dengue, the project will introduce a climate-based early dengue warning system and outbreak response capacities as well as take measures to clear breeding sites.

The multinational lender approved \$102 million financing for Bangladesh to improve riverbank protection and navigability of the Jamuna river in an effort to save people from being displaced, protect their livelihoods, and spur economic activities. The approval came on 19 September at a meeting of the global lender's board of directors in Washington.

The Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project 1, the first among a series of proposed projects, will help improve navigation channels with adequate depth that can accommodate large cargo vessels year-round. The project, for the first time in Bangladesh, will pilot nature-based solutions with innovative river structures and navigation at two channels of Jamuna, crossing Phulchhari, Gaibandha, and Kalihati.

## ADB mobilises \$261m for Rampura-Amulia-Demra expressway

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has mobilised \$261 million of private sector capital for the construction of the four-lane 13.5 kilometre expressways connecting the Rampura, Amulia and Demra areas in Dhaka. ADB mobilised the amount as a transaction advisor for the Government of Bangladesh's Rampura Amulia Demra expressway public-private partnership (PPP) project.

The expressway will ease traffic congestion and will ensure better communication between Dhaka and

other major cities of the country. The project is being funded through



a \$193 million senior loan from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank; Bank of China; DBS Bank Limited; and Infrastructure

Development Company Limited, a nonbanking financial institution based in Bangladesh. The remaining \$68 million has been provided by sponsors as equity contributions.

ADB assisted in project structuring, negotiation, tender execution, and provided support for commercial award and financial closure.

The deal -part of a programmatic approach taken by ADB to develop road PPPs as an asset class for



investments- is the second successful financial closure of a PPP transaction with ADB as transaction advisor in Bangladesh. ADB is currently advising the government on the Joydebpur-Mymensingh Expressway

PPP project, which will improve connectivity to 10 special economic zones.

The Rampura-Amulia-Demra Expressway will be designed,

constructed, financed, operated, and maintained during a 25 year concession period by a consortium comprising China Communications Construction Company Limited and China Road and Bridge Corporation.

## ADB to arrange \$3.5b funding for Dhaka metro southern route

A sum of US\$3.5 billion is assured by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for bankrolling Dhaka metro's MRT-5 southern route for expansion of overhead transport facility aimed at easing city-traffic tailbacks.

As hinted during a meeting between an ADB team and the Economic Relations Division (ERD) on 31 August. ADB would provide US\$2.5 billion worth of loan and mobilise another chunk of \$1.0 billion in credit from any foreign lenders as co-financers of the MRT-5 project.

Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) will construct the MRT-5 (south) from Gabtoli to

Dasherbandi via Kalyanpur-Russell Square-Rampura-Aftabnagar-Dasherbandi at a proposed cost of Tk530 billion, equivalent to \$5.0 billion. Meanwhile, the construction of the MRT-5 northern route stretching over Hemayetpur-Mirpur 10-Banani-Gulshan-Vatara has already been started with the financial support of Japan.

The proposed 17.40-km metro rail MRT Line-5 southern route from Gabtoli to Dasherbandi will be ready by 2030. Out of this route, some 12.80 kms will be installed underground and 4.60 kms elevated. According to the company officials, 16 stations will be constructed with 12 underground

and the rest elevated over the ground.

The stations are Gabtoli, Technical Junction, Kalyanpur, Shyamoli, College Gate, Asad Gate, Russell Square, Panthapath, Sonargaon Hotel, Hatirjheel West, Niketan, Rampura, Aftabnagar West, Aftabnagar Central, Aftabnagar East, and Dasherbandi.

The feasibility study for the MRT-5 southern route was conducted in November last year where some \$5.5 billion was estimated as the total project cost for the 17.40km line. The MRT-5 southern route is expected to help ease nagging traffic congestion in Dhaka city.

## ADB approved 490m during July-Sept'23

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the government of Bangladesh on 14 August signed an agreement for US\$190 million in additional loan for the ongoing Rural Connectivity Improvement Project that is upgrading rural roads, making agricultural areas more productive, and improving socioeconomic centres in rural Bangladesh.

Sharifa Khan, secretary of the Economic Relations Division, and Edimon Ginting, ADB Country Director for Bangladesh, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides. Through this project, ADB will expand and improve rural road networks by making

the road design and construction more climate and disaster resilient. The ADB country director said this project also helps improve transport efficiency in rural areas, boost agricultural productivity, and generate employment.

The Asian Development Bank will also provide Bangladesh \$300 million to enhance the skills of labour force, create more employment and elevate remittance. A loan agreement was signed between the Bangladesh government and the ADB at the Economic Relations Division in the capital on 28 August.

Sharifa Khan, secretary of ERD and Jiangbao Ning, deputy country

director of ADB assigned to Bangladesh, signed the agreement. The finance department of the Ministry of Finance will implement the programme titled 'Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Programme' in the period 2024-2041 with the collaboration of different government and private training institutions.

The objectives of this programme are to increase the flow of remittances by sending skilled manpower abroad and providing technical and ICT based training to labour force to enhance their skills. Finance division will be responsible for fund management and coordinator of this programme.

## AIIB to lend Bangladesh \$4.5b in 5 yrs

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will provide US\$4.5 billion to Bangladesh during the next five years. The loan is expected to help finance efforts to face climate change-induced problems, and play a pivotal role in creating a bridge between public-and private-sector investments, according to a press release, issued after the eighth annual meeting of the bank in Egypt held in 25-26 September.

A Bangladesh delegation, led by Economic Relations Division (ERD)



Secretary Sharifa Khan, attended the meeting and urged the AIIB board of directors to provide increased financing for construction of the climate-resilient infrastructure. The main theme of this year's annual

meeting was "Sustainable Growth in a Challenging World". Ms Khan said at the meeting that "developing countries like Bangladesh are under severe threat of facing highest losses from climate change-induced disastrous events".

The AIIB has so far provided loans worth \$3.27 billion to Bangladesh against 18 projects after granting the first loan worth \$165 million in a project in 2016.

## Danish firms offer \$1.3b for offshore wind energy project

Bangladesh's offshore wind energy is expecting a big boost soon as Denmark-based investor CIP and developer COP have joined hands



ever investment offer for Bangladesh in the wind energy sector.

Being able to generate electricity round the clock, the project could be a competitive option for Bangladesh as the electricity generation from offshore wind power costs around \$0.075 per kilowatt hour or Tk7.86 at the current rate, which is much cheaper than coal or LNG and oil-fired power plants.

investors worldwide, according to its official data.

The project is expected to be operational in 2028 in line with grid expansions in Cox's Bazar and Teknaf. The proposal comes at a crucial point in time when despite its ambitious clean energy targets, Bangladesh struggles to progress due to land constraints to produce solar power and poor prospects in hydropower.

with local conglomerate Summit Group for developing a \$1.3 billion wind power project off the coast of the Bay of Bengal. In a proposal submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, the Danish investors wished to implement the project with 500MW capacity, which would be the largest-

Copenhagen Offshore Partners (COP) develops offshore wind projects exclusively for Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), one of the leading green infrastructure fund managers in the world. To date, CIP has raised \$19 billion from more than 120 international institutional

The initial investment proposal and continued collaboration offer made by the consortium were disclosed in a COP press release issued on 18 July. The utility-scale offshore wind project with an initial capacity of 500MW is expected to be a key driver of Bangladesh's progression into a green nation.

## Japan grants \$3.38m for human resource development in Bangladesh

Japan has pledged to provide a funding of \$3.38 million for the project known as 'The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)'. An exchange of notes and a grant agreement were signed between Bangladesh and Japan on 17 July.

The Exchange of Notes and Grant Agreement were signed by Sharifa Khan, Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) under the Ministry of Finance, representing Bangladesh. His Excellency Iwama Kiminori, Japan's Ambassador to Bangladesh, signed the 'Exchange of

Notes,' while Ichiguchi Tomohide, Chief Representative of JICA



Bangladesh Office, signed the 'Grant Agreement' on behalf of the Japanese government.

This initiative aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of the selected individuals, allowing them

to contribute effectively to the development of Bangladesh upon their return.

## Bangladesh 12th most attractive destination for Chinese investors: EIU

Bangladesh has climbed a whopping 40 notches up in a decade in the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) China Going Global Investment Index 2023, standing as the 12th most attractive destination for Chinese investors after India (11th).

Released on 7 September, the 2023 edition of the index ranked 80 investment destinations based on their appeal to Chinese investors, using around 200 indicators. Bangladesh was in 52nd position in the 2013 edition of the index.

The Chinese president, Xi Jinping, launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, and in the decade since, Chinese companies have become formidable global investors. The EIU forecasted that China will regain its position as the second-largest source of overseas direct investment (ODI) by 2024. Singapore topped the 2023 ranking as the most attractive destination for Chinese investors.

"Its appeal lies in its status as an established global business hub, its cultural ties to China and its neutrality in the tensions between China and the West", read the

report. Indonesia came 2nd as the attractiveness of the country stems from its nickel reserves, abundant



cheap labour and vast market size. It is followed by Malaysia (3rd), Hong Kong (4th), Thailand (5th), Vietnam (6th), Switzerland (7th), the United Arab Emirates (8th), Saudi Arabia (9th), and Chile (10th).

The report highlighted, "South-east and South Asia have climbed steadily in the ranking since 2013, reflecting the regions' robust growth outlook, growing middle class, abundant strategic natural resources and relative openness towards Chinese investors."

The EIU has pinpointed four motivations for which Chinese companies "go global": market

expansion, supply-chain development, natural resources and technology and innovation. The risk considerations include a country's bilateral relations with China and the operational and financial risks to general foreign investors.

Within these categories of opportunity and risk, they have selected a series of around 200 forward-looking quantitative indicators to generate the overall China Going Global Investment Index.

Bangladesh ranked as the second most attractive destination for market expansion investment, after Indonesia. The EIU forecasted that Indonesia and Bangladesh will be among the top 20 global economies by 2040, based on market size, economic growth and the potential of the aforementioned sectors.

Bangladesh stood as the 8th most attractive destination for supply-chain development investment, the sub-ranking assessed the competitiveness of different investment destinations as key supply-chain nodes of Chinese manufacturers.

## Bangladesh accounts for 7.90pc of global RMG exports

Bangladesh's share in the global clothing-export market increased significantly to 7.90 per cent last year from 6.40 per cent in 2021, according to latest statistics released by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The country's share in the global ready-made garments (RMG) market was 6.30 per cent in 2020, 6.80 per cent in 2019 and 6.40 per cent in 2018.

The statistics show that total export of RMG from Bangladesh reached US\$44.35 billion in 2022 in an around 27-percent annual growth. The country posted the highest growth in RMG export among the





top 10 exporters in the past year. World Trade Statistical Review 2023, released by the WTO on 31 July, also showed that the country retained the second position in the clothing export, preceded by China and followed by Vietnam, in 2022.

Vietnam's share in the global garment-trade cake increased to 6.10 per cent in 2022 from 5.80 per cent in 2021. Annual RMG exports from Vietnam stood at US\$35.30 billion in the last year. China still reigns as the number one although its share in the clothing-export market declined to 31.70 per cent in the past year from 32.80 per cent in the 2021.

The European Union (EU), according to the WTO publication, is the second-largest global exporter of RMG. So, technically, Bangladesh is the third-largest global RMG exporter, and Vietnam is the fourth-largest. "If EU's combined export figures were disaggregated country-wise, Bangladesh and Vietnam would be the second and third top exporters of clothing in the world market," says the WTO account. The EU's country-wise figure is not available in the WTO publication, however.

Meanwhile, Turkey and India remained in the fifth and sixth positions followed by Indonesia,

Cambodia, Pakistan and the United States of America (USA). The world trade report also shows the annual export value of top 10 clothing exporters stood at \$492 billion in the last year which was \$460 billion in 2021. The value was recorded at \$378 billion in 2020.

Bangladesh is also the fourth-largest importer of textiles on the global market, according to the WTO statistical review report. The country imported textiles worth around \$14.80 billion in the last year which was also the 3.90 per cent of the global share. The European Union is the top importer of textiles followed by the USA and Vietnam.

## Garment export to non-traditional markets increased

According to data compiled by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh's garment export to India has crossed the \$1 billion mark for the first time in FY23. The shipments experienced a remarkable 42 percent year-on-year increase, reaching \$1,012 million during the July-June period.

The duty-free benefit under the South Asian Free Trade Area has significantly contributed to the

recent growth, with exports nearly doubling from \$421 million in FY21 to the current level. Furthermore, Bangladesh's garment exports to Australia also reached the \$1 billion milestone in the last fiscal year,



demonstrating the potential for further expansion in that market.

Additionally, Japan has emerged as a promising destination, with shipments surging 46 percent year-on-year to \$1,599 million in FY23. Despite slower exports to traditional markets, such as the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom, Bangladesh experienced a notable 31 percent year-on-year growth in garment exports to non-traditional markets.

## Share in EU apparel market jumps to 22.20%

Bangladesh's apparel exports to the European Union (EU) have surged, capturing a 22.20% share of the market in 2022. In contrast, the market share of the country's top competitor, China, declined to 29.24%, according to the latest data from Eurostat – the statistical agency of the European Commission.

Bangladesh, the second-largest apparel exporter to the EU, exported \$22.89 billion worth of apparel to the market last year, showcasing a

remarkable 35.69% year-on-year growth. Meanwhile, China's exports stood at \$30.15 billion, with a growth rate of 17.01%.

In 2021, Bangladesh's market share accounted for 19.80%, valued at \$16.87 billion, while China dominated with a 30.22% share, totaling \$30.22 billion. The latest data reveals that the EU's overall apparel imports from all countries reached a

staggering \$103.09 billion in 2022, marking an impressive 20.97% year-on-year increase compared to \$85.23 billion in the previous year.



## Bangladesh outraces rivals in apparel export growth in US

Bangladesh's apparel exporters displayed the sharpest growth in its place as the third-largest apparel supplier for the US with a 9.75 percent in 2022, leaving behind their competitors in the countries such as China and Vietnam, owing mainly to the lingering tariff war between Washington and Beijing and capacity building. Last year, apparel imports into the world's largest economy jumped 22.48 percent year-on-year to \$99.93 billion, according to data from the Office of Textiles and Apparel (Otexa) of the US Department of Commerce. It was \$81.58 billion in 2021.

The country's clothing imports from Bangladesh surged 36.38 percent to \$9.74 billion in 2022, up from \$7.16 billion in 2021 and \$5.40 billion in 2018. With this, Bangladesh retained

percent share, an improvement from 8.76 percent in 2021.

Bangladesh's export to the US, the single largest export market for the country, has risen every year as China has been losing its dominance in the global apparel market because of the trade war that began in 2018. China's share in the global apparel business was 18.2 percent in 2000, 26.6 percent in 2005, and 36.6

percent in 2010. But it declined to 31.7 percent in 2022.

Building up of the capacity and brightening of the image of the largest foreign currency earner following remediation in line with global standards have also helped Bangladesh raise its exports to the US. Globally, Bangladesh's reputation as a predictable supplier received a major boost during the peak of the coronavirus pandemic as the country kept factories open for most of the time whereas many competitors had kept their industries closed for a longer period.

Bangladesh has already waived the mandatory fumigation requirement for importing cotton from the US, a move that will cut the time and cost needed to bring in the key textile raw materials for importers.

Source : The Daily Star

## Merchandise export to UK hits \$5b milestone

Bangladesh has achieved a significant milestone by surpassing the \$5 billion-mark in exports to the United Kingdom. In the just concluded FY23, Bangladesh's merchandise exports to the European country peaked at \$5.3 billion, demonstrating substantial growth from \$4.8 billion in the previous year and doubling the figures from a decade ago when it stood at \$2.7 billion.

Key export items contributing to this achievement include ready-made garments (RMG), frozen food, IT

engineering, leather and jute goods, as well as bicycles. Approximately 80% of the exports comprise knitwear and woven garments. In terms of imports, Bangladesh's trade with the UK amounted to \$380 million during the first 11 months of FY23 till May.

It was projected to reach around \$450 million by the end of the fiscal year on 30 June. At

present, after the European Union and the United States, the UK is the



third largest export destination for Bangladesh.

## 200 LEED-certified apparel units in Bangladesh now

Bangladesh's garment industry has achieved a significant feat as two additional factories were granted certification by the United States

Green Building Council (USGBC) for their eco-friendly endeavours, raising the overall count to 200 certified factories.

The platinum-rated LEED certification from USGBC was conferred upon Lida Textile & Dyeing Limited, situated in Kaliakoir

of Gazipur, and Liz Fashion Industry Limited, also located within the same industrial zone. Among the 200 certified factories, 73 have attained platinum-level certification, 113 hold gold-level recognition, 10 have achieved silver-level, and four have received standard certification. Remarkably, Bangladesh stands as



home to a considerable number of top-tier factories on a global scale. Specifically, 13 out of the top 15 LEED green factories worldwide are located within the country's borders. The year 2022 saw 30 garment factories acquiring LEED certification, while in the current year, 2023, 18 factories have already achieved this distinction.

## Fakir Knitwear to invest \$45.8m at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar

Fakir Knitwear Limited is set to invest about \$45.82 million to set up a knit composite factory at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN) in Mirsarai, Chattogram. The company, which has been contributing to the country's garment, logistics and agricultural sectors since 1936, expects to create employment opportunities for about 2,000 people at the unit.

As such, Fakir Knitwear on 9 August signed an agreement with the Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (Beza) for the allotment of 15 acres of land at the BSMSN. Fakir Mashrikuzzaman, deputy managing director of Fakir Knitwear, and Md Mozibor Rahman, executive

member (investment development) of Beza, signed the agreement at the latter's office.

Sheikh Yusuf Haroon, executive chairman of Beza, said Fakir Knitwear is well-known in its respective sector as a developing business with a good reputation in local and international markets. "Therefore, linking up these investors with Beza will lead to increased investment in the economic zone as well as diversification of products," he added.

Haroon also said that although there are many challenges in providing services to the investors of economic zones, Beza is successfully

ensuring water, gas and electricity connections through coordination



with related government agencies. Also, Beza has been working with various development partners to ensure international standards of central effluent treatment plants at the BSMSN, he added.

## Chinese companies at Adamjee EPZ and Mongla EPZ

Chinese company Cherry Button Limited is going to establish a garment accessories manufacturing factory at Adamjee EPZ with an investment of \$12.2 million. Bangladesh Export Processing Zones

Authority (BEPZA) and Cherry Button Limited signed an agreement to this effect at the BEPZA Complex in Dhaka on 12 September.

Member (Investment Promotion) of BEPZA Ali Reza Mazid and Chairman of Cherry Button Limited MA Miaoyan (Jasika) signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides. Executive Chairman of BEPZA Major General Abul Kalam Mohammad Ziaur Rahman, witnessed the agreement signing ceremony.

This fully foreign-owned company will produce annually 1650 million pieces of metal buttons, plastic

buttons, metal zippers, vislon zippers, nylon coil zippers and other accessories. The company will create job opportunities for 1068 Bangladeshi nationals.

Chinese factory QSL.S Garments Co Ltd is going to set up a ready-made garment (RMG) industry in Mongla EPZ with an investment of \$19.5 million. Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) Member (Finance) Nafisa Banu and QSL.S Garments Co Managing Director Wanle Xuan signed an agreement in this regard on behalf of their respective organisations at BEPZA Complex in Dhaka on 10 September.





BEPZA Executive Chairman Maj Gen Abul Kalam Mohammad Ziaur Rahman was present on the occasion. This fully foreign-owned company will produce annually 6 million pieces of woven and knit

garment products like shirt, T-shirt, jacket, pants, shorts, etc. They will create employment opportunities for 2,598 Bangladesh nationals.

Among others, BEPZA Executive Director (Public Relations) Nazma

Binte Alamgir, Executive Director (Investment Promotion) Md Tanvir Hossain and Executive Director (Enterprise Services) Md Khorshid Alam witnessed the signing ceremony.

### South Korean footwear company to invest \$9.39m in BEPZA EZ

South Korean company Giant BD Footwear Limited is going to invest US\$ 9.39 million to set up a shoe and shoe accessories manufacturing industry in BEPZA Economic Zone (BEPZA EZ). Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) on 10 August signed an agreement with the Korean company at BEPZA Complex in city.

Ali Reza Mazid, Member (Investment Promotion) of BEPZA and Kim

Byung Jin, Chairman of Giant BD Footwear Ltd. signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations. The Executive Chairman of BEPZA Major General Abul Kalam Mohammad Ziaur Rahman witnessed the signing ceremony.

This fully foreign owned company will produce annually 20 million pairs of different kinds of shoes/sandals and shoe accessories where

600 Bangladeshi nationals will get employment opportunity.

Among others, BEPZA Member (Engineering) Mohammad Faruque Alam, Executive Director (Public Relations) Nazma Binte Alamgir, Executive Director (Investment Promotion) Md. Tanvir Hossain and Executive Director (Enterprise Services) Md. Khorshid Alam were present at the function.

### Boosting cross-border trade : Bhanga-Benapole section to be six-lane corridor in 5 years

Country's cross-border trade is likely to get a big boost as the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) will widen the Bhanga-Jashore-Benapole highway into a six-lane corridor in the next five years. According to sources, the RHD has undertaken an Indian LoC (line of credit)-aided project to rebuild the highway aimed at improving sub-regional trade among South Asian nations as it (trade) is still very poor in volume.

The developer has recently sought approval of a Tk 138.41-billion project from the Planning Commission (PC) to upgrade the 129.17-kilometre road to four lanes and two other service lanes for slow-

moving vehicles. It will reconstruct the road from Bhanga (Faridpur) to Benapole via Jashore for connecting Bangladesh with neighbouring India through Padma Bridge.

Currently, the Bhanga-Jashore-Benapole highway is a two-lane corridor that connects the capital city of Dhaka with south-western districts and the country's largest land port Benapole. The Dhaka-Padma Bridge-Bhanga-Jashore-Benapole highway is part of the Asian Highways (AH)-01 and the SASEC Road Corridor-02.



The Dhaka-Padma Bridge-Bhanga-Jessore-Benapole highway will help accelerate both vehicular movement

and regional trade. The road will also connect the Mongla seaport with the country's western frontiers. It will be utilised for linking Bangladesh with India, landlocked Nepal and Bhutan.

### Local car filters reaches global market

Bogura Motors Ltd, a car filter manufacturer based in Bogura, has once again demonstrated its

presence in the international market by exporting filters worth \$11,250 to the United Kingdom last year. The

company is now setting its sights on new markets, including Spain, Portugal, and the USA, in an effort

to further develop this promising industry and diversify the “Made in Bangladesh” brand.

Additionally, Bogura Motors plans to establish another factory in the district to tap into the country’s power plant filter market. The company exported filters to Canada in 2007 but had to halt exports due to rising production costs, despite significant demand in the Canadian market.



Bogura Motors has been dominant in manufacturing engine filters, usually of three types – air filters, oil filters, and fuel filters – for over 30 years and has witnessed an increasing demand for quality filters both domestically and internationally, prompting the company to enhance its production capacity.

## BGMEA - Green Power sign MoU to support garment factories in becoming greener and more energy efficient

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Green Power Limited signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 15 July to support garment factories in becoming more energy efficient with green and clean sources of energy.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan and Managing Director of Green Power Shaikh Ehsanul Habib inked the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. Former Vice President of BGMEA Md. Moshikul Azam Shajal and Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Labour and ILO Affairs ANM Saifuddin were also present at the MOU signing

ceremony held at BGMEA Complex. As per the understanding, Green Power will provide technical support to BGMEA factories regarding adopting green and clean energy including solar power, and aid then in achieving optimum energy efficiency.

To that end, they will also conduct a reconnaissance survey of interested member factories to find options available to incorporate any reliable, low-cost and cleaner sources of power with possible installation of Solar Power and Battery Energy Storage System

[BESS] based on day-load curve of their enterprise.

Upon the consent of the BGMEA member factory Green Power team



may study BGMEA member’s power consumption pattern and may generate an ‘Energy Audit Report’ optionally upon having their interest into it.

## Bangladesh elected FAO council member for second consecutive term

Bangladesh was unanimously elected a member of the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for the second consecutive term from the Asia Region for three years from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027. The

election was held at the 43rd Session of the Conference of the FAO held in Rome on 6 July, where 194 member states participated.

Being a member at the FAO Council, Bangladesh with other council members will lead the organisation at both policy and executive levels in deciding and advising on matters pertaining to

the implementation of programme and budget, monitoring of activities under the new results-based framework, monitoring of the implementation of governance decisions, and oversight of the administration of the organisation for three years.

Bangladesh embassy in Rome remained pro-actively engaged to obtain support in favour of



Bangladesh. The ongoing 43rd Session of the FAO Conference is being held on a hybrid modality at the FAO Headquarters, Rome. The eight-member Bangladesh delegation is led by Agricultural Minister Dr Muhammad Abdur Razzaque.

The delegation also includes Agriculture Secretary Wahida Akter and Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO Md Shameem Ahsan. The Permanent Representative and the Economic Counsellor from the embassy of Bangladesh attended the conference in-person.

The FAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Bangladesh was also earlier elected as a member at the FAO Council in its 42nd Session of the Conference for the term 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2024.

## Jackfruit to be promoted as special agri product by FAO project

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations has initiated the promotion of jackfruit's production and marketing as one of the special agricultural products from Asia and the Pacific region under its One Country One Priority Product or the OCOP project. Bangladesh and 21 other countries from Asia and Pacific countries have participated in a two-day regional launch event, hosted by the FAO during 19-20 July.

Other regional countries were Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu and Vietnam. Under the OCOP project, Bangladesh was selected as one of the first five demonstration countries, along with Egypt, Malawi, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uzbekistan.

Robert D Simpson, FAO representative in Bangladesh, said,

'This event is a great opportunity to further promote Bangladesh's national fruit. There is a strong and growing demand for jackfruit globally and FAO is assisting producers to exploit this potential.' Addressing the event, additional secretary of Ministry of Agriculture Ruhul Amin Talukder said that jackfruit was one of the most nutritious and widely grown fruits in the country, as the country produces more than 10 million metric tonnes jackfruits annually.

To make the national fruit profitable, he emphasised research to develop its varieties and the formation of protocols for its production and processing. In his presentation, chief scientific officer and head for the pomology division of Horticulture Research Centre Babul Chandra Sarker pointed out that post-harvest loss of the fruits is about 30 per

cent because of lack of knowledge on harvest maturity, packaging and handling during loading and



unloading the fruits.

To reduce the post-harvest losses and maintain the fruit quality, he suggested integrated improved postharvest management practices in the existing value chain. Earlier this year, the FAO launched a project to support small-scale jackfruit farmers and entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is the world's second largest jackfruit producer and jackfruit accounts for more than a fifth of the country's total fruit production.

## Govt moves to allow private sector in fuel oil refinery, retailing

In a major policy shift, the government is moving towards ending its fuel oil monopoly as it has drafted outlines to allow the private sector to import and refine crude oils and market their products through their own networks. Under the initiative, the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) will procure more than half of diesel, petrol,

octane, jet fuel, and furnace oil during the initial five years of private sector fuel production entering the market.

The Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources has already drafted a policy framework in this regard. The draft policy states that private refineries will have to sell a

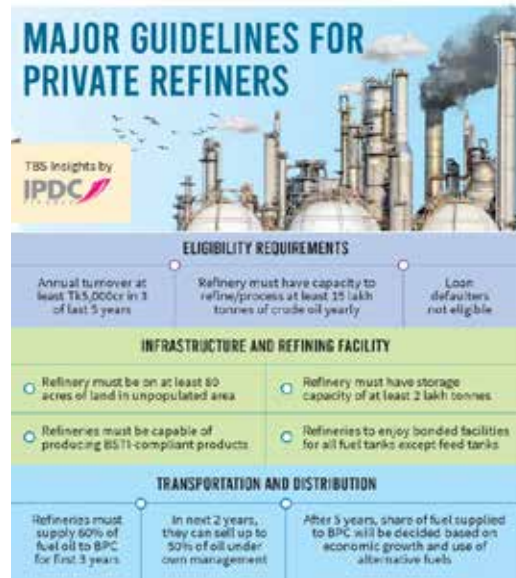
minimum of 60% of the total fuel oil outputs – diesel, octane, petrol, jet fuel, furnace oil and by-products- to the BPC at a government-determined price during the initial three years from the commencement.

The remaining 40% of the fuel oil can be sold by the refineries through their own marketing network. If a private



refinery faces difficulties selling 40% of its oil due to an insufficient sales network, it has the option to sell any surplus amount to the BPC. In the subsequent two years, private refineries are permitted to sell up to 50% of their produced oil through their own management. The proportion will be reviewed after the initial five years of the private sector's engagement in the coveted fuel oil business.

The draft stipulates that private refineries will be able to export their excess products abroad after fulfilling their sales through their marketing network. They will also be allowed to establish petrol pumps on roads and highways, and in upazilas,



and metropolitan areas to retail their produced fuel oil. The government-

set retail prices will be maintained at these designated petrol pumps.

Historically, since the country's independence, the government has been responsible for fuel oil supply management. The state-owned BPC has been the sole player in this field.

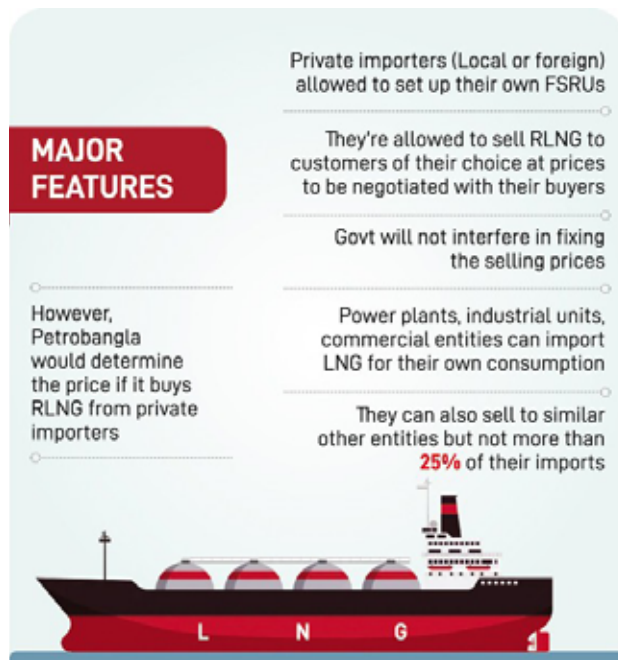
Since 2013, the government has refrained from providing subsidies on fuel. This approach will continue from 2026 onwards, as outlined in the terms of the IMF loan.

## Import of both LNG & RLNG goes private

The private sector is now free to import re-gasified LNG (RLNG) through pipeline besides LNG under an amended policy. Private parties concerned will have the liberty to sell re-gasified LNG at the prices negotiated with their buyers under the amended LNG-import policy adopted by the government on 2 August.

Under "The LNG or RLNG Infrastructure Installation, Import and Supply Policy 2019 (amended 2023)", private parties, local or foreign, are free to import both LNG and RLNG, re-gasify LNG by building floating storage and re-gasification unit (FSRU) and sell the re-gasified liquefied natural gas to consumers of their choice.

The government will not interfere in fixing the selling prices of the re-gasified LNG imported by the private parties. The private-sector LNG or RLNG importers would also be allowed to use the imported LNG or re-gasified LNG in their own power plants and industrial units and for other commercial purposes.



Private sector was allowed only to import LNG, re-gasify it in their FSRUs and sell the re-gasified fuel to clients under the previous policy adopted four years back in 2019. But not a single private entrepreneur came up to import LNG, build FSRU and sell the fuel under their liberty.

They would also have the liberty to supply the re-gasified LNG to others' power plants, industrial units and commercial entities. The private importers will, however, be allowed to sell the 'surplus' re-gasified LNG, not exceeding 25 per cent of their total imported volume, to the state-run Petrobangla that markets petroleum products locally, the policy states. But the price of the re-gasified LNG to be sold to Petrobangla should be determined by it, the policy notes.

To continue import, the private sector will have to obtain no-objection certificates (NOCs) from the government department concerned every year. According to sources the

government has amended the LNG-import policy to allure private sector to import this expensive fuel as the

state-run corporation, Petrobangla, has been struggling to clear outstanding overdue payments to

LNG suppliers - both spot and term - and international oil companies (IOCs) due to US dollar crunch.

## Digital fabrics development aiding exports

Bureau 555, a joint venture between two entrepreneurs of Bangladesh and the United Kingdom, has been facilitating garment exports through the country's first digital fabrics development facility in Gulshan, Dhaka. The facility aims to deliver quick testing reports on fabrics for international clothing retailers and brands.

It tests the fabrics' strength, elongation, bending, thickness and weight, which are mandatory data that determine the quality

of finished fabrics to be used in garment items. Usually, such data is collected at the factory level but it cannot be simulated in the fabrics as conventional testing mechanisms do not have the required facilities.

The digital fabrics development facility creates high-quality 3D samples using efficient digital workflow. Digital fabrics development conserves the manufacturing, shipping and storage cost of garment samples and also reduces time, carbon emissions,

wastage and physical sampling costs.

In the digital workflow, buyers send a piece of fabric and request the Bureau 555 to prepare data on it. The company then digitises the fabric, trims, and reviews the pattern to create and a 3D garment data for buyers. Based on the data, the patterns are made and then the manufacturers go for bulk production of the garment items as per the work orders from international retailers and brands.

## Japanese & Chinese firms to build 370MW solar power plants

Two Japanese companies and one Chinese firm have received approval from Bangladesh to invest in three solar-based power plants. The cabinet committee on purchase gave its nod to the project proposals 26 September. The plants will be built in Dinajpur, Bandarban and Feni.

The plants will have a combined capacity to produce 370 megawatts of electricity. The government will purchase power for 20 years. A 200MW plant will be set up at the Barapukuria coal mine area in Dinajpur with an estimated investment of Tk 7,168 crore. A consortium of Parker Bangladesh and Japan's Sumitomo Corporation will build it. The price of per kilowatt-hour electricity would be Tk 11.06.

A joint venture, which includes China's Fujian Yongfu Power

Engineering Company Ltd, will construct a 70MW plant in Lama upazila of Bandarban at a cost of Tk 2,486 crore. Each unit of electricity will be priced at Tk 10.96.

Marubeni Corporation, a Japanese trading and investment business conglomerate, is investing in a 100MW plant in Sonagazi of Feni. The plant will be constructed at an expenditure of Tk 3,580 crore and power will cost Tk 11.05 per unit.

Currently, Bangladesh's power generation capacity stands at 23,871MW. Of the amount, 1,194 MW comes from renewable energy sources. The government plans to raise power generation capacity from renewable sources to 24,000 MW by 2041, or 40 percent of the total. The number of ongoing projects related to renewable sources is 30 and another 79 project proposals are under consideration, according to a power division document.



## Global/Regional News

### Five key takeaways from G20 summit

The Group of 20 summit in New Delhi managed to defy expectations on 10 September and reach consensus on a joint declaration by world leaders, but not without compromises over the Ukraine conflict and action on climate change.

gross domestic product (GDP). Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has portrayed this weekend as India's diplomatic coming of age and his country's presidency as an opportunity to give a voice to the needs of the Global South.

The G20 denounced the use of force for territorial gain, but refrained from direct criticism of Russia by name. "There were different views and assessments of the situation," the leaders' statement said. Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Oleg Nikolenko criticised the statement, saying the G20 had "nothing to be proud of".



The consensus came as a surprise. In the weeks leading to the summit, sharply differing views on the war threatened to derail the meeting with Western nations demanding members call out Moscow for the invasion and Russia saying it would block any resolution that did not reflect its position.

The Global South's position in the talks helped prevent the G20 agenda from being overshadowed by Ukraine, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. "India has truly consolidated G20 members from the Global South."

*Here are five key takeaways from the two-day summit:*

#### African Union joins G20

The G20 leading economies began the weekend's proceedings by welcoming the African Union (AU), the newest member of a bloc that already represented 85 percent of the world's

Modi opened the summit's formal proceedings by inviting AU President Azali Assoumani to take a seat alongside world leaders with the ceremonial bang of a gavel. Before 9 September, the G20 comprised 19 countries and the European Union with South Africa its only member state from the continent.

The AU at full strength has 55 members, but six military-ruled nations are currently suspended. It has a collective GDP of \$3 trillion with some 1.4 billion people.

#### 'Different views' on Ukraine

G20 leaders have been deeply riven over the Ukraine war since Moscow's invasion last year, with Russian President Vladimir Putin skipping the summit entirely to dodge political opprobrium. Facing the prospect of a major diplomatic embarrassment, host India pressed members to agree on a common statement that watered down its earlier condemnation of the war.

#### Climate failures

Leaders failed to agree on a phase-out of fossil fuels despite a United Nations report a day earlier deeming the drawdown "indispensable" to achieving net-zero emissions. G20 nations account for about 80 percent of global emissions and an inability to agree on the phase-out is a cloud over a key round of climate discussions to begin in November in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates.

"We need stronger, bolder action from leaders," said Madhura Joshi, senior associate at climate think tank E3G. But for the first time, the G20 backed a target of tripling global renewable energy capacity and referenced the need for emissions to peak before 2025.

It also acknowledged limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) will require slashing greenhouse gases 43 percent by 2030 from 2019 levels.

#### 'Spice Routes' and Israeli normalisation

A broad alliance – including the United States and Saudi Arabia – unveiled ambitious plans to create a modern-day Spice Route linking Europe, the Middle East and India. If the initiative goes ahead, it would establish railways, ports, electricity



and data networks and hydrogen pipelines across the Middle East in a counterbalance to lavish Chinese infrastructure spending, potentially speeding trade between India and Europe by up to 40 percent.

The plans are also being touted as a means of helping to normalise relations between Israel and Gulf Arab states.

### India or Bharat?

For days, India has been abuzz with rumours that the official usage of the country's English name would be dropped. Modi gave the biggest signal yet of a potential change in his opening address to the summit, seated behind a country nameplate labelled "Bharat", a word steeped in Hindu religious symbolism and

dating back to ancient scripture. India and Bharat are both official names for the country under its constitution. Members of Modi's Hindu nationalist party have campaigned against using the better-known moniker India, which has roots in Western antiquity and was imposed during the British conquest.

## ASEAN summit concludes with 'fruitful' outcomes

The 43rd Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit concluded in Jakarta, Indonesia on 7 September with a series of outcomes despite rising uncertainties globally. "Within three days, 12 summits have been held, resulting in 90 outcome documents and a number of concrete agreements with partners," Indonesian President Joko Widodo said while addressing the closing ceremony of the summit.

"ASEAN's big duties will not finish in only one chairmanship. We will continue to face the complexity of global challenges," the president said. Indonesia handed over the ASEAN chairmanship for 2024 to Laos at the closing ceremony. "We must hand in hand navigate the challenges to be opportunities, navigate the rivalries to be collaborations, navigate exclusivity to be inclusivity and navigate differences to be unity," Widodo said.

During the summit, ASEAN members reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen ASEAN as an organization that is robust and agile, equipped with strengthened capacity and institutional effectiveness. Numerous documents have been adopted at the summit, including the ASEAN Concord IV and ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN as Epicentrum of Growth.

The summit under Indonesia's ASEAN chairmanship this year

is themed "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth."

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community, its unity and centrality at the 43rd ASEAN Summit.

"We reviewed ASEAN's progress and reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen ASEAN as an organization that is robust and agile, equipped with strengthened capacity and institutional effectiveness to address today's challenges and to remain relevant for its people, the region, and the world," said a Chairman's Statement of the 43rd ASEAN Summit issued on Wednesday.

ASEAN countries also reaffirmed their shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, the statement said.

They pledged to uphold regionalism and multilateralism and emphasized the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values, and norms enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter, the ASEAN Charter, and the Declaration on Zone of

Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, among others.

A series of documents have been adopted at the Summit, including the ASEAN Concord IV, ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN as an Epicentrum of Growth.

The ASEAN Concord IV consolidates the bloc's continued efforts to ensure that ASEAN matters for the region and its people, and remains an epicenter of growth in the region and beyond. ASEAN countries have vowed to further encourage their partners to engage in practical and tangible cooperation with the bloc in the four key areas of



maritime cooperation, connectivity, UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030, and economy.

"We were pleased with the significant progress in the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement," the statement said,

noting the urgent need to ensure effective implementation of RCEP to support the regional post-pandemic economic recovery.

ASEAN welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Local Currency Transaction Task Force and the

completion of the Roadmap on Regional Payment Connectivity for ASEAN, according to the statement. ASEAN countries also noted the importance of sustainable tourism as a catalyst for environmental conservation and economic growth. The bloc members also agreed that

the Philippines shall assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2026, the statement said.

Founded in 1967, ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

## G-20 Summit : PM Modi announces launch of Global Biofuel Alliance

India on September 9 announced the launch of the Global Biofuel Alliance and urged G-20 nations to join the initiative with a plea to take ethanol blending with petrol globally to 20%. The Alliance was launched by Mr. Modi along with

commence work on the Green Credit Initiative.

According to a White House readout, Mr. Biden has made turning the tide towards a clean energy transition one of his Administration's top priorities.



a host of global leaders including U.S. President Joe Biden, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit.

Besides India, the initiating members include Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Italy, Mauritius, South Africa, the UAE and the U.S., while Canada and Singapore are observer countries. "The launch of the Global Biofuels Alliance marks a watershed moment in our quest towards sustainability and clean energy. I thank the member nations who have joined this Alliance," the Prime Minister Modi said.

Earlier, while speaking at the G-20 Summit session on 'One Earth', Mr. Modi also proposed launching the G-20 Satellite Mission for Environment and Climate Observation and urged leaders to

"Tackling the climate crisis requires global action, and while in New Delhi for the G-20 Leaders' Summit, President Biden has continued to build innovative partnerships as part of a global effort to combat climate change," it said.

The Alliance, the readout said, is focused on securing the supply of biofuels, ensuring these biofuels remain affordable and are produced sustainably. "Founding members of the Alliance will continue outreach to other countries committed to these shared values with the goal of adding more countries to this effort," it said.

At the Copenhagen UN climate talks in 2009, developed countries committed to providing \$ 100 billion per year by 2020 to support developing countries in combating climate change. However, the wealthier nations failed repeatedly to fulfil this commitment.

The Global Biofuels Alliance, which the world's third biggest oil consumer wants to push during its G-20 presidency, mirrors the International Solar Alliance (ISA) piloted by New Delhi and Paris in 2015 to bring clean and affordable solar energy within the reach of all.

Biofuel is a renewable source of energy which is derived from biomass. India, which imports over 85 per cent of its crude oil needs, is gradually building capacity to produce fuel from such items as crop stubble, plant waste, and municipal solid waste. While India is on schedule to double the mixing of ethanol extracted from sugarcane and agriculture waste to 20 per cent with petrol by 2025, it is also setting up dozens of compressed biogas plants.

The Global Biofuels Alliance is aimed at facilitating cooperation and intensifying the use of sustainable biofuels across sectors, including transportation. Its focus is primarily on strengthening markets, facilitating global biofuel trade, developing concrete policy lesson-sharing and providing technical support for national biofuel programmes worldwide.

Such an initiative is also aimed at helping India's transition to alternative fuels and cutting its import bill, as the country seeks to achieve its net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2070. On the other hand, the ISA aims to mobilise more than \$1,000 billion of investment needed by 2030 for the massive harnessing of solar energy.

The International Energy Agency estimates that global sustainable biofuel production would need to

triple by 2030 to put the world's energy system on track towards net-zero emissions by 2050. Liquid

biofuels provided more than four per cent of the total transport energy supply in 2022.

## The BRICS Summit 2023: Seeking an Alternate World Order?

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) bloc met for its annual leader's summit in Johannesburg, South Africa on August 22–24, 2023. The highlight of the fifteenth summit was the agreement to admit six new member countries: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, who will officially join the group in January 2024. Ten Council of Councils (CoC) experts from BRICS members and beyond reflect on the future of the grouping and what expansion means for global governance.

The expansion of the BRICS to a BRICS+ format and the adoption of guiding principles, standards,

The recent rupee-designated oil transaction between India and the United Arab Emirates is not merely a



The fifteenth BRICS summit has gone further than any other in the recent past to modernize and galvanize the grouping. It has sent a strong signal that the post-World War II order should accept the multipolar reality and change with the times.

The slew of applications to join the BRICS is clearly a symptom of a deeper malaise. The West's proclivity to deploy unilateral financial sanctions, abuse international payments mechanisms, renege on climate finance commitments, and accord scant respect to food security and health imperatives of the Global South during the pandemic are only some of the elements responsible for the growing disenchantment with the prevailing international system.

and procedures for the same, have potentially made the BRICS a more attractive institution for consensus-building and dialogue in the developing world. Even the profile of the new members suggest that the system is headed for something beyond traditionally "acceptable" partners in the eyes of the West. The presence of Iran especially and the reactions to it in the coming days will be interesting to follow.

Another important aspect will be how these partners tap into the new systems of cooperation that the BRICS has been attempting to set up. Hype about a common BRICS currency might be impractical and premature, but trading in national currencies is becoming a reality.

swipe at the petrodollar arrangement that has prevailed since 1973. It is also a signal that the world's major commodity exporters and importers can try to reduce their dependence on the dollar. If not a new world order, the BRICS expansion is certainly an attempt at an alternative world order, one with a more sympathetic ear for the developing many versus the developed few.

The challenge ahead will not be who joins the BRICS as a partner country but who holds the key to decisions on policy positions. The consensus-driven decision-making process of the BRICS will not make policymaking easier but the attempt to democratize is worth a serious effort.

## Market for clean energy minerals surges to \$320bn: IEA

The market for the minerals crucial to the clean energy transition soared to \$320bn last year but still faces a number of obstacles, including volatile prices, supply chain snarls and geopolitical tensions, according to the International Energy Agency

(IEA). The market for minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and copper doubled between 2017 and 2022, fuelled by the record deployment of clean technologies such as solar panels and electric car batteries, the IEA said on 11 July. Lithium, nickel

and cobalt are crucial to battery performance, longevity and energy density. Copper is a cornerstone for all electricity-related technologies. An energy system powered by clean energy technologies requires more minerals to build solar plants,





wind farms and electric vehicles compared with their fossil fuel-based counterparts. A shift to a clean energy system has therefore caused a considerable increase in the requirements for these minerals.

“Rapid growth in demand is providing new opportunities for the industry,” the agency said in its first annual IEA Critical Minerals Market Review. “But a combination of volatile price movements, supply chain bottlenecks and geopolitical concerns has created a potent mix of risks for secure and rapid energy transitions,” it added.

The IEA, which advises developed nations on energy policies, said the “affordability and speed of energy transitions” will depend on the availability of critical mineral

supplies. Prices rose in 2021, and early 2022 as the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in bottlenecks across supply chains and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine caused major disruptions to commodity markets.

Most prices then evened out in the latter half of 2022 and into 2023, but they remain well above historical averages, the IEA said. “As things stand, 2023 could be a crucial year for clean energy technology prices,” the report said.

## Summit Group to invest \$3b in clean-energy push

Bangladesh’s Summit Group plans to invest \$3.0 billion in solar, wind and hydroelectricity generation projects in south Asia as a part of its clean energy push and efforts to diversify its fossil fuel-based business. Summit Power International, the Singapore-based holding company for all power generation assets of Bangladesh’s Summit Group in which Japanese utility JERA holds a 22 per cent stake, will build 1,000 megawatts of solar and wind energy projects with battery storage in India.

Summit, which operates over a dozen fossil fuel-based power

generation units and owns one of the country’s two floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) to



handle imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG), also plans to build 700 megawatts of hydro power plants in Bhutan and Nepal.

LNG had been central to Bangladesh’s economic growth in the last decade, as millions gained access to the

electricity grid for the first time. The super-chilled fuel, along with rapidly dwindling local gas reserves, generated about two-thirds of its electricity over the second half of the last decade.

However, high global LNG prices after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, difficulty paying for fuel imports amid declining forex reserves and value of its currency and unexpected spikes in demand due to erratic weather resulted in the south Asian nation facing its worst power crisis in a decade this year.

## 25 countries reduced poverty fifty percent in 15 Years, while 1.1 billion remain poor

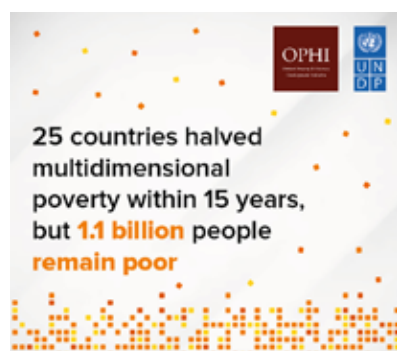
Nearly one in three ‘poor’ countries surveyed halved their global poverty rating within 15 years, according to the latest report of the global Multidimensional Poverty Index

(MPI), released on 10 July by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Oxford’s Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).

However, according to the 2023 release, 1.1 billion out of 6.1 billion people internationally (just over 18%) live in acute multidimensional poverty across 110 countries. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for around half of these (534 million), while South Asia accounts for some (389 million). Together, these regions are home to around five out of every six poor people.

1.1 billion out of 6.1 billion people internationally live in acute multidimensional poverty...but some countries recorded remarkable reductions in poverty... in just four years from 2010, more people exited poverty in China (69 million) than live in the UK.

Nevertheless, some countries recorded remarkable reductions in poverty. India saw 415 million people exiting poverty within just 15 years from 2005 to 2021. And, in just four years from 2010, more people exited poverty in China (69 million) than live in the UK. While Indonesia



saw an eight million reduction in the number of MPI poor in the five years to 2017.

Countries halved their MPI in periods as short as four to 12 years, demonstrating the feasibility of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of halving poverty (according to national definitions) within 15

years. There was steady progress in multidimensional poverty reduction before the pandemic. However, the negative impacts of the pandemic in dimensions such as education are significant and can have long-lasting consequences. The report on 110 countries' MPI ratings, demonstrates that poverty reduction is achievable. But lack of comprehensive data

over the COVID-19 pandemic poses challenges in assessing immediate prospects, according to the compilers. Despite these encouraging trends, the lack of post-pandemic data for most of the 110 countries covered by the global MPI restricts our understanding of the pandemic's effects on poverty.

## Global wealth projected to rise 38% by 2027, despite recent decline - study

Global wealth, as measured in personal holdings of assets from real estate to stocks and shares, is projected to rise 38% by 2027, driven largely by emerging markets, a study published by Credit Suisse and UBS (UBSG.S) on 15 August. The annual Global Wealth Report, which estimates the wealth holdings of 5.4 billion adults across 200 markets, says global wealth will reach \$629 trillion over the next five years.

The upbeat outlook comes despite 2022 recording the first fall in net global household wealth since the 2008 global financial crisis. In nominal terms, net private wealth dipped 2.4% last year, with the loss concentrated in more prosperous

regions such as North America and Europe, the report showed. A stronger U.S. dollar was a big factor.

The largest wealth increases last year were recorded for Russia, Mexico, India and Brazil. The report forecast wealth in emerging economies, including the BRICS countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - will rise 30% by 2027.

It expects the further increases in emerging markets to contribute to a reduction in global wealth inequality in the coming years. The largest declines last year came from financial assets, as opposed to non-financial assets such as real estate, which remained resilient. Broken

down on an individual basis, this meant adults were \$3,198 worse off by the end of last year.



However, "global median wealth, arguably a more meaningful indicator of how the typical person is faring, did in fact increase by 3% in 2022 in contrast to the 3.6% fall in wealth per adult," the report said.

## Global trade finance gap expands to \$2.5t in 2022 : ADB Survey

The global trade finance gap grew to a record 2.5 trillion US dollars in 2022 from 1.7 trillion dollars two years earlier, as rising interest rates, flagging economic prospects, inflation, and geopolitical volatility reduced the capacity of banks to deliver trade financing, according to a survey by ADB. The trade

finance gap is the difference between requests and approvals for financing to support imports and exports.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) released the 2023 Trade Finance Gaps, Growth and Jobs Survey on 5 September. Rebounding strongly after the COVID-19 pandemic, global goods exports grew in 2021 and 2022 at 26.6 per cent and 11.5 per cent respectively, the survey shows. Demand for trade finance surged on the back of this sharp recovery, but heightened economic risks made finance more difficult to secure than before, it said.

The survey is the world's leading barometer of trade finance health. It includes data from 137 banks and 185 companies from around 50 countries. Respondents said they faced continued constraints in 2022 due to rising interest rates and financial market uncertainties, set against the backdrop of a global economic slowdown, and geopolitical instability.

Around 60 per cent of responding banks reported that the Russian invasion of Ukraine impacted their trade finance portfolios due to growing geopolitical uncertainty and increased commodity prices. For the first time, the 2023 trade gaps survey



focuses on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, along with digitalization, in a bid to assess their impact on relevant supply chains and the trade finance gap.

Most of the banks and companies that took part in the survey believe that ESG alignment could potentially help reduce the trade financing gap. The top supply chain challenge cited by firms surveyed was insufficient

financing. They identified access to adequate financing, reliable logistics, and the use of digital technology as the three most important components of resilient supply chains.

## Global public debt hits record \$92 trillion : UN

Global public debt surged to a record \$92 trillion in 2022 as governments borrowed to counter crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, with the burden being felt acutely by developing countries, a United Nations report said.



Domestic and external debt worldwide has increased more than five times in the last two decades, outstripping the rate of economic growth, with gross domestic product only tripling since 2002, according to the report, released in the run up to a G20 finance ministers and central bank governors' meeting July 14-18.

"Markets may seem not be suffering – yet. But people are," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters. "Some of the poorest countries in the world are

being forced into a choice between servicing their debt, or serving their people."

Developing countries owe almost 30% of the global public debt, of which 70% is represented by China, India and Brazil. Fifty-nine developing countries face a debt-to-GDP ratio above 60% - a threshold indicating high levels of debt.

"Debt has been translating into a substantial burden for developing countries due to limited access to financing, rising borrowing costs, currency devaluations and sluggish growth," the UN report added. Furthermore, the international financial architecture made access to financing for developing countries both inadequate and expensive, the UN said, pointing to net interest debt payments exceeding 10% of revenues for 50 emerging economies worldwide.

"In Africa, the amount spent on interest payments is higher than spending on either education or health," the report found with 3.3 billion people living in countries that spend more on debt interest payments than on health or

education. "Countries are facing the impossible choice of servicing their debt or serving their people." Private creditors, such as bondholders and banks, represent 62% of developing countries' total external public debt. In Africa, this creditor participation grew from 30% in 2010 to 44% in 2021, while Latin America has the highest ratio of private creditors holding external government debt for any region at 74%.

The United Nations said multilateral lenders should expand their financing, with measures such as a temporary suspension of International Monetary Fund (IMF) surcharges - commissions charged to borrowers using its credit lines extensively - and increased financing access for countries in debt distress.

A debt workout mechanism is also needed "to address the slow progress of the G20 Common Framework", the authors said, without providing any further details on how that mechanism should work. The debt treatment framework was adopted by the Group of 20 major economies and official creditors in October 2020, and aims to include non-Paris club members such as China in debt relief.

## ADB - Deutsche Bank ink deal to boost supply chain financing

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Deutsche Bank signed a risk participation agreement to enhance access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Asia and the Pacific. The agreement was signed between ADB's Trade and

Supply Chain Finance Programme (TSCFP) and Deutsche Bank AG through its Singapore branch on 5 September.

The agreement will enhance Deutsche Bank's ability to support





SMEs and other corporate clients by releasing more capital for use in key economic sectors in the region, like pharmaceuticals and agriculture.

Supply chain finance is critical to increasing trade by providing working capital to suppliers by

leveraging their relationships with larger corporates. With short-term revolving facilities for supply chain finance transactions, this partnership has the potential to support more than 200 million U.S. dollars in additional trade in Asia and the Pacific each year.

TSCFP is helping banks in Asia and the Pacific improve their ability to provide supply chain finance, particularly to SMEs. It is working to make global trade and supply chains green, resilient, inclusive, transparent, and socially responsible.

## India - Sri Lanka agree to boost ties through energy, power and port projects

India and Sri Lanka said on 21 July that they had agreed to improve economic ties by increasing cooperation in renewable energy and studying the feasibility of building an oil pipeline and a land bridge between the two countries. New Delhi will also help to develop a port and an economic hub at Trincomalee, a city on Sri Lanka's northeastern coast.

The announcements were made by the leaders of the two countries as Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe held talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on 21 July morning.

India's support of nearly \$4 billion between January and July last year was critical for Sri Lanka after it almost ran out of dollars and sank into a financial crisis that left it struggling to fund essential imports including fuel and medicine.

Modi said that the two leaders "adopted a vision document for our Economic Partnership" to strengthen

maritime, air, energy and people-to-people connectivity, to accelerate mutual cooperation in tourism, power, trade, higher education, and skill development.

Modi also said the two sides would work quickly to connect their electricity grids and study the feasibility of building a petroleum pipeline and a land bridge between the countries, which are about 50 km (31 miles) apart at one point. The projects to connect the power grids through undersea cables and the oil pipeline are expected to cost around \$4 billion in total.

The two countries also will soon restart negotiations on a more expansive trade deal known as the Economic and Technological Cooperation Agreement. Wickremesinghe said that he had updated Modi about the reform measures being taken by his government to resolve the island's financial crisis, and expressed

appreciation for the support provided by India for the "most challenging period in modern history".

Sri Lanka defaulted on its foreign debt last May and India is part of a



common platform established with Japan and other Paris Club members to help the island restructure its debt. India remains a key creditor to the island with \$1.9 billion in outstanding debt.

While New Delhi has traditionally had strong ties with its southern neighbour, the small island nation has become a jousting ground between India and China due to its strategic location in the Indian Ocean.

## 165 million people fell into poverty between 2020 to 2023



Over the past three years, poverty rates in poor countries have surged, with the number of additional individuals living on less than \$3.65-a-day reaching 165 million by 2023 according to a new policy brief from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), titled "The Human Cost of Inaction:

Poverty, Social Protection and Debt Servicing, 2020-2023". The entirety of these additional poor live in low - and lower-middle-income economies, with the poorest 20% in low-income countries suffering the most with their incomes still below the pre-pandemic levels in 2023. In response to this crisis, the UNDP is

calling for adaptive social protection and a “Debt-Poverty Pause” to redirect debt repayments toward critical social expenditures.

Over the past decade, debt service payments have steadily been consuming a larger and larger share of public revenue and expenditure in developing economies. As an example, compared to the average high-income country, the latest data suggests that the average low-income country devotes between double and triple the share of revenue or expenditure to servicing interest payments.

On average, low-income countries are likely to allocate more than twice as much funding to servicing net interest payments as they do to social assistance, and 1.4 times more than to healthcare. Debt servicing accounts for 60% of education expenditures in these nations.

UNDP Chief economist George Gray Molina said: “As interest rates peak in 2023, the international financial system continues to stress the need for ‘temporal and targeted relief to the poor’ affected by the crises. However, highly indebted developing countries have run out of fiscal space for continued debt-financing – which translates into a squeeze on social protection and other expenditures. In the absence of credible debt relief, these countries are not able to deliver this ‘temporal and targeted’ support.”

The brief – that builds on the findings of the UN Crisis Response Group report: A World of Debt, a growing burden to global prosperity” – calls, in the short-run, for a “Debt-Poverty Pause” to redirect debt repayment towards financing social expenditures and countering the effects of macroeconomic shocks. “This systemic addition to the

international financial architecture should be triggered automatically, to stabilize free-falls when exogenous shocks shrink developing countries’ fiscal space, bloat their debt servicing and throw households into poverty. This is the beginning of a new adaptive social protection architecture to prepare for a future prone to shocks,” said Molina.

The solution is not out of reach for the multilateral system. According to the policy brief’s calculations, it would cost little more than US\$14 billion, which is approximately 0.009 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product in 2022, to mitigate the current surge of poverty and lift out of poverty the 165 million people living on less than \$3.65 a day. This is little less, on average, than four percent of low- and middle-income countries’ public external debt service payments in 2022 – which reached \$370bn.

## Rich & developing nations must accelerate race to net zero: IEA

Rich and developing nations alike must sharply improve their net-zero targets, the International Energy Agency said on 26 September, warning that a clean energy surge



was the main reason the world’s climate goals are still achievable. Wealthy countries must now reach carbon neutrality in around 2045, five years early, and China should speed up by a decade to 2050 to keep to the Paris goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the IEA said.

“The world has already delayed too long to avoid hard choices,” the global energy watchdog said. The report, which comes ahead of crunch UN climate talks, updates the IEA’s landmark 2021 ‘Net Zero Roadmap’, which said new fossil fuel development was incompatible with global decarbonisation by mid-century.

IEA chief Fatih Birol said he was more ‘hopeful’ now than two years ago due to record growth in solar power capacity and electric car sales in line with the IEA’s pathway to net-zero emissions. He praised ‘very impressive’ policies in the United States, Europe, China and India that have helped drive clean energy investment up 40 per cent to \$1.8 trillion this year. But he added that to reach net zero this needs to reach \$4.5 trillion by 2030.

The energy sector is ‘changing faster than many people think,’ the IEA said, adding that together these clean energy technologies are projected to deliver a third of the emissions reductions needed by 2030. But it warned of the negative impact of increased fossil fuel investments and ‘stubbornly high emissions’ during the post-pandemic economic rebound and the energy crisis driven by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The world’s energy future will be at the heart of debates at the UN’s COP28 climate summit in Dubai, a major oil producer, between November 30 and December 12. The IEA warned countries not to pin their hopes on so-called carbon removal technologies — to extract CO2 molecules from the atmosphere and store them permanently — if emissions reductions are too slow.

## WTO News

### World Trade Report 2023 makes case for “re-globalization” amid early signs of fragmentation

The 2023 edition of the WTO’s World Trade Report presents new evidence of the benefits of broader, more inclusive economic integration as early indications of trade fragmentation threaten to

trading system is far stronger than the case for walking away from it,” DG Okonjo-Iweala says.

In introducing the report at the opening of the WTO’s annual Public Forum on 12 September, WTO Chief Economist Ralph Ossa said: “The main conclusion is that we need to embrace trade instead of rejecting it if we want to overcome the most pressing challenges of our time.”



unwind growth and development. The flagship publication, launched on 12 September, features findings on how re-globalization — or increased international cooperation and broader integration — can support security, inclusiveness, and environmental sustainability.

“The post-1945 international economic order was built on the idea that interdependence among nations through increased trade and economic ties would foster peace and shared prosperity. For most of the past 75 years, this idea guided policymakers, and helped lay the foundation for an unprecedented era of growth, higher living standards and poverty reduction,” WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala says in her foreword to the report. “Today this vision is under threat, as is the future of an open and predictable global economy.”

“The WTO is not perfect — far from it. But the case for strengthening the

“In particular, the report makes the case for extending trade integration to more economies, people, and issues, which is a process that we call “re-globalization,”” Mr Ossa added. Trade integration “is a powerful tool to improve living standards, which helped lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty.”

Starting with an analysis of the current state of globalization, the report confirms that geopolitical tensions are beginning to affect trade flows, including in ways that point towards fragmentation of trading relationships. WTO Secretariat calculations find, for example, that goods trade flows between two hypothetical geopolitical blocs — based on voting patterns at the UN General Assembly — have grown 4-6 per cent more slowly than trade within these blocs. However, the report contends that, despite these findings, international trade continues to thrive, implying that

talk of de-globalization is on balance still not supported by the data. The publication points to the expansion of digital services trade, environmental goods trade, and global value chains in addition to the resilience of trade to recent global crises.

The report goes on to examine the relationship between economic integration and three major challenges facing today’s global economic order: security and resilience, poverty and inclusiveness, and environmental sustainability — areas in which arguments have gained ground that globalization has not delivered as expected or exposes countries to excessive risks. Looking at the evidence, the report makes the case that “re-globalization,” which is the renewed drive towards integrating more people, economies and pressing issues into world trade, is a more promising solution to these issues than fragmentation. The report shows that trade openness is strongly linked with a reduced likelihood of conflict and has led to sharp declines in poverty for over four decades. Also, technology improvements enabled by trade have had a strong impact in reducing carbon emissions.

Finally, the report emphasizes the need for more trade and more cooperation to effectively address the major issues that policymakers are facing the world over — from security to inclusiveness to climate change. A re-invigorated and reformed WTO can play a central role in tackling these challenges.



## Report shows many G20 export restrictions remain in place, including on food and fertilizers

G20 economies introduced substantially more trade-facilitating than trade-restrictive measures on goods between mid-October 2022 and mid-May 2023. However, several export restrictions on food, feed and fertilizers remained in place, compromising the predictable flow of food through international markets and contributing to price volatility at a time when food affordability remains a major global concern. The WTO Trade Monitoring Report on G20 trade measures, issued on 4 July, shows that the war in Ukraine, COVID-19 after-effects, extreme weather and high food and energy prices continue to cause uncertainty in global trade.

to reduce the number and trade coverage of export restrictions, particularly on food, feed and fertilizers, to help dampen the price volatility that makes life harder for people around the world.”

The G20 Trade Monitoring Report makes reference to the upcoming 13th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13) in February 2024, a key opportunity for WTO members to reinforce the multilateral trading system and the predictability it provides to the global economy.

“G20 economies must continue to show restraint in implementing trade-restrictive measures and exercise leadership in supporting open and mutually beneficial trade. Their initiative and leadership between now and MC13 will be crucial for delivering results,” noted DG Okonjo-Iweala.

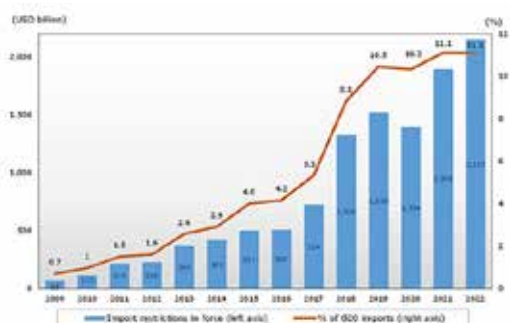
As of mid-May 2023, WTO members still had 63 export restrictions in place on food, feed and fertilizers — down from the total of 101 that had been introduced since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. In addition, 21 COVID-19-related export restrictions remain in force. Of these, G20 economies were maintaining 19 of the export restrictions on food, feed and fertilizers and 12 of the pandemic-related export restrictions.

A similar pattern has been observed for the trajectory of trade restrictions introduced in the wake of both crises. Initial and often comprehensive export bans were subsequently replaced with other restrictions, such as quotas and licensing requirements, and many were later notified to the WTO.

The report notes that from a transparency point of view this is important: it provides clear information to markets and reflects commitment to requirements set out in multilateral trade rules.

During the review period, G20 economies introduced 77 new trade-facilitating and 41 trade-restrictive measures on goods. Most of them were import measures. The trade coverage of G20 trade-facilitating measures was estimated at USD 691.9 billion (up from USD 451.8 billion in the last report, issued in November 2022) and that of trade-restrictive measures at USD 88.0 billion (down from USD 160.1 billion).

Overall, there is no sign of a rollback of the accumulated stockpile of G20 import restrictions introduced since the global financial crisis. By the end of 2022, 11.1% of G20 imports were affected by import restrictions



“The trade disruptions caused by the shocks of the past three years have pushed economic security to the forefront of policy discussions. Yet what we have seen over this period is that open global trade, anchored in the multilateral trading system, is a powerful force for economic security, enabling WTO members to better produce and access food, medical supplies, and other essentials,” said WTO Director-General Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

“It is welcome that G20 economies have been taking more steps to facilitate imports, underscoring how trade is a tool to push back against inflationary pressures. I call on them to show leadership by continuing

The report is set against a backdrop of pronounced weakening of merchandise trade, which slumped during the fourth quarter of 2022 and appears to have remained below trend in the first quarter of 2023. World merchandise trade volume growth is expected to slow from 2.7% in 2022 to 1.7% in 2023, before picking up to 3.2% in 2024.

The report points to the increase since 2020 in the implementation of new export restrictions by WTO members, first in the context of the pandemic and subsequently with the war in Ukraine and the food security crisis. These developments were first described in the November 2022 G20 Trade Monitoring Report.

implemented since 2009 and still in force.

With regard to trade remedy initiations, the average number in the reporting period increased slightly compared to the two last reports but remained down from the 2020 peak. Trade remedy actions remained an important trade policy tool for most G20 economies, accounting for 52% of all non-COVID-19-related trade measures on goods recorded in the report. Anti-dumping continued to be the most frequent trade remedy action in terms of initiations and terminations.

The significant decline in the number of trade remedy initiations since 2021 may represent efforts by members to ensure that their territories remained well stocked and accessible for a wide range of products.

With regard to services trade, some 34 new measures were introduced by G20 economies during the review period, mostly of a trade-facilitating nature, for instance when it comes to commercial presence by a service provider or the presence of natural persons of one member in the territory of another member. On the other hand, some new policies appeared to be trade restrictive, such

as measures affecting communication services and new or revised foreign investment-screening policies.

The review period saw the introduction of numerous new economic support measures by G20 economies, including environmental impact reduction programmes, renewable-energy production schemes and support for energy efficiency and decarbonization. Other measures included various support programmes for the agricultural sector. The WTO trade monitoring reports have been prepared by the WTO Secretariat since 2009.

## Goods barometer signals upturn in trade backed by strong auto demand

Global goods trade showed signs of a turnaround in the second quarter of 2023, driven by strong automobile production and sales, but further upward momentum in Q3 and beyond may be limited as long as export orders remain weak, according to the latest WTO Goods Trade Barometer issued on 24 August.

The current reading of 99.1 for the barometer index is up from the previous reading of 95.6 from last May and close to the baseline value of 100. This suggests that merchandise trade volume turned up in Q2 after two quarters of decline, but that it remains slightly below trend. Sustained recovery in Q3 and beyond is less than certain as long as the barometer's export orders component (based on purchasing managers' indices) remains weak.

The Goods Trade Barometer is a composite leading indicator for world trade, providing real-time information on the trajectory of merchandise trade relative to recent trends. Barometer values greater

than 100 are associated with above-trend trade volumes while barometer values less than 100 suggest that goods trade has either fallen below trend or will do so in the near future.

The volume of merchandise trade was down 1.0% year-on-year and 0.3% quarter-on-quarter in the first quarter of 2023, extending a downturn that began in the fourth quarter of 2022. Several factors contributed to the slump, including high food and energy prices linked to the war in Ukraine, and tighter monetary policies aimed at fighting inflation in advanced economies.

Global import demand remains weak, weighed down by sluggish economic growth in leading economies including the European Union and China. The current results are slightly weaker than WTO's most recent trade forecast issued on 5 April, which projected 1.7% growth in merchandise trade in 2023. However, the target is still attainable if trade growth picks up in the second half of the year as

expected.

Most of the barometer's component indices were slightly below trend in their latest readings. These include the export orders index (97.6), the container shipping index (99.5), the air freight index (97.5), and the raw



materials index (99.2). The main exceptions were the automotive products index (110.8), which has climbed firmly above trend, and the electronic components index (91.5), which has fallen below trend. Surging exports of automotive products have contributed to stronger-than-expected GDP growth in Japan in the first half of 2023.

Vehicle exports have also been a rare source of strength for the Chinese economy, which has struggled to gain momentum in recent months.

## WHO, WIPO, WTO renew commitment to support integrated solutions to global health challenges

At their meeting on 12 September, the Directors-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the WTO agreed on future directions for trilateral cooperation.



At their third meeting since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Directors-General of WHO, WIPO and the WTO agreed to shift the focus of trilateral cooperation from the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to increasing and broadening support for more effective and sustainable use of flexibilities in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to increase access to health technologies and to be better prepared for future pandemics.

While acknowledging the critical role of intellectual property (IP) to incentivize innovation, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros

Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WIPO Director-General Daren Tang and WTO Director-General Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala recognized the challenges faced by members to fully implement at domestic level the wide range of available options to secure timely and equitable access to health technologies. This included the TRIPS COVID-19 Vaccines Decision adopted at the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference in June 2022 as well as flexibilities generally available under the TRIPS Agreement.

They agreed that trilateral cooperation should address these challenges by intensifying activities to provide tailored support and information to members, including through joint technical seminars for delegates handling health, trade and IP issues.

To mirror this broader focus of trilateral cooperation, and to respond to members' evolving needs, the Directors-General agreed to expand the use of the WHO-WIPO-WTO COVID-19 Technical Assistance Platform beyond COVID-19. They agreed that the platform would be adapted to enable members to seek assistance for any issues at the crossroads of public health, trade and

IP. It would also be developed as an active communication and resources tool to disseminate information about relevant technical assistance activities and materials.

Noting the multiple crises caused by climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss and their impact on human health, the Directors-General agreed to make climate change and human health the topic of the next session in the series of high-level trilateral policy symposia. The 10th Trilateral Symposium will be hosted by WHO on 14 November 2023 as a public event in hybrid format open to government representatives and other interested stakeholders. The Directors-General noted that the outcome could usefully feed into the health and climate day that will be organized at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in December 2023.

The Directors-General pledged their continuing commitment to progressing trilateral cooperation as a priority for each organisation and as a widely welcomed foundation for informed and evidence-based policy analysis and support for governments to take the measures necessary to promote public health outcomes.

## South-South cooperation is key to sustainable growth DDG Xiangchen Zhang

South-South cooperation — or cooperation among developing economies — holds a special place in my heart. Seven years ago, I had the honour to be involved in designing and establishing the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development at Peking University and to unveil it together with Professor Lin Yifu. This July, I

received an invitation to the Institute's commencement ceremony, where I had the honour to share my personal experiences and aspirations for the future of South-South cooperation.

I am deeply convinced that South-South cooperation holds tremendous promise for sustainable development. I often draw

inspiration from Professor Lin Yifu's theory on development economy, which underscores the importance of considering the applicability of economic theories within specific environmental contexts. This theory resonates with a number of recommendations that emerged as early as 2006 through the Aid for Trade Task Force, acknowledging



the significant value of technical cooperation among developing economies, and its effectiveness in delivering tangible results due to the shared experiences and understanding of challenges faced.

The Task Force also emphasized the importance of harnessing the strengths of South-South partners to generate trade growth and achieve development objectives. The most recent Aid for Trade Monitoring and Evaluation exercise underlined this message, stressing the increasingly significant role that South-South cooperation can play in supporting growth in developing and least-developed country members of the WTO.

A recent webinar on Aid for Trade highlighted the substantial development potential of tapping into the growth of South-South trade and triangular cooperation among two or more developing economies and a developed economy or multilateral organization.

Experts shared examples of the tangible impact of South-South cooperation in promoting trade growth and attaining the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The expertise, resources and collaborative frameworks offered by South-South partnerships can help developing economies to overcome financial barriers and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable and resilient future.

South-South trade accounts for an increasing share of global trade. It expanded from 17 per cent of global trade in 2005 to 28 per cent in 2021, and since 2019, the value of South-South trade has surged by

approximately 50 per cent. According to UNCTAD, Latin America has seen an increase of about 45 per cent, while South Asia and East Asia have witnessed remarkable growth of over 65 per cent. This trend reflects the increasing involvement of South-South partners and of how they are diversifying trade beyond the two largest developing economy markets of China and India.

Open, rules-based trade is crucial to ensure that fast-growing developing economies share their growth with other developing economies. This approach adds to the resilience of the multilateral trading system, making it more inclusive.

In a similar vein, Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has highlighted how re-globalization — or increased international cooperation — can empower developing economies to explore growth opportunities, move up the value chain and diversify their exports. It is particularly encouraging to see that Africa's exports have been showing positive signs of diversification over the last decade.

However, developing economies are also facing pressing challenges, such as the after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts and the impact of climate change, all of which are threatening food and energy security. To help address these challenges, the new Aid for Trade programme will play a crucial role in providing a platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing and collective action.

The recent Aid for Trade Monitoring and Evaluation exercise provided valuable insights into the growing role that South-South partners play in supporting sustainable development initiatives. These partnerships are helping to address SDG 12 ("responsible consumption and production"), SDG 13 ("climate action") and SDG 15 ("life on land"), covering issues such as the green economy, the circular economy, renewable energy and waste management.

South-South cooperation also facilitates access to financing and investment opportunities for renewable energy projects, enabling developing economies to access financial resources and attract the private sector.



It is imperative that developing economies participate fully in WTO negotiations aimed at improving trade rules. Through South-South cooperation initiatives, I hope that developing economies can utilize their mutual knowledge and experiences to fully harness the potential of the multilateral trading system, allowing them to reap the immense benefits of trade for the well-being of their people. Let us work together to forge stronger partnerships, deepen engagement and work towards a more inclusive and prosperous future for global trade.

## New WTO report underscores role of trade in meeting SDGs, bolstering economic recovery

The role of trade in helping countries recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and meet the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is highlighted in a new WTO report submitted to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The report also underlines the WTO's contribution to improving livelihoods and making trade work for people. To increase awareness about the SDGs, the WTO also showcased the role of trade in attaining these goals in an exhibition took place in Geneva from 7 September.

The WTO report analyses the trade performance of developing economies in 2022 and emphasizes the contribution of trade to achieving the five SDGs reviewed at the 2023 Forum:

On SDG 6, the report notes the essential role played by trade in services in supplying water for consumption and for the treatment of wastewater. It also underscores the importance of public-private partnerships to help developing economies improve water supply and sanitation services. The report also examines "indirect trade in water", the trading of water-intensive products, particularly in the agricultural sector.

On SDG 7, the report emphasizes the role of international trade cooperation in facilitating trade and investment in affordable and clean energy products and services. Stepping up regional and multilateral cooperation will help address the trade barriers to adopting and

diffusing low carbon and energy efficient technologies. The report notes that opening up trade in cleaner and renewable energy products and energy efficient products could raise global exports of these goods by 5 per cent by 2030.



On SDG 9, the report stresses that industry innovation can be promoted through the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, the WTO's plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement and initiatives such as Aid for Trade. These agreements and initiatives can help governments adopt and implement policies aimed at supporting the creation of fruitful ecosystems for innovation, technology transfer and industrialization. The report also looks at how governments are using subsidies in their industrial policies and why multilateral cooperation on subsidies is important for a transparent, open and predictable multilateral trading system.

On SDG 11, the report notes how sustainable tourism serves as a

source of revenue, contributing to bolstering economic growth in cities and communities. International trade in sustainable goods and environmental services will be essential as cities across the world innovate to lower greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate change and address resource depletion and waste generation. The WTO can help open trade further, allowing domestic producers of green goods and services to tap into rapidly growing global markets.

On SDG 17, the report delves into the WTO's partnerships with other international organizations and development partners and the impact of these partnerships on improving the capacity of developing and least-developed economies to participate more fully in international trade. These include the Standards and Trade Development Facility, the Enhanced Integrated Framework, the Codex Alimentarius Commission for Food Safety, the Organisation for Animal Health, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the International Plant Protection Convention. An example of partnership in 2023 was the WTO's participation in the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs (LDC5) held in March in Doha, Qatar, and in the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs.

The Forum took place from 10 to 19 July in New York. It is organized annually under the auspices of the UN's Department for Economic and Social Affairs.



25 year in Bangladesh

LSI Main Products:  
Brass Metal Zipper Wire  
Zinc Alloy  
Plastic Products  
Zipper Series  
Metal Button Series  
Velcro Tape  
Any Kind of Metal Item



Poplar - Taiwan's  
Sister Concern of LSI Group  
Taiwan's Popular Cuisine  
Outlet- Jamuna Future Park  
Shop No: 5A-005.006  
Level-5, Next of Block Blaster Cinema  
Outlet-Uttara  
House No: 20 Sector: 7  
Lakedrive Road  
Uttara Model Town-Dhaka



## Contact Us

Ms. Rachel Wu (Managing Director)  
☎ +880 1713 010 229 ✉ rachelwu@lsitwn.com  
✉ racheldhk2014@gmail.com

Sales  
☎ +880 1847 228 263  
✉ info@lsitwn.com

### Head Office

House#97,(5th floor), Meghmollar, Suhrawardi Avenue, Baridhara Diplomatic Zone, Dhaka-1212.

### Factory

Plot # 20(Part)-22(New), DEPZ( Extn.Area), Ganakbari, Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka-1349.



www.lsitwn.com



# SINGER

Introducing

# Primax<sup>series</sup>

Prime **Technology**  
Max **Entertainment**

4K MEMC

Dolby Vision · Atmos

2.4 GHz  
WIFI  
Dual-band



NETFLIX YouTube



Max-Protection



DUST



THUNDER & HIGH  
VOLTAGE



HUMIDITY

**SINGER**  
Embrace Life Now

# Enhance your skills in the Receivables Finance Industry



## Learn from the Leaders

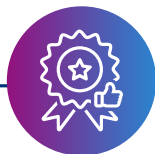
Education is a key element for the future development and professionalisation of the Factoring & Receivables finance Industry. FCI Academy constitutes the most complete education programme on Factoring & Receivables Finance, providing a wide range of globally recognised and accredited educational offerings that aim to support personal, corporate and market development globally.



### Introduction to Factoring & Receivables Finance Course

**AVAILABLE ON-DEMAND**  
**1-2 Months**  
**A short overview for beginners**

Enhance your skills and enrich your knowledge on this form of finance that shows significant growth during the last decades and supports the physical Supply Chain and economic development.



### Fundamentals on Domestic & International Factoring Course

**2-3 Months**  
**Foundations on the Factoring Industry**

Providing an overview of factoring, including a brief history of the industry, FCI, the different types of factoring, the benefits, the methods and the mechanism of the two-factor system.



### Supply Chain Finance & Reverse Factoring Course

**3-4 Months**  
**Comprehensive SCF & Reverse Factoring training**

Understand the entire trade cycle of this financial transaction, from an overview of supply chain through to the implementation of supply chain finance and client on-boarding.





standard  
chartered

## • I have a dream •

**A partner for good growth for  
the last 118 years**

We're empowering young people to unleash  
their full potential by supporting them to  
learn, earn and grow.



For more details,  
scan this QR code  
with your phone.

FLOWER SHOP



here for  
good™