



# MODERN & EFFICIENT PORT FOR TRADE & INVESTMENT



# গোদরেজ

উন্নতমানের একদিনের মুরগির বাচ্চা, ব্রয়লার, লেয়ার, গবাদিপশু,  
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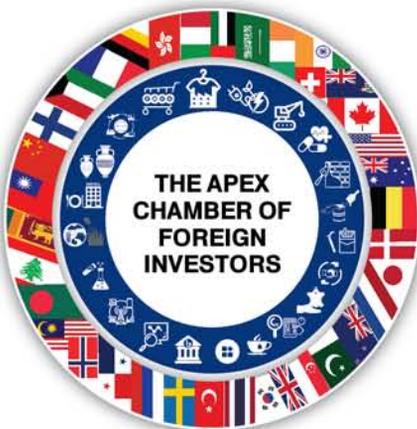
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## *From the desk of Editor*



Seaport plays an instrumental role in international trade. Enhancing port capacity, improving cargo-handling efficiency, and aligning port management standards with international best practice is crucial for Bangladesh's long-term competitiveness in international trade. As Bangladesh's prime maritime gateway Chittagong Port is currently undergoing major transformation, we have dedicated the current Edition of FICCI Monthly Bulletin to spotlight far-reaching advantages of Modern and Efficient Port for Trade and Investment.

Chittagong Port handles over 90% of Bangladesh's trade and about 98% of the container trade. In the current Edition of FICCI Monthly Bulletin we present an exclusive interview of the Honorable Chairman of Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), as well as exclusive articles by the Chief Executive Officer of RSGT Bangladesh, and the Country Director, Public Affairs, of Maersk Bangladesh Ltd., featuring crucial aspects of infrastructure development and logistic transformation through major public-private-partnership (PPP) to boost Bangladesh's competitiveness, trade, and economic growth.

As a leading business chamber FICCI highlights crucial aspects of competitiveness and growth in continuous effort to connect the dots for enhancing business prosperity, operational transformation, and Bangladesh's tangible development ambition. Besides our regular activities we organize monthly events such as Luncheon Meeting and Leaders Talk to nourish productive interaction and focused stakeholder engagement for goal-oriented transformation and inclusive growth.

A bigger, smarter and greener port will reduce cost, improve supply chain reliability and establish Bangladesh as a competitive regional maritime trade hub. We hope that the variety of contents presented in the current Edition of FICCI Monthly Bulletin will enlighten our readers with interesting insights and useful information, and motivate all the stakeholders to step up collective commitment for enhancing Bangladesh's deeper integration with global trade and investment networks through coordinated and constructive participation.

**T. I. M. Nurul Kabir**

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**Rupali Haque Chowdhury**  
President, FICCI  
Managing Director,  
Berger Paints Bangladesh Ltd.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is both an honor and a responsibility to begin my tenure as President of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a time when Bangladesh's trade and investment landscape is experiencing meaningful transformation. As we step into 2026, there is a renewed sense of optimism—one that is not driven by ambition alone, but by tangible progress we can see and feel.

Few developments illustrate this momentum better than the changes taking place at Chattogram Port. The arrival of mother vessels is already redefining Bangladesh's connection with global markets. For investors, this translates into faster cargo movement, reduced logistics costs, and greater certainty across supply chains, critical elements that directly influence competitiveness and long-term investment decisions.

The continued advancement of the deep seaport project further strengthens this positive outlook. By enabling the handling of larger vessels and increased cargo volumes, it prepares Bangladesh to engage more effectively with global shipping networks. This is not simply an expansion of capacity; it reflects growing confidence that our infrastructure is being built with the future of trade in mind.

Equally encouraging is the Laldia Terminal project, developed through international partnership with Denmark. This initiative highlights the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors and brings global expertise, modern port management practices, and sustainability standards into our maritime ecosystem. It sends a clear message that Bangladesh values quality investment and long-term partnerships.

Yet infrastructure alone cannot deliver results. The progress we are witnessing is being reinforced by strong policy leadership and active investment facilitation, particularly through the efforts of the Executive Chairman of BIDA. Continued emphasis on regulatory efficiency, coordination among agencies, and meaningful investor engagement will be essential to translating infrastructure development into lasting economic impact.

For FICCI members, modern and efficient ports are more than physical assets, they are strategic enablers that support export growth, strengthen supply chain resilience, and deepen Bangladesh's integration into regional and global value chains.

This issue brings together expert analyses, interviews, and diverse perspectives on the role of modern ports in driving trade and investment, while also highlighting inspiring contributions from FICCI member companies across sectors. I sincerely thank all contributors, sponsors, and the FICCI Secretariat for their dedication in bringing this edition to life.

As FICCI, we remain committed to constructive dialogue and partnership with all stakeholders. With sustained collaboration and clear execution, Bangladesh is steadily emerging as a competitive maritime and trade hub. I look forward to working closely with our members as we move forward together in this promising new chapter.

Warm Regards

Rupali Haque Chowdhury  
President, FICCI

# ***POLICYMAKERS' VIEWS*** **ON MODERN AND** **EFFICIENT PORT** **FOR TRADE AND** **INVESTMENT**





**Brigadier General (R.) Dr. M Sakhawat Hussain**  
Honorable Adviser  
Ministry of Shipping  
Ministry of Labour and Employment  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



## MODERN AND EFFICIENT PORTS FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT

The shipping sector is one of the main driving forces of Bangladesh's economy. The country's economic growth largely depends on the sustainable development of this sector. With this vision in mind, we have undertaken various drastic development initiatives over the past year.

The last year has been a year of strengthening our capacity and efficiency. The Chattogram Port Authority achieved unprecedented records in container and cargo handling, marking a unique milestone for our national economy. Increased operational efficiency at the port has significantly reduced vessel wait times, enhanced our competitiveness in global trade, and substantially contributed to national revenue.



For the first time in the country's 54-year history, the National Ports Strategy has been formulated. The objective is to ensure the long-term and sustainable development of the country's land, river, and seaports, improve coordination among ports, and strengthen the overall maritime sector. It is expected that the National Port Strategy will bring a transformative change in the country's port management system.



Groundbreaking steps have also been taken in developing infrastructure in the shipping sector. The inclusion of foreign investment and technology in the Laldia Terminal and Pangaon Container Terminal will elevate port management to global standards. Work on the Matarbari Deep Sea Port and the Bay Terminal is progressing rapidly, which will position Bangladesh as a regional trade hub. Chinese investment in the comprehensive modernization of Mongla Port, along with enhanced coastal shipping connectivity with Chattogram, has taken our logistics capacity to new heights. Foreign investment in infrastructure will further expand both domestic and international maritime trade.



Special emphasis has been placed on "Green Shipping" and environmentally sustainable maritime transport. A national action plan has been adopted to reduce carbon emissions in compliance with global IMO standards. At the same time, the development of a skilled workforce and improvements in Bangladesh's global ranking in ship ownership have strengthened our readiness to harness the potential of the Blue Economy.

As Bangladesh continues to modernize its ports and expand maritime capabilities, it is building a robust foundation for sustained foreign investment, resilient trade growth, and its emergence as a future regional hub for maritime trade and logistics.



**Ashik Chowdhury, CFA**  
 Executive Chairman, BIDA & BEZA  
 CEO, Public Private Partnership Authority  
 Chief Adviser's Office



## MODERN PORTS ARE SYSTEMS

A port doesn't become modern just because it's new, busy or making profits.

Vietnam's Cai Mep proves the point. In the 1990s it was, quite literally, swamp. Today, it ranks 7th globally and 5th in Asia for port efficiency. It rivals Singapore and fuels Ho Chi Minh City's rise as a coastal powerhouse. That took two decades.

The first shift was policy. Vietnam's early constraints will sound familiar: thin capital, fragmented assets, weak connectivity. In 2006, it liberalised—inviting foreign operators and capital. The state focused on channels and breakwaters; global players built and ran the terminals. Cai Mep became a joint-venture web of Vietnamese, Japanese, Singaporean and European partners.

But concrete wasn't enough. Limited shipping loops kept utilisation low. Vietnam responded by chasing direct connectivity. Today, Cai Mep runs 35 weekly international services, including direct routes to the US and Europe. CMIT, operated by APM Terminals, is one of Southeast Asia's few terminals built for megavessels—with record productivity of 162 crane moves/hour.



The lesson is simple: it takes the whole tribe. Government, global operators, shipping lines, customs and the industrial ecosystem must move together to keep cargo flowing.

Matarbari Deep Seaport has the right ingredients. Like Cai Mep, it's a deep-water play backed by Japanese ODA, built to anchor an industrial ecosystem. With an 18.5m natural draft, it can berth megavessels, handle both bulk and containers, and reduce shipping costs by up to 30%—if the logistics spine holds.



We're also entering the operator-and-systems phase. Last year, we finalised the Laldia Container Terminal with APM Terminals: 100% greenfield FDI, no debt, and a design that will raise Chattogram Port's capacity by 44%. It's proof that strategic infrastructure can be delivered without fiscal drag. Bay Terminal, also scheduled for 2030 under another global operator, will allow direct shipping to Europe. These initiatives are being advanced with the highest urgency to unlock Bangladesh's potential as a regional manufacturing hub.

Vietnam leapt nearly 20 years ago. We're just now making that turn. That means unlearning deep-rooted seaport habits: corruption, discretion, unpredictability. Change is never easy. Yet, despite pockets of resistance,

sustained support and pressure from businesses and investors have kept reforms moving forward. Businesses want to trade with dignity. They want efficiency, predictability, and world-class service that meets international standards.



We are ready to learn systems—and to speak the precise language of international logistics: turnaround time, berth productivity, cargo volume per trip, mainline loops, vessel fuel efficiency and information technology.

Our own experience proves it. The New Mooring Container Terminal ran nearly two decades with 3-4 day turnaround times—without serious efforts to compete with faster regional ports such as Colombo. Recent operational reforms reduced turnaround time by 13 percent and increased throughput by 40 percent. These gains were achieved through better coordination and stronger process discipline.

It shows what incremental improvement can deliver. With stronger collaboration with global partners, Bangladesh can now move from incremental gains to full system transformation—modernising port management end to end.

# **INTERVIEW OF**

## **THE HONOURABLE CHAIRMAN OF CHITTAGONG PORT AUTHORITY (CPA)**





চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ  
Chittagong Port Authority



**Rear Admiral S M Moniruzzaman,**  
OSP, ndc, ncc, psc  
Chairman  
Chittagong Port Authority

## INTERVIEW

Chittagong Port is in the midst of a major transformation, reshaping how Bangladesh connects with global trade. In this interview, Rear Admiral S M Moniruzzaman, Chairman of the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), speaks candidly about the operational reforms and disciplined management that have led to historic improvements in vessel turnaround time. He explains how digitalisation and the move toward paperless systems are making port processes faster, simpler, and more cost-effective for exporters and importers. The conversation also sheds light on the Bay Terminal project and the role of international partnerships in expanding capacity and strengthening competitiveness. Looking ahead, the Chairman shares CPA's vision for building a seamless, multimodal, and technology-driven logistics ecosystem for Bangladesh.

**Q1. Chittagong Port has recorded noticeable improvements in vessel turnaround time and reduced waiting periods. What key operational reforms or process changes have driven this progress?**

**CPA Chairman:** The reduction in vessel turnaround time reflects carefully planned operational improvements and targeted capacity expansion by the Chittagong Port Authority. In 2025, overall, operational discipline and efficient management were introduced across the port ecosystem. Primary focuses were on the capacity and efficiency enhancement with greater speed in delivery of services. In this regard, we introduced modern cargo handling equipment, increased yard space, and reinforced operational preparedness across all terminals. These initiatives allowed the port to manage growing vessel calls and cargo volumes with greater efficiency.



As a direct outcome, Chittagong Port recorded Zero Waiting Time for the first time in its history during the final quarter of 2025, as vessels were able to berth immediately on arrival. During this period, the average vessel turnaround time declined to 2.53 days. This milestone highlights the collective dedication of port officials, employees, and workers, who maintained uninterrupted operations despite logistical pressures and political challenges. Faster vessel handling has delivered tangible benefits to importers by speeding up cargo discharge and facilitating smoother and more reliable trade flows.



**Q2: How is digitalisation being used to streamline processes and reduce logistics costs for exporters and importers?**

**CPA Chairman:** Digitalisation sits at the heart of the Chittagong Port Authority's modernisation efforts and its transition towards a paperless port. CPA aims to achieve its complete port single window digital platform. i.e. CPA Sky as the first ever port community system by February 2026. The introduction of the Terminal Operating System (TOS) has strengthened coordination across port operations, while the e-gate pass management system allows users to apply for gate passes and complete billing payments online at any time.



This shift has eased traffic congestion around the port and enhanced transparency by reducing reliance on manual procedures. The level of adoption is clear; with an average of 60,000 to 65,000 gate entries handled each month and a highest recorded daily issuance of 7,080 gate passes. By providing remote access to essential services and cutting physical delays, digitalisation has made cargo movement more efficient, reduced administrative pressure, and helped exporters and importers save both time and operating costs.





**Q3: The Bay Terminal project is a major capacity expansion. What timelines and milestones should the market watch for, and how will it change Bangladesh's trade footprint?**

**CPA Chairman:** The Bay Terminal stands as a flagship infrastructure initiative that marks a significant step forward in expanding Bangladesh's port capacity. It's a dream project that will be a game changer for Bangladesh's competitiveness in the global maritime trade. It has been planned as the country's first green port, ensuring that growth is aligned with long term sustainability objectives. To develop its marine infrastructure, a loan agreement of USD 650 million has been signed with the World Bank, and construction activities are expected to begin by mid 2026.



<p><b>MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT COMPONENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of breakwater</li> <li>Construction of access channel and navigational aids</li> <li>Developing hinterland connectivity and common facilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>COSTS OF THREE COMPONENTS</b></p> <p>Total estimated cost about <b>Tk 13,000cr</b> : World Bank to give <b>\$650m</b> for the first two components : CPA would spend <b>Tk 3,000</b> for the 3rd component</p> <p><b>INVESTMENT OFFERS FOR BAY TERMINAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abu Dhabi-based AD Ports Group offers to invest <b>\$1b</b></li> <li>PSA Singapore and Dubai-based DP World promised to invest <b>\$1.5b</b> each</li> <li>Local firm East Coast Holdings proposed to invest <b>\$3.5b</b> jointly with a few global firms</li> </ul>	<p><b>BAY TERMINAL OVERVIEW</b></p> <p>Proposed terminal comprises construction of four terminals</p> <p>There will be two container terminals, one multi-purpose terminal and an oil and gas terminal</p> <p>Currently ships with 10-metre draft and of 200 metre length can berth at existing jetties of Ctg port</p> <p>Bay Terminal will accommodate 12-metre draft and 280-metre-long ships</p>
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Source: The Daily Star

Once operational by 2030 the Bay Terminal will substantially improve Chittagong Port's capacity to accommodate rising container volumes and larger, modern vessels for 24/7 operation as well as direct shipping. Bay Terminal will advance speed to market to and from Bangladesh reducing cost of freight and cargo dwell-time to achieve competitive advantages over our peer competitors like Vietnam, Thailand, India etc to attract highend products, FDI and open-up provisions for job creation in Bangladesh. Together with the Matarbari Deep Sea Port, it will reinforce Bangladesh's role as an important commercial gateway in South Asia. As a whole, the project is expected to facilitate increased trade volumes, draw the interest of international terminal operators, and enhance Bangladesh's competitiveness in regional and global maritime trade.



**Q4: How are international port operators and global technology partners contributing to Chittagong Port's transformation into a competitive regional logistics hub?**

**CPA Chairman:** International collaboration forms an important pillar of the Chittagong Port Authority's transformation agenda. In keeping with global best practices, the authority has expanded public private partnerships to improve operational efficiency and raise management standards. Long term agreements have been concluded with Denmark's APM Terminals for operating the Laldia Container Terminal and with Switzerland's Medlog for managing the Pangaon Terminal. These collaborations introduce international operational expertise, contemporary terminal management practices, and efficiency focused approaches into daily port operations. At the same time, the use of digital systems such as the TOS is supporting more transparent and data informed decision making. Combined, the contribution of international operators and modern technologies are helping Chittagong Port align with international standards and strengthen its position as a competitive regional logistics hub in the global maritime stage.



**Q5: Looking ahead, what initiatives is CPA considering to better integrate inland transport networks and digital platforms to enable a seamless, end-to-end logistics ecosystem across Bangladesh?**

**CPA Chairman:** As cargo volumes continue to rise, the CPA remains focused on reinforcing the wider logistics chain connected to the port. Ongoing digitalisation efforts (CPA Sky) are directed towards simplifying procedures, expanding paperless services, and improving transparency for all port users. At the same time, major infrastructure initiatives such as the Bay Terminal, the expansion of Laldia Terminal, and the Matarbari



Deep Sea Port are intended to ensure smoother cargo movement beyond the port area. Currently, about 96% cargoes are transported to and from Dhaka/Chittagong by road. CPA has taken initiatives to diversify its logistic ecosystem by a modal shift in hinterland transport corridor. A 70%, 20% and 10% respectively by road, rail and inland waterways are considered for multi-modal connectivity. In addition, through terminal modernisation, the adoption of digital platforms, and alignment of port development with national logistics requirements, the authority is working to enable faster cargo movement and foster a more efficient as well as a competitive trade ecosystem across Bangladesh and beyond.

# **THEMATIC ARTICLE**

**FICCI'S COMMITMENT TO  
ECONOMIC EXCELLENCE  
CONTINUES TO SHAPE A  
PROSPEROUS FUTURE  
FOR BANGLADESH**

## MODERNIZING PORTS TO SAFEGUARD TRADE AND PREVENT ILLICIT FLOWS



**Abdul Mukaddim**  
Head of Anti-Illicit Trade  
BAT Bangladesh



Bangladesh's economy is deeply anchored in maritime trade. Seaports serve as the country's principal gateways for exports and imports, sustaining industrial growth, facilitating international commerce, and generating vital foreign exchange earnings. As trade volumes have expanded over the years, port infrastructure has also grown to support the nation's export-led development ambitions. Yet, despite this progress, critical vulnerabilities remain. Many port systems continue to rely on outdated processes that undermine efficiency, regulatory oversight, and enforcement effectiveness.

In today's interconnected global economy, modern ports are no longer just logistics hubs; they are strategic assets. Efficient, well-governed ports enhance trade competitiveness, attract investment, and play a decisive role in preventing illicit activities. Weak port controls create opportunities for illegal flows, including illicit cigarettes, counterfeit consumer goods, and substandard medicines, to enter domestic markets. <sup>1</sup>

These illicit imports pose serious risks to public health, erode government revenue, and distort fair competition. Strengthening and modernizing port systems is therefore essential to safeguarding commerce, protecting consumers, and maintaining regulatory integrity.

### Bangladesh's Evolving Port Landscape

Bangladesh's major seaports are undergoing significant transformation aimed at improving operational efficiency and global competitiveness. At Chattogram Port, the government has announced plans to lease major terminals, such as Laldia and New Mooring, to experienced foreign operators under long-term arrangements. This move reflects a broader effort to attract private capital, international expertise, and modern management practices.

Capacity expansion, deployment of modern cargo-handling equipment, and gradual integration of digital systems have contributed to higher container throughput, reduced vessel turnaround times, and smoother cargo flows. <sup>2</sup>



Similarly, Mongla Port is expanding through dredging initiatives, terminal upgrades, and increased ship calls to improve throughput and revenue generation. <sup>3</sup>

These developments are positive and necessary. When paired with robust digital customs systems and coordinated enforcement mechanisms, port modernization can significantly reduce vulnerabilities that allow illicit goods to infiltrate legitimate supply chains.

<sup>1</sup> Lack of automation plagues customs with corruption, inefficiency: <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/781873>

<sup>2</sup> Container, cargo, ship handling rise at Chittagong Port: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/397255/container-cargo-ship-handling-rise-at-chittagong>

<sup>3</sup> Mongla port to get Tk 4,000cr equipment from China | The Daily Star: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/mongla-port-get-tk-4000cr-equipment-china-3845306>

## Persistent Challenges to Trade Integrity

Despite visible progress, structural and operational challenges continue to undermine port performance and enforcement effectiveness. Congestion, legacy infrastructure, and procedural inefficiencies slow cargo movement and extend vessel waiting times, creating gaps that illicit actors exploit. Heavy reliance on manual inspections and limited automation weaken monitoring capacity, making it difficult to detect misdeclared or prohibited consignments.

Under-invoicing, false declarations, and document manipulation remain common tactics used by smugglers. The economic cost is substantial: as per the latest news reports, illicit cigarette trade is estimated to deprive the national exchequer of approximately Tk 10,000 crore annually.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond revenue erosion, illicit trade undermines regulatory credibility, exposes consumers to unsafe products, and penalizes legitimate businesses that comply with tax and customs requirements. Addressing these risks requires more than incremental improvements, it demands systemic modernization.

## Learning from Regional Peers

When benchmarked against regional peers, Bangladesh's ports and customs systems still have considerable ground to cover. Singapore operates one of the world's most automated and tightly monitored port ecosystems. Vietnam has strengthened regional cooperation and digitized trade processes, while Sri Lanka has invested in modern port governance and oversight frameworks. Gaps in automation, intelligence-led enforcement, and real-time monitoring leave Bangladesh more exposed to illicit flows, weakening trade competitiveness and diminishing investor confidence.



## Economic and Investment Implications

The economic consequences of weak port enforcement extend far beyond revenue losses. Smuggling, under-invoicing, and misdeclaration disrupt market dynamics and raise the cost of doing business for compliant operators. Persistent congestion at Chattogram Port, occasional customs system disruptions, and container backlogs add uncertainty and operational costs for trade-dependent industries.

Illicit trade also signals regulatory weakness, a key concern for foreign and domestic investors seeking predictable, transparent trade environments. The scale of the challenge is evident in the tobacco sector alone, where the illicit cigarette market has expanded by over 30 percent, with an estimated 832 million illegal cigarette sticks entering the market every month, bypassing import duties that can exceed 600 percent, as per the latest news reports.<sup>5</sup>

Strengthening port governance is therefore critical not only to protect revenue but also to sustain investor confidence and economic stability.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.kalerkantho.com/print-edition/last-page/2026/01/13/1632741>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.kalerkantho.com/print-edition/last-page/2026/01/13/1632741>

## The Broader Benefits of Modern Ports

Modern ports deliver multidimensional benefits. Advanced cargo-handling infrastructure, integrated digital customs platforms, and real-time surveillance systems significantly reduce opportunities for smuggling, misdeclaration, and fraud. Effective enforcement helps intercept illicit cigarettes, counterfeit cosmetics, substandard pharmaceuticals, and other prohibited goods before they reach consumers.

Improved systems also enhance revenue collection by ensuring accurate assessment and payment of duties and taxes. At the same time, streamlined processes reduce congestion and clearance delays, enabling customs officials to focus on high-risk consignments while facilitating faster clearance for compliant trade. The result is a safer marketplace, stronger regulatory control, and a more competitive trading environment.



## The Way Forward

A decisive shift toward fully digital customs and documentation systems is a critical next step. Digitalization minimizes human discretion, reduces corruption risks, and creates transparent, tamper-resistant processes that significantly curtail illicit imports. Risk-based inspection regimes, rather than random checks, allow authorities to concentrate resources on high-risk shipments, including illicit cigarettes, prohibited goods, and unsafe consumer products.

Capacity-building initiatives, such as those under the UNODC's Passenger and Cargo Control Programme, have already demonstrated the value of intelligence-led profiling, data analytics, and targeted inspections.<sup>6</sup>

These approaches improve interception rates while ensuring legitimate trade flows remain uninterrupted.

Equally important is strengthening transparency, accountability, and inter-agency coordination across ports, customs, border forces, and law enforcement agencies. The planned transition to fully paperless customs processes by 2028 can further reduce discretionary power and close loopholes exploited by criminal networks. Coordinated intelligence-sharing and joint enforcement actions are essential to dismantling organized smuggling operations that adapt quickly to regulatory weaknesses.

Modern, efficient ports are foundational to Bangladesh's trade ambitions and investment attractiveness. By combining upgraded infrastructure with digital systems, risk-based enforcement, and strong institutional coordination, Bangladesh can secure its ports against illicit flows while enhancing competitiveness and revenue protection. Such reforms will not only strengthen public finances and protect consumers but also send a clear signal to investors that Bangladesh is committed to transparent, secure, and efficient trade facilitation.

<sup>6</sup> Bangladesh: UNODC's PCCP equips customs officers to better respond to new and emerging air cargo threats | United Nations in Bangladesh: <https://bangladesh.un.org/en/308040-bangladesh-unodc%E2%80%99s-pccp-equips-customs-officers-better-respond-new-and-emerging-air-cargo>

## FUTURE-READY PORT INFRASTRUCTURE: LALDIA CONTAINER TERMINAL



**Khalid Mustafiz Gaffar**  
Country Director - Public Affairs  
Maersk Bangladesh Ltd.



Bangladesh's economic story is one of remarkable resilience and quiet ambition. From the bustling factory floors, goods travel far beyond our borders. Textiles, apparel, and an increasingly diverse range of manufactured products that the world wants are coming from Bangladesh. But beyond the cargo, the ships lined up on the horizon at Chattogram carry something more: determination, livelihoods, and Bangladesh's stake in global trade. Over 90% of the country's international trade flows through Chattogram Port, the beating heart of an ecosystem that keeps the economy moving.

Yet as global trade has expanded in both volume and complexity, the infrastructure has started to show signs of strain. Congestion has impacted logistics costs and delivery times. Bangladesh now faces a decision: either continue with incremental improvements or think bigger and prepare its maritime infrastructure to meet tomorrow's demands.

### A Strategic Commitment at a Pivotal Moment

The Laldia Container Terminal represents that bigger thinking. It is a \$550+ million investment that signals Bangladesh's readiness for the next chapter of its trade development.

For APM Terminals, this commitment reflects three converging factors. First, Bangladesh's economic trajectory remains strong, anchored by a resilient export base. Second, when Bangladesh graduates from Least Developed Country status, the transition will unlock new trade opportunities but will demand world-class infrastructure to capitalise on them. And third, there is genuine momentum around reform and creating an environment conducive to public-private partnerships.



APM Terminals' decision to invest at this scale is grounded in both market need and policy alignment. When infrastructure gaps meet government commitment and a framework that enables international best practices through a greenfield model, the investment case becomes clear.

### A Partnership Built Over Decades

It's worth noting that A.P. Moller - Maersk's presence in Bangladesh's logistics and shipping sector dates back to the 1980s. This is not a newly formed engagement, but rather the continuation of a partnership built over decades. Laldia is the next step in our long-standing relationship, reflecting our confidence in Bangladesh's future and our commitment to its trade development.

Laldia Container Terminal is a story of collaboration. The terminal itself is structured as a government-to-government and public-private partnership between Bangladesh and Denmark. APM Terminals will design, finance, build,

and operate the terminal over a 30-year period, with potential for extension. This model places the commercial risk squarely on the company's shoulders. The land remains with the country; APM Terminals doesn't generate revenue until the terminal is operational. Any delays directly impact the company's returns. We've staked both our commercial and reputational capital on delivering this project successfully and on time by 2030.

### Transforming Operations

Once operational, Laldia will add over 800,000 TEUs of annual capacity to Bangladesh's container trade at full build-out, providing critical headroom to ease current bottlenecks and accommodate future growth. The terminal will be capable of handling vessels up to 6,000 TEU, compared to the current limitation of approximately 2,700 TEU. This is transformational for Bangladesh's competitive position. Larger vessels and elimination of transshipment mean quicker transit times for Bangladesh's exporters. In sectors such as garments, where lead times determine competitiveness, this results in significant reductions in total logistics costs and improved delivery predictability. It means getting products to market faster, with greater reliability.

APM Terminals operates more than 60 ports and terminals worldwide. According to the World Bank's 2025 Container Port Performance Index, we operate terminals in 10 of the 20 most efficient ports globally in 2024—more than any other terminal operator. There will be no difference in how Laldia Container Terminal is operated compared to the global portfolio. The same standards for safety, training, performance, and customer service will apply.

### Building for a Sustainable Future

Sustainability isn't an add-on at Laldia, it's embedded in the design. APM Terminals has committed globally to achieving Net Zero emissions from operations by 2040, and Laldia will be built and operated in alignment with that ambition.

The terminal will feature electrified cargo-handling equipment, solar power installations on terminal structures, and shore-power-ready systems that enable vessels to plug into the grid rather than run auxiliary engines. These measures will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and air pollution—benefiting not just operations, but employees, nearby communities, and the environment.



Beyond the infrastructure itself, Laldia will create approximately 500 direct operational jobs, as well as broader economic benefits through secondary employment and skill development. The standards we follow globally enable us to create high-quality, modern jobs in a safe and respectful work environment. We also hope to become a good neighbour by training this generation of port employees who will carry forward international best practices and contribute to Bangladesh's maritime sector for years to come.

### A National Project for Collective Success

Ultimately, Laldia is more than an APM Terminals project; it is a national infrastructure asset with broad economic significance. Its success depends on the collective commitment and constructive participation of all stakeholders: government, regulators, shipping lines, freight forwarders, exporters, and the local community.

This infrastructure will benefit the country as a whole by reducing logistics costs, improving supply chain reliability, and supporting the growth and diversification of Bangladesh's export economy. Strengthening exports drives economic growth across society, creates jobs, and builds skilled labour through knowledge transfer.

It's about more than moving containers efficiently. It is about preparing Bangladesh for the future of global trade. Building a port that is bigger, smarter, greener, and more resilient. Giving exporters the confidence that their goods can reach the world reliably and sustainably. And perhaps most importantly, it reflects Bangladesh's own ambition: a commitment to shaping its future, to competing on the global stage with world-class infrastructure, and to writing the next chapter of its economic story—one container at a time.

## MODERN PORTS, COMPETITIVE TRADE: BANGLADESH'S NEXT GROWTH IMPERATIVE



**Md Ziaur Rahman**  
Senior Analyst  
Policy Exchange Bangladesh

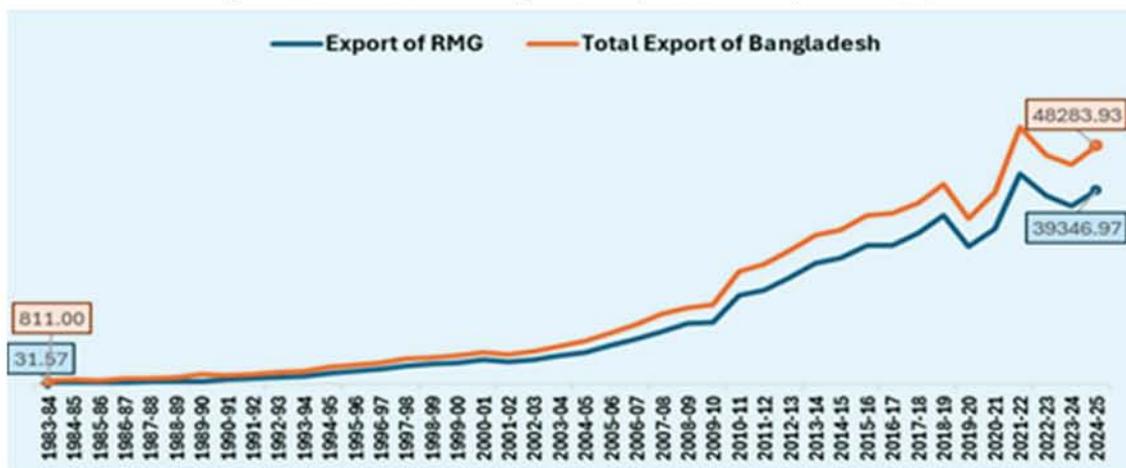


**Dr. M. Masrur Reaz**  
Chairman and CEO  
Policy Exchange Bangladesh

### A. Trade-Led Growth and the Strategic Role of Ports

Bangladesh is entering a defining phase of its development, shaped by a new political horizon and renewed momentum for reform. With more than \$450 billion economy, the country's path to stability, job creation, and sustainable growth will continue to depend heavily on trade. Over the past two decades, export-led growth, anchored largely in textiles and ready-made garments, has powered Bangladesh's rise, delivering average economic growth of over 6 percent since 2000 and lifting the country to lower-middle-income status. As Bangladesh prepares to graduate from LDC status in 2026 and pursues its ambition of becoming a high-income country by 2041, exports must expand far beyond their current scale to compete in a \$33 trillion global trading system<sup>1</sup>. Yet with a relatively small domestic market, deeper global integration is not optional. In this context, the modernization of ports, through greater efficiency, capacity, and reliability, will be a decisive factor in determining whether Bangladesh can sustain its export momentum and translate global opportunities into inclusive growth at home.

Figure 1 Sustained Growth in Bangladesh's Exports Over Time (in million USD)



Source: EPB

### B. Why Modern Ports and Logistics Matter for Efficient Trade Facilitation

**Ports and logistics systems are the backbone of global trade, determining how efficiently goods move within countries and across borders.** According to the World Bank, more than four-fifths of global merchandise trade by volume is transported by sea<sup>2</sup>, while containers account for roughly 35 percent of total cargo volumes and over 60 percent of global trade value<sup>3</sup>. This makes efficient container handling central to trade competitiveness and connectivity.

1 <https://unctad.org/publication/global-trade-update-march-2025#:~:text=Global%20trade%20hit%20a%20record,%25%20of%20the%20total%20growth>

2 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/05/05/asian-ports-dominate-global-container-port-performance-index>

3 <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/transport/why-ports-matter-global-economy>

**Port performance, however, is inseparable from the quality of supporting infrastructure.** Efficient road, rail, and inland waterway connections, strong hinterland linkages, and seamless port access significantly enhance competitiveness. Countries with well-connected port systems benefit from lower trade costs, higher transport efficiency, and a more business-friendly environment. As the pandemic underscored, port efficiency is not merely a logistics issue, it is a strategic economic asset, shaping resilience, investment decisions, and the timely delivery of essential goods.

**C. Port and Logistics Inefficiencies a Key Hurdle to Competitiveness**

**Trade openness alone does not guarantee growth; competitiveness depends on how efficiently a country can move goods.** For Bangladesh, this reality is becoming unavoidable. As labour cost advantages gradually erode, the country’s next phase of export-led growth will be determined less by wages and more by the quality of its logistics and trade infrastructure. Yet progress in this area remains slow and uneven.

**Despite years of strong export performance, Bangladesh’s logistics ecosystem continues to lag behind peers.** Congested transport networks, weak multimodal connectivity, and fragmented logistics services add substantial cost and delay to trade. This underperformance is visible in global rankings: Bangladesh stands 88th in the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index and 39th out of 50 countries in the Agility Emerging Markets Logistics Index. These numbers point to a structural constraint, exports have grown in spite of logistics inefficiencies, not because of improvements in them.

Table 1 Global Indices Signal Major Room for Improvement

	India	Vietnam	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
Logistics Performance Index 2023 (LPI)	38	43	88	73
Agility Emerging Markets Logistics Index (2025)	2	10	39	27
Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) 2024	Mundra: 25 JNPT: 23 Chennai: 154	Haiphong: 30	Chittagong: 356	Colombo: 80
Trade Freedom Index (2025)	143	53	138	126

Source: The World Bank, Agility Logistics, The Global Economy, S&P Global

**Ports, which globally have evolved into integrated logistics hubs, remain a critical bottleneck in Bangladesh.** Efficient ports reduce trade costs, improve reliability, attract foreign investment, and support regional development. In Bangladesh, however, outdated practices, limited capacity, and poor hinterland connectivity continue to undermine these benefits. Logistics costs reach as high as 48 percent in some sectors<sup>4</sup>, far exceeding those of competing economies. The World Bank estimates that targeted logistics reforms could increase export earnings by up to 19 percent, while even a 1% reduction in logistics costs could raise export demand by more than 7%<sup>5</sup>, gains that Bangladesh can ill afford to ignore as it approaches LDC graduation in a more protectionist global trade environment.

Figure 2 Several Issues Require Priority Attention for Logistics Sector Development



4 <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/outdated-logistics-eroding-bds-competitive-edge-experts>

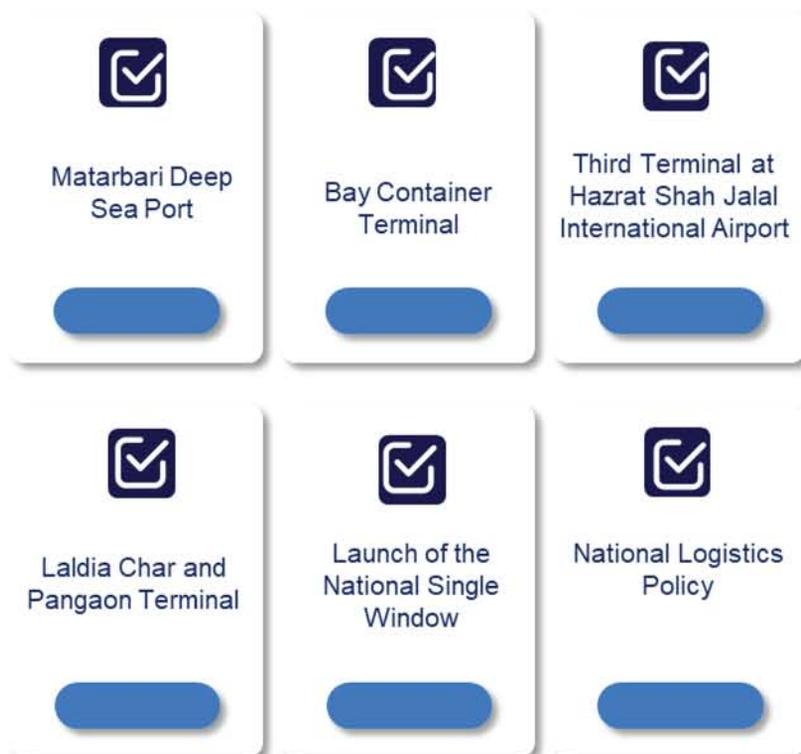
5 Moving Forward, The World, 2020

**Nowhere are these weaknesses more evident than at Chattogram Port, the country's primary trade gateway**, handling over 90 percent of seaborne trade and nearly all container traffic. High berth occupancy, long vessel turnaround times, and slow cargo clearance remain persistent problems. The port ranks 356th out of 403 ports globally in the Container Port Performance Index <sup>6</sup>, with average container ship turnaround times of around 2.5 days, the shortest in six years, yet still about 12 hours longer than at Sri Lanka's ports <sup>7</sup>, highlighting persistent efficiency gaps despite recent improvements. Import clearance takes around 11 days <sup>8</sup>, while export border compliance remains cumbersome and time-consuming. Without decisive modernization of port operations, governance, and connectivity, Bangladesh risks allowing logistics inefficiencies, not market demand, to define the limits of its trade competitiveness.

#### D. Modernizing Ports and Logistics: Recent Progress

In recent years, the government has increasingly recognized that logistics inefficiencies are a binding constraint on Bangladesh's trade competitiveness, prompting a shift toward more structural reforms in the port and logistics sector. A key development has been the engagement of experienced foreign port operators through long-term concession and public-private partnership arrangements at facilities such as Laldia and Pangaon. These initiatives aim to introduce global operational standards, modern terminal management practices, and advanced technologies to improve productivity, reduce congestion, and enhance service reliability, signaling a gradual move away from traditional, state-dominated port operations.

Figure 3 Recent Initiatives to Improve Port and Logistics Sector



**Alongside operational reforms, the government has initiated major capacity-expansion projects**, including new container terminals such as the Bay Container Terminal and the Matarbari Deep Sea Port, which are expected to significantly increase container-handling capacity and improve vessel turnaround times. At the policy level, the adoption of the National Logistics Policy marks an important step toward addressing long-standing coordination gaps by promoting multimodal connectivity and integrated planning across ports, roads, railways, and inland waterways. Together with digital trade facilitation initiatives such as the National Single Window, these measures reflect a growing recognition that modern ports and efficient logistics are essential to sustaining export growth in a post-LDC, increasingly competitive global trade environment. However, their success will ultimately depend on timely implementation, regulatory clarity, and sustained institutional coordination to translate ambition into tangible performance gains.

<sup>6</sup> <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/fa57ba78-0402-4eb4-b168-51708cf526f7>

<sup>7</sup> <https://bizmagazine.newagebd.net/post/economy/2278/chittagong-port-set-for-foreign-management-shift>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/how-reducing-dwell-time-can-improve-chittagong-ports-efficiency-4023791#:~:text=Bangladesh%2C%20however%2C%20faces%20the%20opposite,discourages%20service%20expansion%20and%20investment>

E. What Must Happen Next

**Modernizing trade infrastructure and logistics is essential not only for strengthening Bangladesh’s position in exports**, but also for enabling export diversification into higher-value sectors and new markets. According to UNESCAP, improved infrastructure could generate economic gains of up to USD 35.5 billion for Bangladesh by 2030 <sup>9</sup>. Capturing this potential will require the development of an integrated logistics system anchored by world-class ports, efficient transport corridors, adequate storage facilities, and technology-driven clearance and turnaround processes.

Figure 4 Building a Logistics Ecosystem: Key Policy Priorities

Effective Governance of Logistics Sector	Efficient Border Clearance	Innovative and Long-term Finance for Logistics Development	Transitioning to More Efficient Ports and Hinterland Connectivity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution of Nodal Agency/Champion Ministry/Department for logistics</li> <li>• Implementation of National Logistics Policy/Formulation of Strategy</li> <li>• Development of co-ordination framework, review and monitoring</li> <li>• Implementation mechanism for sector review &amp; monitoring framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digitization of Customs</li> <li>• Exploring presence of OGAs at trade gateways</li> <li>• Strengthening Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme</li> <li>• Relaxing restrictions on import &amp; LCL containers/cargo to be handled at off-docks</li> <li>• Development of One Stop Border Posts for land based trade in long term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit Guarantee Mechanism for Transport and Logistics Operators; inclusion in priority sector (for IWT)</li> <li>• Vehicle Scrappage Policy incentivizing fleet renewal and high- capacity vehicles</li> <li>• Policy for promoting private sector participation in ports, railways – Terminal Facilities and Wagon Ownership/Investment, airport cargo hubs etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gradual adoption of landlord port model; fast completion of Bay Terminal project preparations</li> <li>• Promoting development of Off-dock facilities through conducive policy environment</li> <li>• Promoting inland containerization by expansion of rail ICD/terminal capacity and relaxing customs regulations requiring bank guarantee for movement of empty containers</li> <li>• Enhancing Climate Resilience of New Ports and Logistics Infrastructure</li> </ul>

**Recent flagship investments offer a critical opportunity to address long-standing capacity and efficiency constraints.** However, the gains will materialize only if port expansion is matched by timely upgrades to road, rail, inland waterway, and warehousing infrastructure that connect ports to key commercial hubs. Ultimately, creating a competitive port and logistics ecosystem will require a whole-of-government approach, strong coordination across agencies, effective private sector participation, and sustained focus on execution, to ensure that infrastructure investments translate into real trade competitiveness.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/perspective/news/why-infrastructure-vital-the-sdgs-1849489>

## MODERN &amp; EFFICIENT PORT FOR TRADE &amp; INVESTMENT



**Erwin Haaze**  
Chief Executive Officer  
RSGT Bangladesh



Bangladesh stands at a defining stage in its economic journey. As the country steadily moves beyond a manufacturing-driven growth model toward deeper integration with global trade and investment networks, logistics efficiency has become a decisive competitive advantage. At the heart of this shift is Chittagong Port, the nation's primary maritime gateway, now undergoing a quiet but far-reaching transformation.

Targeted infrastructure development, supportive policy reforms, and the growing involvement of experienced international terminal operators are collectively repositioning Chittagong Port as a more modern, efficient, and investment-ready logistics hub. These advancements are particularly vital for trade-driven sectors such as garments, footwear, agro-processing, and emerging industries including light engineering and electronics assembly, where dependable supply chains are essential to global competitiveness.



### Strengthening the Logistics Chain

Recent operational improvements at Chittagong Port are beginning to resolve long-standing constraints. Optimized yard configurations, modern cargo-handling equipment, improved vessel planning, and digital operational controls have collectively boosted productivity and eased congestion. As a result, berth utilization has improved, container throughput has increased, and vessel waiting times have declined, delivering direct benefits to exporters and importers alike.

The participation of professional terminal operators such as RSGT Chittagong has played a significant role in this progress. Targeted investments have strengthened key links across the logistics chain, including faster yard operations, enhanced container visibility, safer handling practices, improved equipment availability, and more predictable vessel turnaround times. Together, these improvements enhance supply chain reliability, lower logistics costs, and reinforce Bangladesh's export-led growth strategy.

## Beyond Infrastructure: Modernizing the Entire Ecosystem

While terminal-level upgrades are critical, meaningful logistics transformation depends on modernization across the broader port and trade ecosystem. This requires coordinated reforms involving customs, port authorities, banks, freight forwarders, and regulatory bodies.

Priority areas for continued development include:

- Streamlined NBR and customs procedures, including risk-based inspections, pre-arrival processing, and faster clearance for compliant cargo
- Automated payment systems to minimize manual processing and delays
- Reduced paperwork through digital documentation and electronic data interchange
- A fully operational Port Community System (PCS) connecting all stakeholders through a unified digital platform

In parallel, the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has a crucial role in progressively reinforcing its landlord port model—focusing on regulation, planning, and oversight while enabling private operators to deliver efficient terminal services. This approach reflects global best practices and supports sustainable capacity expansion.

## Creating an Attractive Investment Environment

Collectively, these initiatives are delivering a more efficient, transparent, and predictable logistics environment. Reduced vessel delays, higher yard productivity, and improved cargo-handling capacity are translating into tangible business benefits. Faster cargo movement lowers inventory holding costs, improves cash flow, and strengthens Bangladesh's appeal as a destination for foreign direct investment (FDI).

Increasingly, investors view ports not merely as transport nodes, but as critical enablers of industrial growth, export diversification, and regional competitiveness. Efficient ports support port-centric industrialization, special economic zones, and value-added logistics activities such as parts consolidation, light assembly, and final product shipment areas where Bangladesh holds considerable growth potential.



## Policy Leadership and Sustainability

Sustained policy leadership has been essential in maintaining momentum. Investment facilitation initiatives led by the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) have helped align infrastructure development with investor expectations. Streamlined approvals, targeted reforms, and coordinated stakeholder engagement are enhancing transparency and predictability across the investment landscape.

At the same time, sustainability has become an integral component of port development. Modern terminals are increasingly adopting energy-efficient equipment, environmentally responsible operating practices, and digital solutions to reduce emissions and environmental impact. Compliance with global ESG standards is no longer optional, as international customers and shipping lines increasingly demand adherence to defined environmental and safety benchmarks. Alignment with these standards is critical to safeguarding Bangladesh's future trade opportunities.

### A Regional Gateway for the Future

With enhanced capacity and connectivity, Chittagong Port is well positioned to evolve into a regional gateway, serving neighboring land-linked economies and facilitating cross-border trade. Such a role would further strengthen Bangladesh's strategic standing within the Bay of Bengal and the broader Indo-Pacific trade corridor.

Ultimately, the modernization of Chittagong Port represents more than physical infrastructure development. It reflects Bangladesh's readiness to engage the global economy with confidence, through free zones, value-added services, and integrated supply chains as these initiatives mature, Bangladesh is steadily establishing itself as a competitive regional maritime and trade hub.



#### Company Story: RSGT Chittagong - Enabling the Next Chapter of Port-Led Growth

RSGT Chittagong is playing a strategic role in Bangladesh's port modernization journey by delivering world-class terminal services grounded in international operational standards, disciplined execution, and targeted infrastructure investment at Chittagong Port.

As a professional terminal operator, RSGT Chittagong remains focused on reliability, efficiency, and service excellence to meet the evolving needs of global shipping lines, cargo owners, and logistics partners. The company invests USD 170 million in terminal infrastructure, cargo-handling equipment, and advanced operational systems.

These investments include Rubber Tyred Gantry (RTG) cranes, advanced container scanning systems, and a comprehensive suite of supporting handling equipment, all fully deployed and integrated into daily operations. Collectively, these assets have enhanced yard productivity, strengthened cargo security and regulatory compliance, and improved overall cargo flow within the terminal.

"Our focus has always been on delivering world-class service standards through strong operations and the right infrastructure," said Erwin Haaze, Chief Executive Officer of RSGT Chittagong. "The equipment currently in operation enables us to deliver consistent, safe, and efficient services aligned with global benchmarks."

A key remaining milestone in RSGT Chittagong's modernization roadmap is the arrival and commissioning of its Ship-to-Shore (STS) gantry cranes, expected by the end of the first quarter of this year. While all other major equipment is already operational, the STS cranes will significantly enhance berth productivity and vessel-handling capacity, allowing the terminal to operate at its full design potential.

"With all other equipment already in place, the arrival of the STS cranes will allow us to fully leverage our terminal capabilities," Haaze added.

Beyond infrastructure and technology, RSGT Chittagong's operations are driven by people and local partnerships. The terminal operates with a team of more than 400 local experts and is supported by a network of over 250 local vendor businesses, reflecting a strong commitment to developing local capabilities and fostering inclusive, sustainable growth.

Operational excellence at RSGT Chittagong is supported by robust safety systems, structured training programs, and continuous performance monitoring. The terminal works closely with port authorities and stakeholders to ensure seamless operations and full regulatory compliance.

"Our commitment is clear," Haaze concluded. "We aim to consistently deliver world-class terminal services that support Bangladesh's ambition to become a modern, efficient, and globally competitive maritime and trade hub."

# **MEMBER'S STORY**

**FICCI MEMBER  
COMPANIES PLAY A  
SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE  
SUSTAINABLE CIRCULAR  
ECONOMIC GROWTH &  
DEVELOPMENT OF  
BANGLADESH**



## PUSHTI KOTTHA: A COLLECTIVE STEP TOWARD SAFE MILK AND BETTER NUTRITION

Pushti Kothha is an industry-led knowledge-sharing platform launched by Arla Foods Bangladesh, designed to promote safe milk production and consumption practices across Bangladesh. It brings together school students, teachers, policymakers, and general consumers under one umbrella to exchange insights, share best practices, and foster collaboration. The initiative reflects Arla Foods' commitment to improving food safety standards and empowering stakeholders with the right knowledge and tools.

The recent emphasis on food safety regulations and consumer awareness campaigns underscores the urgency of addressing gaps in quality assurance. Pushti Kothha, inspired from Arla's global initiative "Food Movers", responds to this need by creating a structured dialogue in the wider community, ensuring that safe milk is not just a promise but a reality.



At the heart of Pushti Kothha is a strong working partnership with the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA). This collaboration aligns content, training modules, and communication campaigns with national food safety guidelines, ensuring consistent, practical, and trustworthy guidance.

"Pushti Kothha" was adapted by the Green Dairy Partnership for the ground level participants. The event took place in December, at Bharat Bhaina High School, Keshabpur, Jashore, bringing together farmers, students, women entrepreneurs, youth, community leaders and government officials to strengthen knowledge and practices for clean, hygienic milk from farm to table.

More than 600 students and teachers joined the event while key stakeholders addressed the gathering. They took part in interactive learning sessions, hands-on demonstrations, and youth-friendly activities that explained why clean and safe milk is important for health.



Attending the event Rexona Khatun, Upazilla Nirbahi Officer, Keshabpur encouraged that such positive messages about food safety should also be included in the national curriculum. Building up to that, Abdur Rahman, District Food Safety Officer, Jashore affirmed how Bangladesh Food Safety Authority appreciated such a timely initiative.

Each participant received a brochure with simple, step-by-step guidance on hygiene, boiling milk safely, storing milk at home, and preventing contamination. They also received an interactive ludo board which came in with instructions on safe food practices. Both the toolkits were inspired and guided by Bangladesh Food Safety Authority. The participants also received dairy products as an encouragement to the healthy habit of drinking milk.

The launch of Pushti Kotha is just the beginning. In the coming months, Arla Bangladesh plans to roll out interactive sessions, digital campaigns, and community engagement programs to amplify its reach.



## CHEVRON BANGLADESH SUPPORTED “RESTORING MOBILITY: ARTIFICIAL LIMB SUPPORT” INITIATIVE CONCLUDES IN SYLHET

The SMILE project, in collaboration with the Jalalabad Disabled Rehab Centre and Hospital (JDRCH), recently celebrated the closing ceremony of the Restoring Mobility: Artificial Limb Support intervention, held at Grand Sylhet. The event marked the successful provision of prosthetic and orthotic devices to 60 beneficiaries from Sylhet and Nabiganj upazilas, many of whom have lived with physical disabilities for years without access to affordable rehabilitation services.

The closing ceremony was graced by distinguished guests, including Md. Abdul Mannan, the Additional Secretary, Coordination & Monitoring, Energy and Mineral Resources Division, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as Chief Guest. Joining the occasion were Eric M. Walker, Managing Director and President, Chevron Bangladesh; Muhammad Imrul Kabir, Director, Corporate Affairs, Chevron Bangladesh; A K M Arif Akter, Head of Social Investment, Chevron Bangladesh; Helal Hussain, Country Director, Swisscontact; and Rtn. PP Engr. Shoaib Ahmed Matin, Chairman, Board of Trustees, JDRCH. Their presence underscored the shared commitment to inclusive development and the transformative power of collaboration in building resilient communities. Representatives from Chevron Bangladesh, Swisscontact, JDRCH, Rotary Club of Jalalabad, and beneficiaries of the initiative also attended, reflecting a united effort toward meaningful social impact.



Speaking at the event, the Chief Guest Md. Abdul Mannan highlighted the broader social significance of the artificial limb support, emphasizing that such interventions go far beyond medical assistance. He further said, “I sincerely appreciate Chevron Bangladesh, Swisscontact and JDRCH, whose collective partnership and expertise have improved mobility, and hope for persons with disabilities, demonstrating the power of collaborative action in creating meaningful societal change.”

Eric M. Walker, in his address, emphasized Chevron's community partnership engagements, saying, “Nearly 80 percent of people have limited access to such specialized support, and being part of an initiative that delivers personalized care truly warms my heart, every step taken by these beneficiaries is a strong step toward a better tomorrow.”

Echoing this sentiment, Helal Hussain said “This initiative was impactful and went beyond just mobility, it enabled them to return to work, continue education, actively engage in social life, and contribute economically while fostering greater inclusion within their communities.”

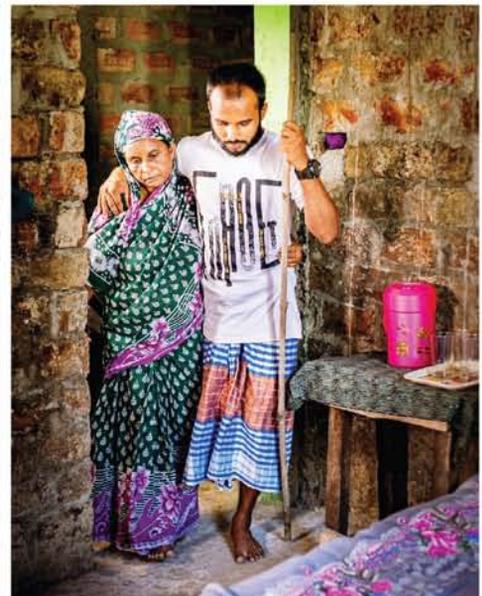
## MEMBER'S STORY

Muhammad Imrul Kabir, in his speech said that "Chevron has been a trusted energy partner to Bangladesh for over three decades, and our commitment goes beyond powering progress. Through initiatives like the SMILE project, we strive to create inclusive opportunities that restore mobility and dignity. Our initiatives in Bangladesh support 9 out of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, including health, education, and inclusion for people with disabilities.

One of the most powerful moments of the ceremony was the heartfelt testimonies shared by several beneficiaries. They spoke about the profound transformation these artificial limbs have brought to their daily lives, from regaining mobility and independence to returning to work, education, and household responsibilities.



While household income stabilizes and personal confidence grows, a positive ripple effect spreads, strengthening families, enhancing community resilience, and contributing to broader socioeconomic development. Building on this foundation, Chevron Bangladesh and Swisscontact, through the SMILE project, have been working relentlessly to improve livelihoods and uplift communities through sustainable and impactful development initiatives. Together, with a shared mission to significantly enhance the quality of life for individuals requiring orthotic and prosthetic support, they have collaboratively brought measurable, meaningful change to the communities they serve.



# WING

Women in Next Generation

## DRIVING GENDER INCLUSION AND FUTURE LEADERSHIP: CCI BANGLADESH LAUNCHES WING

Advancing gender inclusion and shaping future leadership remain core priorities for CCI Bangladesh. Diversity is not merely a value; it serves as a catalyst for innovation, resilience, and sustainable growth. In alignment with CCI's commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace, WING (Women in Next Generation) has been launched as a pioneering initiative designed to empower women and strengthen the diverse talent pipeline across critical business functions.



The launch of WING, in partnership with the Enroute Foundation, represents a significant milestone for CCI Bangladesh. Inspired by global best practices, the program addresses one of the pressing challenges in the corporate landscape: the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and operational functions such as Sales, Supply Chain, and Finance. These areas have historically seen limited female participation, often due to systemic barriers including lack of exposure, mentorship, and structured career pathways.



WING is positioned as more than a program; it is a strategic movement. The initiative began with the Sales Traineeship Program for Women, targeting female graduates from educational institutions. This program provides hands-on experience, mentorship, and career exposure in sales, a domain where female representation remains significantly low. Participants gain practical knowledge, build confidence, and develop networks that prepare them for future leadership roles. Beyond operational training, WING tackles structural challenges by creating pathways for internships, skill-building, and professional guidance. Research indicates that women often face limited access to these opportunities, resulting in fewer managerial positions. WING bridges these gaps by focusing on equitable access, the initiative ensures that women not only enter the workforce but thrive within it. Expansion plans include extending the initiative to departments such as Supply Chain and other enabling functions, thereby building a truly inclusive talent pipeline.



### Impact Objectives of WING include:

- Empowering women through meaningful employment opportunities and career pathways
- Enhancing skill readiness and marketability for future roles
- Contributing to inclusive community development
- Strengthening the future leadership pipeline with diverse perspectives and equal opportunities

WING also serves as a communication platform, amplifying CCI's commitment to gender inclusion and sustainability. Empowering women is framed not only as a social responsibility but also as a business imperative that drives innovation and long-term success. The initiative helps shape the leaders of tomorrow and sets a benchmark for inclusive growth in the business landscape.



Through WING, CCI Bangladesh is taking an ambitious step toward creating a workplace where diversity thrives and opportunities are equitable. A promise to make our organization more women-friendly and contribute meaningfully to the broader goal of gender equality in business.



## EDOTCO RANGERS: WHEN EMPLOYEES LEAD WITH PURPOSE BEYOND CONNECTIVITY

When corporate purpose is translated into collective action, impact moves beyond intention and becomes transformation. At EDOTCO, this belief is brought to life through EDOTCO Rangers initiative, a Group-driven employee volunteerism initiative that embeds social responsibility into the organisation's operating culture.

EDOTCO Bangladesh has achieved 100% employee participation in this voluntary initiative, reflecting a strong internal commitment to responsibility, teamwork, and inclusive growth. Through the combined efforts of its workforce, the company successfully delivered 18 Rangers programs, each aligned with EDOTCO's core values and designed to build trust, goodwill, and meaningful engagement with the communities it serves.



In the latest cycle, over 300 EDOTCO Rangers contributed a total of 2,464 voluntary hours, demonstrating a structured and outcome-oriented approach to employee engagement. A significant 72% of total contributions (1,768 hours) were directed toward Community Engagement & Awareness, supporting SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by strengthening social awareness, access to resources, and community resilience.



Green Living & Civic Responsibility initiatives accounted for 17% (424 hours), reinforcing SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) through responsible citizenship and grassroots civic participation. Environmental stewardship remained integral to the program, with Coastal Cleanup activities contributing 7% (184 hours) in support of SDG 14 (Life Below Water), while Tree Plantation & Eco Wellbeing initiatives added 4% (88 hours), advancing SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).



Beyond the numbers, EDOTCO Rangers reflects a broader ESG-driven approach to human capital and social value creation. By institutionalizing volunteerism as a shared responsibility, EDOTCO ensures that sustainability is not treated as a parallel agenda, but as a core element of business continuity and long-term value creation.

Through EDOTCO Rangers programme, connectivity extends beyond infrastructure, becoming a exemplary platform for inclusion, empowerment, and collective progress. As EDOTCO continues its sustainability journey, the initiative stands as a testament to the company's belief that responsible growth is achieved when communities, employees, and businesses move forward together.





## BANGLADESH'S MANGOES: POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL MARKETS



Bangladesh, the 8th largest mango producer globally, cultivates over 2 million tonnes annually in regions such as Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, and Naogaon. A recent study by LightCastle Partners, developed with philanthropic support from HSBC under the Climate Resilient Advancement in Agriculture in Barind (CRAAB) project and implemented by SAF Bangladesh, highlights how strengthened infrastructure, processing facilities, and market linkages can unlock the export potential of this sector. The following are the key findings from the report:

### Modern Infrastructure Supporting Exports

The country's mango sector is well-positioned to benefit from recent enhancements at Chattogram Port and key logistics hubs, which enable faster, reliable shipments. Expansion of cold-chain systems, treatment units, and airport cargo facilities offers opportunities to further enhance supply chain efficiency, ensuring mangoes reach international markets fresh and premium-quality.

### Processing Facilities and Post-Harvest Readiness

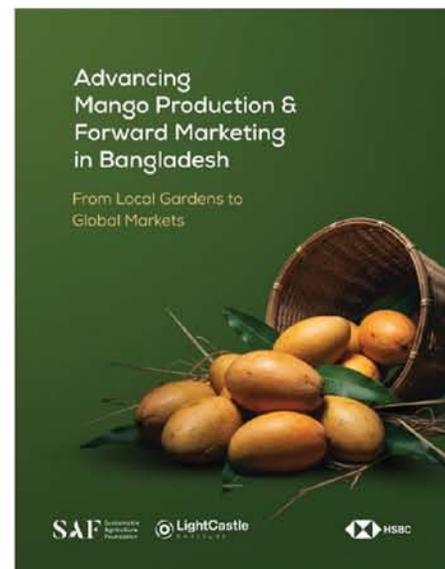
Centralized packing houses (CPHs) and post-harvest treatment units play a crucial role in sorting, grading, certification, and extending shelf life. Cluster-based orchards and contract farming initiatives improve traceability and consistency, helping mangoes meet international standards and maintain quality across long-distance exports.

### Global Market Insights

Worldwide mango imports exceed USD 4 billion, with strong demand in Europe, the US, China, and the Middle East. Countries like India, Thailand, and Mexico lead in premium markets through advanced post-harvest and treatment systems. Bangladesh's mangoes, known for their unique taste and aroma, are well-positioned to compete internationally with growing investments in processing and logistics.

### Current Export Destinations

Bangladesh now exports to 22 countries, with the UK (41%), Sweden, Canada, UAE, and Switzerland among the top destinations. Entry into China, the world's second-largest mango importer, marks a significant milestone. Export earnings reached USD 284,135 in FY25 (till May), reflecting increasing market reach and recognition.





### Future Export Opportunities

With continued focus on certified orchards, technology integration, and supply chain coordination, Bangladesh can expand further into high-value markets such as the US, EU, Middle East, and East Asia. Learning from regional models like Thailand's TMGA cooperative and scaling cluster-based farming can help the sector sustain growth and increase international visibility. Additionally, private sector may increase investment in the production of mango-based products such as mango bars, pulp, dried mangoes, beverages, and mango powder, among others, to cater to a diversified consumer base and gain a stronger foothold in the global mango market.



With strategic investments in infrastructure, processing, and market linkages, Bangladesh's mango sector is ready to transform from local abundance into a globally recognized export powerhouse, offering both premium quality and economic growth.



Scan to read the full report



## JT INTERNATIONAL BANGLADESH RANKED NUMBER ONE TOP EMPLOYER IN BANGLADESH



JT International Bangladesh Ltd. has been ranked the No.1 Top Employer in the country by the Top Employer Institute.

This recognition shows how much the company cares about creating a great place to work – with inclusive people practices, helpful digital tools, and a culture that supports high performance and purpose.

JT International Bangladesh Ltd. focuses on the fundamentals that matter: clear and accessible leadership, opportunities to grow and learn, comprehensive well-being support, and genuine employee engagement. These priorities are shaped by global best practice and tailored to meet the needs of the teams in Bangladesh.

The Top Employer recognition is a respected, rigorous global assessment. JT International Bangladesh Ltd.'s top ranking reflects its strong performance across strategy, leadership, organizational development, talent attraction, learning, career growth, and overall employee experience.



LafargeHolcim

## LAFARGEHOLCIM BANGLADESH LAUNCHES 'EXPERIENCE ZONE' TO ELEVATE CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

LafargeHolcim Bangladesh PLC (LHB), a leader in the construction industry inaugurated its pioneering 'Experience Zone' on December 09, 2025. Located within the Jalsiri Housing Project in Purbachal, Dhaka, this facility is designed to offer a direct and hands-on experience of construction material quality, scientific principles and technical performance.

The Experience Zone was officially inaugurated by Mr. Mahfuzul Hoque, Commercial and Logistics Director of LafargeHolcim Bangladesh PLC. Md. Anissuzaman, Chief Financial Officer, A K M Atiqur Rahman, Human Resources Director and Neel Azavedo, Business Development Director along with senior officials of LHB were present during the inauguration.



In his inaugural address LHB Commercial and Logistics Director, Mr. Mahfuzul Hoque emphasized the company's commitment to innovation and sustainability stating "LafargeHolcim has consistently been at the forefront of delivering innovative, high-quality and sustainable construction solutions. This Experience Zone is a transformative step that will significantly enhance public understanding of construction materials. Customers will now gain practical knowledge on product suitability and the reasons underpinning the superior durability and reliability of LafargeHolcim's offerings."

The Experience Zone serves as an interactive hub, showcasing a comprehensive range of cement and other construction materials. A core feature of the zone is the availability of live demonstrations highlighting the strength, durability and long-term performance of the products.

The Experience Zone will also act as a resource center, providing in-depth information on sustainable construction practices and green innovation, expert consultation and guidance for home builders, professional engineers and masons on future project planning.



LHB believes this initiative will establish a new benchmark for transparency and quality assurance in the construction sector, enabling customers and professionals to make well-informed, confident and data-driven purchasing decisions.

LHB has ambitious plans to replicate the Experience Zone concept across key regions of the country, ensuring broader access to modern construction technology and accurate technical information for all stakeholders.



## METLIFE BANGLADESH: BUILDING MOMENTUM WITH FIRST EVER SOCIAL BOND INVESTMENT AND 'INSURANCE EXCELLENCE AWARD'



MetLife Bangladesh has invested BDT 50 crore in the country's first-ever social bond, issued by BRAC Bank, marking a significant milestone in sustainable financing in Bangladesh.

The proceeds from this pioneering social bond will be directed toward impactful sectors, including women-led MSMEs, affordable housing, healthcare, agriculture, and

climate risk mitigation and resilience projects, all aimed at fostering inclusive economic growth and social development.

BRAC Bank, leading private commercial bank in Bangladesh, holds the distinction of being the highest-rated bank by renowned local and international credit rating agencies. It has also earned the top position among Bangladeshi companies in the prestigious Bloomberg ESG rating, underscoring its commitment to environmental, social, and governance excellence.

MetLife Bangladesh, the country's leading life insurer with around 1 million individual customers and over 900 corporate clients, continues to strengthen its investment portfolio.

In addition to being one of the largest investors in government bonds, MetLife is diversifying into secured corporate bonds to provide sustainable financing to local corporates while delivering better returns on customers' insurance policies. With this latest investment, MetLife Bangladesh's total investment now stands at approximately BDT 19,000 crore.

This collaboration between MetLife and BRAC Bank sets a new benchmark for responsible investment in Bangladesh, reinforcing both organizations' dedication to driving positive social impact through innovative financial solutions.



IDRA Insurance Excellence Award 2025

বাংলাদেশের ১ নম্বর জীবন বীমা প্রতিষ্ঠান  
মেটলাইফ

MetLife Bangladesh ranked as the number one Life Insurer in the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA) introduced 'Insurance Excellence Award 2025'. This award recognizes overall performance, service quality, good governance, claims settlement track record, and compliance, with the goal of strengthening public confidence in the insurance industry.

This has been made possible due to the MetLife Bangladesh teams' relentless efforts and the customer's continued confidence in MetLife Bangladesh. Every person in the MetLife Bangladesh team remains fully committed to supporting the vision of building a stronger image for the insurance sector and further strengthening the trust placed on MetLife Bangladesh.



## UBL LEADS INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP 2025 ON ST. MARTINS ISLAND

St. Martin's Island reopened to visitors in late 2025 with renewed emphasis on responsible tourism and environmental protection. With access resuming after a period of restriction, the early weeks of reopening were critical for restoring the island's ecological balance. Seizing this moment, **Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL)**, in partnership with **Kewkradong Bangladesh (KB)**, launched the **International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) 2025** within the **first week of reopening**. This marked the second consecutive year the partners conducted the initiative on St. Martin's Island, reaffirming their long-term commitment to coastal protection.



### A Timely Intervention with Meaningful Visible Impact

As visitors returned in increasing numbers, UBL and KB mobilised **over 500 volunteers** from universities, youth networks, and the local community. In a single day, volunteers removed **1,850 kg of marine debris** from the island's shoreline. The collected waste included everyday items like plastic bottles and food wrappers, as well as fishing-related materials that pose particular risk to marine and coral ecosystems.

Importantly, the waste removed during the cleanup was transported to the mainland for **safe and responsible disposal**, closing the loop on the intervention and ensuring that the effort went beyond surface-level action.

Carrying out the cleanup at the start of the tourism season was intentional. Early intervention helps stabilise environmental conditions and prevents waste from accumulating rapidly during peak visitation periods.

### Beyond Collection: Encouraging Responsible Behaviour

ICC 2025 aimed to achieve more than waste removal. A key component of the initiative was the focus on shared responsibility and behaviour change. Volunteers engaged tourists, island workers, and residents in discussions about responsible tourism, proper waste disposal, and the island's ecological vulnerability. These conversations play an important role in shaping habits, reducing repeat leakage, and strengthening the culture of stewardship needed to keep St. Martin's clean.



KB, as the national coordinator for the Ocean Conservancy's ICC, guided a structured **waste-categorisation process**, generating data on the types and sources of debris found on the island. Insights from this data help identify where plastic leakage is originating and inform upstream improvements in packaging, consumer awareness, and collection systems.

### Youth voices amplify the message nationally

To extend the impact beyond the island, UBL collaborated with **six youth influencers**, each creating content that highlighted the importance of coastal ecosystems, responsible travel, and plastic waste reduction. Their combined storytelling reached over **10 million people**, turning a local cleanup initiative into a national conversation. This amplification helped reinforce environmental awareness among younger audiences, demonstrating the value of pairing on-ground action with digital engagement.



### Anchored in UBL's long-term plastics commitment

UBL's role in ICC 2025 reflects its broader ambition under its **Plastics pillar** and **Growth Action Plan (GAP) 2030**, which focuses on circularity, reduction, and partnerships. Since 2020, UBL has invested in large-scale, partnership-led waste-management systems, including a major initiative in Chattogram where the company now collects more plastic than it uses in its packaging.

By linking coastal cleanups with long-term value-chain transformation, UBL ensures that interventions contribute to systemic improvement rather than one-off results. This holistic approach is central to delivering measurable impact over time.

### A replicable model for responsible business action

The ICC 2025 effort demonstrates how FICCI members can play a meaningful role in environmental protection through well-designed, partnership-led initiatives. UBL and KB's model illustrates four elements other businesses can adopt:

- **Immediate action:** Address leakage already presents in natural environments
- **Evidence-based insights:** Use waste data to guide upstream decisions
- **Community and youth engagement:** Build awareness and shift behavioural norms
- **System connection:** Align short-term action with long-term circularity efforts

Through early, coordinated, and data-informed action, UBL continues to set an example of how businesses can protect natural assets while contributing to sustainable development.



# **FICCI ACTIVITIES**

**OUR JOURNEY  
WILL CONTINUE FOR  
A MORE GLORIOUS  
BANGLADESH**

*as we still have a long way to go  
with many roads unexplored*



**62<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025 OF FICCI**



FICCI announced its new leadership for the 2026-2027 term at the 62nd AGM on December 7, 2025, at Le Méridien Dhaka.

Rupali Chowdhury, Managing Director of Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited, has been elected President, marking an important milestone as the Chamber plans its next phase of strategic progress.

She will be joined by Mr. Deepal Abeywickrema, Chairman & Managing Director of Nestlé Bangladesh PLC, as Senior Vice President, and Mr. Mohammad Iqbal Chowdhury, CEO of LafargeHolcim Bangladesh PLC, as Vice President. The newly elected 15-member Board will assume office on January 1, 2026, succeeding the Board led by outgoing President Mr. Zaved Akhtar, Chairman of Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.



The Board includes Mr. Jahangir Saadat, President, KEPZ; Mr. Mohamed Fairouz, MD & CEO, Singer Bd Ltd.; Ms. Rubaba Dowla, Country MD, Oracle Bd; Mr. Sumitava Basu, Country Head, Marico Bd Ltd.; Mr. Md. Moinul Huq, Citi Country Officer, Citibank N.A.; Mr. A. A. M. M. Shams Zaman, Managing Partner, PwC Bd; Mr. Uegaki Hiroshi, Country Manager, Mitsubishi Corp; Mr. Ziad Shatara, MD & CEO, Robi Axiata PLC; Mr. Shadab Ahmed Khan, MD, Coca-Cola Bd Beverages Ltd.; Mr. Hedayet Ullah, MD, Syngenta Bd Ltd.; Mr. Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan, Country Manager, Excelerate Energy Bd Ltd.; and Mr. Manas Singh, CEO, STS Capital Ltd.

President-elect Ms. Chowdhury thanked FICCI members for their trust and reaffirmed her commitment to promoting foreign investment and supporting Bangladesh's continued economic transformation. She also acknowledged outgoing President Mr. Zaved Akhtar for his impactful leadership over the past two years.



Outgoing President Mr. Akhtar reflected with appreciation on the Chamber's collective progress during a period of economic and political transition. He expressed gratitude to the Board and members for their support and shared confidence that the new leadership will continue strengthening FICCI's advocacy and partnerships across the public and private sectors.





The AGM recognized its patrons: MasterCard Singapore Holding PTE Ltd. (Platinum); Haleon Bangladesh Ltd., JT International Bangladesh Ltd., and Philip Morris Bangladesh Ltd. (Diamond); Syngenta Bangladesh Ltd., Excelerate Energy Bangladesh Ltd., Coca-Cola Bangladesh Beverages Ltd., and United Ayzag LPG Ltd. (Gold); and Marico Bangladesh Ltd., Petromax LPG Ltd., Robi Axiata Ltd., and Chevron Bangladesh (Silver).



The event brought together FICCI members and both outgoing and newly elected Board members, marking a forward-looking moment for the Chamber.



## FICCI HOLDS FIRST BOARD MEETING FOR 2026-27 TENURE



The first Board Meeting of the newly elected Board of Directors of FICCI for the 2026-27 term was held on 15 January 2026 at the FICCI Office, with President Ms. Rupali Haque Chowdhury, Senior Vice President Mr. Deepal Abeywickrema, and other Board Members in attendance. The meeting focused on setting the strategic priorities, work plan, and advocacy agenda for the 2026-27 tenure, reaffirming FICCI's commitment to proactive engagement with policymakers and advancing a conducive business environment for foreign investors in Bangladesh.

## FICCI PRESIDENT HOLDS COURTESY MEETING WITH U.S. EMBASSY COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR



FICCI President Ms. Rupali Haque Chowdhury recently held a courtesy meeting with Mr. Paul Frost, Commercial Counselor. The discussion covered a range of issues of mutual interest, reflecting the shared commitment to strengthening dialogue and cooperation. FICCI Executive Director Mr. T I M Nurul Kabir accompanied the President at the meeting, reaffirming FICCI's ongoing engagement with international partners.

**FICCI BOARD HOLDS COURTESY MEETING WITH  
IMF RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE**



The Board of Directors of FICCI, led by President Ms. Rupali Haque Chowdhury, paid a courtesy call on Mr. Maxym Kryshko, IMF Resident Representative in Bangladesh, at the FICCI office on 5 February 2026. The meeting provided a valuable platform for exchanging views on key economic and business issues, including the financial sector, the overall business ecosystem, tax policy, cost of doing business, ease of doing business, and sector-specific challenges. Both sides underscored the importance of policy coherence and stakeholder engagement in fostering a more competitive and investment-friendly environment in Bangladesh.



## FICCI BOARD MEETS WORLD BANK TO DISCUSS KEY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS ISSUES



The Board of Directors of the FICCI, led by President Ms. Rupali Chowdhury, paid a courtesy call on Mr. Jean Pesme, Division Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, at the World Bank office on 8 February 2026. The meeting brought together senior representatives from FICCI and the World Bank, including the Deputy Country Director and high-level officials from various sectors.

The meeting offered a constructive forum for sharing perspectives on key economic and business matters, including the financial sector, the broader business ecosystem, tax policy, the cost and ease of doing business, and economic challenges. Both parties highlighted the need for policy coherence, continuity of reforms, and active stakeholder engagement to build a more competitive, transparent, and investment-friendly environment in Bangladesh.



**FICCI PARTICIPATES IN DPOA VALIDATION WORKSHOP ON BANGLADESH'S LDC GRADUATION PROGRESS**



FICCI Board Director Mr. Shams Zaman and Executive Director Mr. T. I. M. Nurul Kabir attended the Validation Workshop on the Doha Programme of Action (DPOA: 2022-2031) National Progress Report for Midterm Review held on 19 January 2026 at NEC-2, Economic Relations Division (ERD). The workshop reviewed and validated Bangladesh's progress towards LDC graduation, assessing national achievements and remaining development challenges in alignment with DPOA targets, with FICCI's participation reflecting its continued commitment to constructive policy dialogue and private sector engagement in the country's sustainable development journey.

**92ND TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**



The 92nd Tripartite Consultative Council (TCC) meeting of the Bangladesh Ministry of Labour and Employment was held on 29 January 2026 at the ministry's conference room, bringing together worker leaders, representatives of the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF), and officials of the Ministry of Labour and Employment. The meeting was presided over by the Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Brigadier General (retired) Dr. M. Shakhawat Hossain, and focused on key labour and employment issues through tripartite dialogue. FICCI Executive Director, Mr. T I M Nurul Kabir, repeated the chamber and participated in the discussions on behalf of the chamber.



**JT INTERNATIONAL BANGLADESH LIMITED ANNOUNCES  
NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR**



**Dr. Oliver Kutz**  
Managing Director  
JT International Bangladesh Limited



JT International Bangladesh Limited has appointed Dr. Oliver Kutz as its new Managing Director, effective 1 February 2026. He will be based in Dhaka.

Oliver brings more than two decades of international experience in the tobacco industry. He began his career in 2000 with Reemtsma/Imperial Brands and went on to hold a series of senior commercial and general management roles across Asia, the Caucasus, Eastern Europe, and North America. His leadership journey includes serving as Marketing Director in

Taiwan, General Manager for the Caucasus, Ukraine, and Russia, as well as President & CEO of ITG Brands USA. He later led Central & Eastern Europe as General Manager based in Prague, and most recently served as General Manager for the UK & Ireland.

Oliver holds a PhD in Marketing. He is married and has two children.

Speaking about the potential of the Bangladesh market, Oliver stated, "Bangladesh presents significant opportunities for responsible growth. I look forward to working with our teams and stakeholders to strengthen our business foundations, uphold the highest standards of compliance, and support the continued development of JTI's presence in the market."

**RUHUL QUDDUS KHAN JOINS UNILEVER BANGLADESH AS CEO & MD**

**Mr. Ruhul Quddus Khan**  
CEO and Managing Director  
Unilever Bangladesh Limited



Ruhul Quddus Khan has joined Unilever Bangladesh Limited as its Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, bringing with him over 29 years of experience in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. With deep expertise across business transformation, operations, and leadership, Ruhul is known for his strategic foresight and people-first approach. Since assuming the role on 1 November 2025, he has been focused on driving best-in-class performance through market-making, unmissably superior brands.

Ruhul began his career at Unilever Bangladesh in 1996 as a Management Trainee and has since held several pivotal leadership roles, including Head of Manufacturing, Supply Chain Director, and Customer Experience and Logistics Head. Over nearly three decades, he has led major factory capacity expansions, efficiency turnarounds, crisis management efforts, and digitalization initiatives that elevated Unilever Bangladesh's supply chain to global benchmark status. His leadership during periods of disruption, including the COVID-19 pandemic, foreign exchange volatility, and socio-political challenges, ensured business continuity while prioritizing employee safety.

A Mechanical Engineering graduate from IIT Kanpur, Ruhul brings a strong blend of analytical rigour and human-centred leadership to his role. A firm believer that growth and responsibility must advance together, he is steering Unilever Bangladesh's sustainability agenda in alignment with Unilever's Growth Action Plan (GAP) 2030, with a clear focus on Net Zero operations and green energy integration. A passionate mentor and lifelong learner, Ruhul continues to foster a culture of accountability, agility, and innovation, positioning Unilever Bangladesh as one of the country's most trusted and future-ready organizations.

**KENICHIRO KAWAMOTO JOINS MITSUI & CO. (ASIA PACIFIC) PTE. LTD.  
AS COUNTRY CHAIRPERSON**



**Mr. Kenichiro Kawamoto**  
Country Chairperson  
Mitsui & Co. (Asia Pacific) Pte. Ltd., Dhaka



Mr. Kenichiro Kawamoto has joined Mitsui & Co. (Asia Pacific) Pte. Ltd., Dhaka Branch as its new Country Chairperson. He brings extensive global experience to the role, having previously served in key positions across Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and at Mitsui's Tokyo Headquarters. Mr. Kawamoto succeeds Mr. Mohammad Shariful Alam, Country Manager, and assumes leadership at a time of expanding opportunities for Mitsui's operations in Bangladesh.

With a distinguished international career, Mr. Kawamoto is well-positioned to further strengthen Mitsui's strategic footprint in the country. His cross-regional expertise and deep understanding of global trading and investment dynamics are expected to contribute significantly to enhancing the company's business operations and partnerships in Bangladesh. We extend a warm welcome to Mr. Kawamoto and look forward to continued collaboration with Mitsui & Co. under his leadership.

Mitsui & Co. (Asia Pacific) Pte. Ltd. (MCAP), headquartered in Singapore, serves as the regional headquarters of Mitsui & Co., Ltd., one of Japan's leading Sogo-Shosha (general trading companies). Established in 2007, MCAP oversees operations across 15 countries in Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, and Oceania, with a diversified business portfolio encompassing resources, infrastructure, chemicals, food, and mobility, supported by strong capabilities in investment, marketing, and logistics.

**MD. AHTESHAMUL HAQUE KHAN JOINS DUTCH-BANGLA BANK  
AS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO**



**Md. Ahteshamul Haque Khan**  
Managing Director & CEO  
Dutch-Bangla Bank PLC.



Md. Ahteshamul Haque Khan Joined Dutch-Bangla Bank as the Managing Director & CEO on 7 February, 2026.

Before joining as the Managing Director & CEO, Mr. Khan was the Deputy Managing Director and Chief Business Officer (CBO) of the same Bank for around 6 years. He was also the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the bank. Before that, he served as Manager of several strategically important branches of DBBL, including the Local Office.

Mr. Khan joined Dutch-Bangla Bank in 2003. He played a pivotal role in the bank's transformational initiatives, innovation, business expansion and operational excellence.

With over 30 years of banking experience, Mr. Khan began his banking career as an Assistant Manager (on probation) at Basic Bank in 1995.

He completed his B.Sc (Hons) and M.Sc in Economics from Jahangirnagar University.

**SIAM CITY CEMENT (BANGLADESH) LTD. APPOINTS  
DR. KANTHASAT BOONTEM AS CEO & MANAGING DIRECTOR**



**Dr. Kanthasat Boontem, Ph.D.**  
CEO & Managing Director  
Siam City Cement (Bangladesh) Ltd.



Dr. Kanthasat Boontem, Ph.D. has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Siam City Cement (Bangladesh) Ltd.

A Thai national with over 23 years of experience across the SCCC Group and the regional cement industry, he brings deep leadership exposure from Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Bangladesh.

He has built a strong professional foundation through hands-on technical roles, while gaining extensive experience in plant operations, sourcing, and new business development, equipping him to lead complex, multi-country operations.

Previously serving as Operations Director and a member of the Executive Committee, Dr. Boontem has played a key role in the organisation's journey. His expertise spans manufacturing excellence, supply chain optimisation, digital transformation, and ESG initiatives, positioning him well to lead the company's next phase of growth.

**ROBI APPOINTS MUHAMMAD SHOAIB BAIG AS CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER**

**Mr. Muhammad Shoaib Baig**  
Chief People Officer  
Robi Axiata PLC.



Muhammad Shoaib Baig is a highly experienced C-Level leader with over 20 years of expertise in transforming and leading large organizations across various industries and regions, including the UK, Europe, Asia Pacific/ South Africa, and Pakistan. Shoaib comes with a strong track record in business transformations, employee engagement, talent management, digitalizing key business processes and implementing HRMS systems.

In his last position, Shoaib was the Group Chief People Officer for PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone), where he led the People & Organisation Division, overseeing HR, Admin, Estate Management, Industrial Relations, HSE, internal communications and more. Under his leadership, PTCL Group achieved significant milestones, including winning the "Best Place to Work" award in Pakistan's Tech/Telecom sector, significantly reducing employee turnover, and improving employee engagement levels.

Previously, Shoaib held senior HR roles at Telenor, Unilever, Novartis, OGDCL, edotco, and K Electric, where he led cultural transformations, implemented HR strategies, and managed large workforces. His tenure at Telenor saw the company rise to the #1 position in Pakistan due to implementation of full spectrum of people & organisational interventions.

Shoaib's international experience includes leadership roles at Novartis Pharmaceuticals, where he led HR for the UK & Ireland and subsequently for Asia-Pacific & South Africa region. Also at Unilever PLC UK, he successfully led Global HR projects including digitalization and talent management initiatives.

He holds an MBA and a BE Honors in Civil Engineering from the University of Leeds, UK, and has completed executive education programs at INSEAD and Babson College, USA. Shoaib is a British citizen with a proven ability to drive business growth and organizational excellence.



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সুরক্ষিত রাখছে আপনার ভালোবাসার সবকিছু



# touching millions through bKash



## Pivotal role in women empowerment

Women from households using bKash earn 86%<sup>[1]</sup> more comparing to non-bKash using families. In terms of ownership of financial assets, 'bKash using women' are 20%<sup>[2]</sup> ahead of non-bKash users.

## Parity in financial services

About 44%<sup>[3]</sup> of the bKash users are women.

## Awareness in education and healthcare

Households using bKash are more conscious about education and healthcare, thus spend more in these areas.

## Enabling families to increase income

Per capita income of families using bKash is 5.8%<sup>[4]</sup> higher than non-bKash users. They are also more efficient in tackling disaster-induced situation.

\*According to BIDS study on "Impact of Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh - The Case of bKash"

Source: [1 & 2: Page 104]; [3: Page 71]; [4: Page: 109]





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1 Serving = 250 ml  
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Per Serving  
1.59g Sugar in 250 ml



\*অফারটি সীমিত সময়ের জন্য। স্টক থাকা পর্যন্ত প্রযোজ্য।  
এই অফারটি ছাড়াও কোকা-কোলা পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।

অফারটি **স্মার্ট** ১.৭৫ লিটার-এর ক্ষেত্রেও প্রযোজ্য।



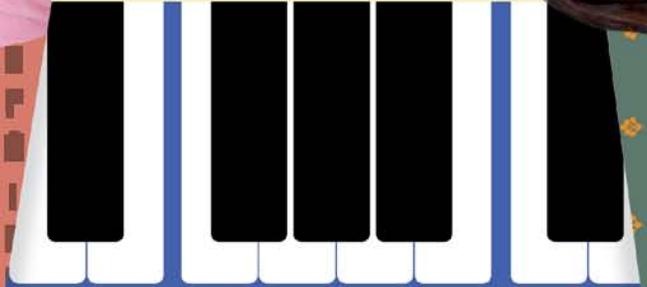
Architecta  
by Aupee Karim



Heritage Weave  
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Soundscape  
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# NOURISHMENT IN **20 MINUTES**<sup>^</sup> BEFORE SHAMPOO



<sup>^</sup> BASED ON CONSUMER STUDY  
CONDUCTED BY DABUR INTERNATIONAL

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A Brand under Marico Bangladesh Limited

<sup>^</sup>Basis technical study data against non conditioning hair

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