



# FRENCH NATIONAL DAY 2025

14th July



Md. Muin Uddin Mazumder  
**President**  
France Bangladesh Chamber  
of Commerce & Industry (CCIFB)

On this momentous occasion of French National Day, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the people of France, to our French members, partners, and to all those who cherish the enduring ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Bastille Day is more than a celebration of a historic event, it is a reaffirmation of values that continue to inspire freedom-loving people around the world. The storming of the Bastille in 1789 was not only the beginning of the French Revolution—it marked a turning point in the global struggle for democracy, justice, and human dignity.

As President of the France Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCIFB), I am proud of the longstanding and ever-deepening partnership between our two countries. France and Bangladesh share a dynamic bilateral relationship—rooted in mutual respect, strengthened through cultural exchange, and increasingly powered by growing economic cooperation.

French innovation and excellence continue to contribute meaningfully to Bangladesh's development journey. In sectors such as energy, infrastructure, aerospace, fashion, agriculture, and sustainable development, French companies are playing an active and positive role. At the same time, Bangladeshi entrepreneurs and professionals are making their mark in France and beyond. The CCIFB stands at the heart of this evolving partnership, serving as a platform for dialogue, business facilitation, and collaboration. As we celebrate this National Day, we also look to the future—with optimism and purpose. Our Chamber remains committed to further strengthening commercial ties, promoting bilateral investments, and building bridges of opportunity between our two nations.

Let this day remind us that values-driven cooperation can shape a more inclusive and prosperous world. On behalf of the CCIFB, I once again convey my warmest felicitations to the French community in Bangladesh, to our partners in France, and to all who uphold the spirit of July 14th.

**Vive la France! Vive l'amitié franco-bangladaise!**



France Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCIFB)

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### World Bank to continue support for Bangladesh projects

#### Says finance adviser

The World Bank has assured Bangladesh of continuing its assistance in ongoing projects along with the budgetary support. "It (World Bank) has expressed its satisfaction over the overall economic situation of the country," Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed told reporters after a meeting with World Bank's visiting new Vice President for the South Asia Region, Johannes Zutt, at the secretariat, reports UNB. He said that Zutt appreciated Bangladesh's advancement although it went through a very tough situation in the past one year. "We are very much happy to see the progress of financial sector, balance of payment, and foreign exchange sector,

as it is going well," the finance adviser quoted the World Bank official as saying. He also mentioned that Zutt put emphasis on revamping the private sector, its development, and enhancement of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country. He said that Bangladesh is doing well overall, compared to the other countries of the world. The adviser said Zutt recalled his past role as the country director of the World Bank in Bangladesh 15 years ago and pointed out that since then Bangladesh has gained remarkable changes, especially in physical structure such as metro rail. "The World Bank will provide all kinds of support needed for Bangladesh," the

adviser quoted the VP of the Washington-based lender as saying. Responding to a question, Salehuddin said that World Bank is happy about the reforms that are going on in Bangladesh. Zutt, he said, appreciated the central bank's initiative for restructuring the banking sector. "The macroeconomic situation of the country is on the right track," he quoted the WB official as saying. Regarding the US Tariff issue, the adviser said that the commerce adviser would brief on the outcome of the negotiations on his return home from Washington. "He will inform us in which area we need to adjust our tariff, there is a tax policy and other issues involved in this matter, we will look into the matter," he said.

### EU ready to retaliate in tariff fight with US

The European Union said on Saturday it was ready to retaliate to defend its interests if the United States pressed ahead with imposing a 30% tariff on European goods from August 1, reports Reuters. US President Donald Trump latest salvo surprised the bloc, the United States' largest trading partner, which had hoped to avoid an escalating trade war after intense negotiations and increasingly warm words from the White House. Ulsula von der Leyen, head of the EU executive which handles trade policy for the 27 member states, said the bloc was ready to keep working towards an agreement before August 1, but was willing to stand firm. "We will take all necessary steps to safeguard EU interests, including the adoption of proportionate countermeasures if required," she said of possible retaliatory tariffs on US goods entering Europe. EU ambassadors were due to discuss next steps on Sunday, before trade ministers meet in Brussels on Monday for an extraordinary meeting. They will need to decide whether to impose tariffs on 21 billion euros of US imports in retaliation against separate US tariffs against steel and aluminium, or extend a suspension which lasts until the end of Monday.



**AB BANK INAUGURATES RELOCATED PAHARTOLI BRANCH**  
AB Bank PLC has recently relocated its Pahartoli Branch to Green Gulbarh Tower, Zakir Hossain Road, A.K. Khan Moor, Akbar Shah, Chattogram. Syed Mizanur Rahman, Managing Director & CEO, AB Bank, inaugurated the new premises with all modern banking facilities virtually from the bank's Head Office.



**ISLAMI BANK HOLDS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**  
Islami Bank Bangladesh PLC organised 'Half-yearly Business Development Conference' of Dhaka Central, North, South and East Zone and six corporate branches in Dhaka at the Islami Bank Tower on Sunday. Obayed Ullah Al Masud, chairman of the bank, addressed the conference as the chief guest. Md. Abdus Salam, chairman of the audit committee, Dr. M. Masud Rahman, chairman of the risk management committee, and Dr. M. Zubair Khan, independent director, were present as special guests. Md. Omar Faruk Khan, managing director (current charge), presided over the event.

### Gold demand sluggish in Asia as volatile prices weigh on sentiment

Demand for physical gold remained sluggish last week across major Asian markets as price volatility weighed on sentiment, with premiums in China holding firm and discounts in India narrowing, reports Reuters. Dealers in top consumer China charged premiums of \$10-\$25 an ounce over the global benchmark spot price, compared with premiums of \$4.2-\$33 last week. Spot gold fell to its lowest level in over a week on Wednesday, dipping below the \$3,300 mark, before recovering to trade at \$3,335

as of 0530 GMT on Friday. US President Donald Trump has broadened his trade war in recent days, announcing new levies on several countries, set to take effect on August 1. This uncertainty has failed to trigger a renewed interest in gold buying in China this week, said Hugo Pascal, a precious metals trader at InProved. China's central bank issued new anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regulations targeting precious metals and gemstone dealers, state news agency Xinhua

reported. "(This regulation) will kill some potential demand onshore China," a mainland China-based precious metal trader said, adding gold demand may rise only when prices approach \$3,000-\$3,100. Meanwhile, Indian dealers' discounts narrowed to up to \$8 an ounce, inclusive of 6% import and 3% sales levies, from last week's \$14. Discounts are gradually narrowing due to limited supplies, as imports were low in May and June and scrap availability is also restricted, said a Mumbai-

based bullion dealer with a private bank. Domestic gold prices traded around 97,300 rupees (\$1,133.57) per 10 grams on Friday after hitting an all-time peak of 101,078 rupees last month. Gold demand is typically subdued in India during the monsoon season that spans June to September. In Hong Kong, gold was sold at a premium of \$1.50, while in Singapore gold traded between at-par prices and a \$2.20 premium. In Japan, bullion changed hands at par to a premium of \$0.50.

### Spot LNG prices inch up as hot weather boosts cooling demand

LONDON, July 13 (Reuters) - Asian spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices edged higher last week as a heat wave in Japan and North Korea spurred cooling demand, while industrial demand in China remained subdued. The average LNG price for August delivery into north-east Asia was at \$12.90 per million British thermal units (mmbtu), up from \$12.70/mmbtu last week, industry sources estimated. The price for September delivery was estimated at \$12.70/mmbtu. "Prices have risen this week, supported by a heatwave in north-east Asia. Seoul recorded its hottest day since 2018 and stocks are being drawn down in both South Korea and Japan to meet stronger cooling demand," said Martin Senler, head of LNG pricing at Argus. At least two Atlantic basin carriers have diverted away from Europe to Asia since the start of the month and a further two Qatari carriers have changed course from Europe to Asia as well, Senler said. Meanwhile, demand in South Asia and China remains muted with average cooling demand for the time of year and subdued industrial demand, given production prices and inflation numbers that have been published this week, said Klaas Dozeman, market analyst at Braintchild Commodity Intelligence. Dozeman said that import tariffs "and the

fluid situation around them could influence industrial demand over the coming weeks". In Europe, the gas market is stabilising. "Gas prices may be finding a floor for summer. Europe needs to keep up sufficient competition to keep pulling in cargoes to refill its storage ahead of winter, even with the slight easing of regional targets to 80% from 90% before," said Alex Froyle, senior LNG analyst at data intelligence firm ICIS. There is the potential for some minor short-term bullishes if heat waves continue in East Asia and if Japan and Korea's competition with Europe to secure fuel for summer power generation spikes, Froyle said. However, fundamentals are becoming a little easier, with the second half of the year set to see an extra 7 million tons per annum (mtpa) coming on stream from the second phase of Plaquemines in the United States, as well as 14 mtpa from LNG Canada, he added. S&P Global Commodity Insights assessed its daily North West Europe LNG Marker (NWM) price benchmark for cargoes delivered in August on an ex-ship (DES) basis at \$11.572/mmbtu on July 10, a \$0.44/mmbtu discount to the August futures price at the TTF hub. In the LNG freight market, Atlantic rates recorded the largest week-on-week decline since January and were assessed at \$31,750/day on Friday, while Pacific rates decreased marginally to \$38,750/day.



**MIDLAND BANK SIGNS MOU WITH PIZZA HUT**  
Midland Bank PLC (MDB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Pizza Hut, the renowned US-based international restaurant chain, recently. Md. Nazmul Huda Sarkar, Chief Technology Officer of Midland Bank, and Farhan Hadi, Head of Marketing of Pizza Hut, signed the agreement at the Midland Bank's Head Office in Dhaka. Under this partnership, every Midland Bank cardholder will receive a complimentary pizza coupon worth Tk 299 (one Ultimate Hot Chicken - personal pizza) from Pizza Hut Bangladesh as a welcome gift upon card issuance.

### Daily average container handling rises at New Mooring terminal

Container handling at the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) of Chattogram Port has seen a significant improvement in the first seven days of operational management by Chittagong Dry Dock Limited (from July 7 to 13, according to CA's Press Wing. During this period, the terminal recorded an average of 3,181 TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) handled per day, compared to 2,956 TEUs a day during the previous seven days when the terminal was managed by Salf Powertec Limited, reports UNB.

This marks an increase of 225 TEUs per day, reflecting a positive improvement in efficiency and performance. The NCT terminal had long been operated by Salf Powertec Limited, under the expiry of its contract with Chittagong Port on July 6, 2025, the Ministry of Shipping approved the handover of operational responsibility to Chittagong Dry Dock Limited. Container loading and unloading of 10 vessels were successful in seven days and currently four vessels are being handled simultaneously at the four berths of the NCT terminal.



**JANATA BANK HOLDS 18TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
The 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Janata Bank PLC was held on Sunday at the bank's head office in Dhaka, with Chairman of the bank Md Fazlur Rahman in the chair. Managing Director Md Mazibur Rahman presented the bank's financial and business performance at the meeting. Additional Secretary of the Financial Institutions Division Md. Azimuddin Biswas, Directors of the bank Badre Munir Ferdous, Dr Md Abdus Sabur, Abdul Majid Sheikh, AKM Khairuddin Chowdhury, Abdul Awal Sarkar, Dr Md Shahadat Hossain, Md Ahsan Kabir, Md Kawser Alam, and Md Obaidul Haque attended the meeting. Company Secretary Md. Abdul Alim Khan moderated the AGM.

### SpaceX to invest \$2b in Musk's xAI startup

SpaceX has committed \$2 billion to xAI as part of a \$5 billion equity round, deepening the ties between tech billionaire Elon Musk's ventures as his artificial intelligence startup races to compete with rival OpenAI, the Wall Street Journal reported on Saturday. The investment follows xAI's merger with X and values the combined company at \$113 billion, with the Grok chatbot now powering Starlink support and for future integration into Tesla's Optimus robots, reports Reuters. In response to a post on X about whether Tesla could also invest in xAI, Elon Musk said on Sunday, "It would be great, but subject to board and shareholder approval," without confirming or denying the Journal report on SpaceX's investment plans in xAI. SpaceX, xAI and Tesla did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

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ccifb  
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**MARKETING & SALES CONFERENCE 2025-26**  
ACI Pharma Business | 10 July 2025

**ACI PHARMA BUSINESS HOSTS ANNUAL MARKETING & SALES CONFERENCE**  
ACI Pharma Business held 'Annual Marketing & Sales Conference 2025-26' in Cox's Bazar recently, bringing together Sales and Marketing Personnel from all across the country. M Mohibuz Zaman, MD & CEO, ACI Healthcare Ltd., Mohammad Abul Basher Howlader, Director, Healthcare Operations, Md. Muhsin Mia, Director, Marketing Operations, and Mahmudur Rahman Bhuiyan, Director, Field Marketing Operations, attended the event. Best performers of 2024-25 were rewarded for their excellent achievement and contribution.