

LEGAL AND TAX DIGEST

BANGLADESH

LAOS

MYANMAR

Legislative developments – October 2025





BANGLADESH

Banking and Finance

*FEPD Circular No. 40 dated 28 October 2025 issued by the Foreign Exchange Policy Department of the Bangladesh Bank on “**Outward Remittances for Power Purchases**”*

The Bangladesh Bank has issued a series of circulars this year that have progressively shaped the regulatory framework for outward remittances for international transactions, particularly in the energy sector. Taken together, FEPD Circulars 33, 37, and 40 demonstrate a clear evolution, from establishing procedural requirements to granting regulatory flexibility and finally, to providing sector-specific facilitation for cross-border electricity trade.

FEPD Circular 33 dated 14 August 2025 introduced the IMP Form requirement for payments involving customs clearance and established the procedural framework to ensure that remittances associated with import transactions adhere to a standardized documentation protocol.

Subsequently, **FEPD Circular 37 dated 30 September 2025**, expanded the scope by clarifying that the Bangladesh Bank may approve bona fide current international transactions beyond indicative limits under Section 5(1)(a) of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947. This introduced regulatory flexibility, allowing case-by-case approvals for transactions that exceed standard thresholds.

Finally, this latest **FEPD Circular, No. 40** applies these principles specifically to the energy sector. It facilitates outward remittances for government-approved cross-border power purchase arrangements transmitted through the national grid by mandating government authorization, valid contractual agreements, authenticated invoices, and certificates confirming receipt of electricity. It also emphasizes compliance with tax obligations, including source tax and VAT, and reinforces adherence to KYC norms, AML/CFT standards, and routine reporting requirements. Where customs formalities are involved, Circular 40 explicitly refers to the IMP Form procedure established in Circular 33.

The combined effect of these circulars is a coherent framework that balances facilitation of essential imports with strong compliance safeguards. For stakeholders authorized dealers, government agencies, and foreign suppliers, this evolution underscores the importance of aligning operational practices with both procedural and sector-specific requirements to ensure lawful and efficient execution of outward remittances.

*Circular No. 27.00.0000.071.99.009.24.785 dated 6 October 2025 issued by the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources on “**Policy on Commercial Power Generation of Power Plants Based on Renewable Energy with Private Participation, 2025**”*

This policy marks a strategic shift in the country's energy framework. It aims to promote clean energy, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and encourage private investment in power generation. It replaces the now-repealed provisions of the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act 2010, which previously allowed unsolicited proposals for power procurement.

The policy enables the development of merchant power plants (“**MPPs**”) by private, foreign, and joint venture investors. These plants, powered by renewable sources such as solar, wind, biomass, and waste-to-energy, can supply electricity directly to large consumers and bulk power consumers under negotiated tariffs through merchant power purchase agreements. MPPs may also sell up to 20% of their output to public sector utilities under power purchase agreements, though without government guarantees.

The policy ensures open access to transmission and distribution networks managed by Power Grid Bangladesh PLC and other licensed entities, subject to the payment of tariffs determined by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission. It outlines clear provisions for power wheeling, grid connectivity, and compensation mechanisms in case of system limitations or changes in the law.

Investors must meet specific qualifications, including financial capacity and experience in power generation. Disqualified entities include loan defaulters, litigants with unresolved disputes, and those barred by regulatory authorities. The policy also supports public-private partnerships and encourages state-owned enterprises to contribute land or assets.

Environmental compliance is mandatory, with impact assessments required for all projects. The policy introduces renewable energy certificates that will be issued by SREDA to quantify and trade environmental attributes of clean energy generation.

This policy represents a progressive legal and regulatory framework aimed at transforming Bangladesh's energy sector. By fostering private investment, ensuring competitive tariffs, and promoting sustainability, it aligns with global climate goals and enhances energy security. Legal professionals, investors, and stakeholders should closely examine the policy's provisions, especially those relating to contractual obligations, dispute resolution, and regulatory compliance, as they will significantly influence future energy projects and commercial engagements in the country.

Authors and Contacts



Habibullah Shakil

Legal Advisor
habibullah.shakil@vdb-loi.com



Osman Goni

Partner
osman.goni@vdb-loi.com

LAOS



Commerce

*Decree No. 632 dated 17 October 2025 issued by the Government of the Lao PDR on “**One District One Product**”*

This decree sets out the regulations, application procedures, and investment incentives for the development of products and services under the One District One Product (“**ODOP**”) program. It enters into effect on 18 November 2025.

The key highlights are summarized below.

Requirements for ODOP products and services

ODOP products must meet the following requirements:

- They must be produced by local individuals, groups, entities, or organizations
- They must use at least 70% local raw materials and there must be a stable source of supply
- The producer must own the intellectual property related to the product
- The producer must have its own manufacturing process, processing facilities, packaging, and product logo
- The production site must meet the applicable standards
- The design and production must be unique and distinctive, reflecting the cultural heritage, traditions, and identity of the nation, tribe, or local community
- The producer must comply with all relevant laws, regulations, and standards, including those concerning consumer protection and environmental impact

Some examples of ODOP products include handicrafts, food and beverages, traditional medicines, and cosmetics.

ODOP services must meet the following requirements:

- They must be provided by local individuals, groups, entities, or organizations
- They must reflect Lao culture
- They must use at least 70% local materials in the provision of services or in the decoration of the service premises
- The creator or provider must own the intellectual property associated with the service
- The design, methods, or decoration of the service must be unique and representative of Lao style
- The provider must comply with all relevant laws, regulations, and standards

Some examples of ODOP services include community-based tourism services, traditional performance services, traditional art workshops, and location-based services, such as those offered at Hor Pha Keo, Plain of Jars, Pheuksa Garden, and cultural tourism villages.

Use of the official ODOP logo

The official ODOP logo may be displayed on ODOP products and at ODOP service premises, as well as on clothing, documents, production sites, advertisements, and promotional events, subject to prior approval from the District Industry and Commerce Division where the products are manufactured or the services are provided.

The approval is valid for three years and may be renewed by submitting a renewal request at least three months before its expiry date.

Incentives

This decree mentions incentives from the Lao government in a general way of creating opportunities for the investor in respect of a favorable investment environment by providing access to funding, sources of materials, development, consultancy, marketing, advance and eco-friendly technology, intellectual property rights protection, and information. These will likely be expanded upon in future regulations by the respective authorities.

It also provides specific investment incentives in term of taxes and official fees, including:

- **Exemption from official fees** for applying for approval to use the ODOP logo.
- **Exemption from profit tax**, starting from the date of approval to use the ODOP logo, in accordance with the Law on Investment Promotion for up to 15 years for investments in Zone 1 and up to seven years for those in Zone 2.
- **Exemption from land concession fees** in accordance with the Law on Investment Promotion for up to 15 years for investments in Zone 1 and up to eight years for those in Zone 2.
- **Exemption from import duties** on the importation of equipment and machinery that are not available domestically for the production of ODOP products.
- **Exemption from export duties** for the exportation of ODOP products.

Regulatory

Notice No. 23902 on 6 October 2025 issued by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport ("MPWT") on the "Management of Taxi Operation Services Conducted via Online Platforms or Applications"

The notice sets out the guidelines and requirements for the operation of online platform taxi services.

The highlights are outlined below.

- Online taxi operators must maintain a physical office in the Lao PDR for correspondence purposes.

- Online taxi operators must obtain a passenger transportation license in each province where they operate.
- Online taxi operators must ensure that their vehicles all have copies of their vehicle registration book, annual transportation permit, road tax payment receipt, other tax payment receipts, and passenger insurance.
- Drivers must have a driving license, identification card, taxi service training certificate, proof of affiliation with a company or association, and employment identification card.
- Vehicles must pass technical inspection; be equipped with a taximeter, front-and-rear dash cameras, and an internal dash camera; be new; have a commercial vehicle license plate; have window tinting not exceeding 20% (or not tinted at all); display the MPWT transport vehicle sticker; comply with the company's designated color; and display the company's contact number.
- The online platform or application must be approved by the Ministry of Technology and Communications before the MPWT's Department of Transport issues the online taxi license.

Service fees must be approved by the MPWT's Department of Transport.

Authors and Contacts



Khammanh Vathanaphone

Legal Associate

khammanh.vathanaphone@vdb-loi.com



Sornpheth Douangdy

Senior Counsel

sornpheth.douangdy@vdb-loi.com

MYANMAR

Commerce

*Export and Import Bulletin No. 6/2025 dated 8 October 2025 issued by the Department of Trade ("DOT") under the Ministry of Commerce on "**Increase of Service Fees**"*

With effect from 15 November 2025, the DOT has increased the service fees for online services, including for the use of the Myanmar TradeNet 2.0 system.

Below are the current service fees set under Export and Import Bulletin No. 5/2018 dated 9 August 2018 and Export and Import Bulletin No. 18/2020 dated 28 October 2020, and the updated fees set under this bulletin applicable from 15 November 2025:

No.	Matter	Current service fees (MMK)	Updated service fees (MMK)
1.	Annual member fee for use of the online TradeNet 2.0 system	15,000	50,000
2.	Online application fee	3,000	10,000
3.	Export license renewal fee: (i) For the first two-month extension (ii) For the second one-month extension	5,000 5,000	50,000 30,000
4.	Import license renewal fee: (i) For the first two-month extension (ii) For the second one-month extension	5,000 5,000	The same rate as that of the original license fee
5.	Amendment of the information stated on the export or import license	5,000 per change	10,000 per change
6.	Return of export or import license	-	30,000

The late fees for renewal or amendment of an export or import license remain unchanged: (i) MMK5,000 if applied for within one month from the date of expiration; (ii) MMK10,000 if applied for later than one month from the date of expiration.

Please note that any reapplication for a license submitted later than 14 days from the date of expiration of the license will not be processed. Applications to amend information on a license must be submitted before the arrival of the goods at Myanmar's ports and airports.

This bulletin revokes Export and Import Bulletin Nos. 5/2018 and 18/2020.

Authors and Contacts



Nu Htet Htet Lwin

Translation Manager
nuhtethtet.lwin@vdb-loi.com



Aye Myat Thu

Partner
ayemyat.thu@vdb-loi.com

* * *

Information included in this document does not represent legal, tax, or other advice. This document is not intended to represent a comprehensive list of all new laws and regulations issued or published in the relevant jurisdictions.