

BANGLADESH ECONOMIC ZONES AUTHORITY
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Annual Report
on
Right to Information Act

2018-2019

Introduction

The Right to Information Act was enacted in 2009 with the objectives of empowering citizens to ensure free and easy access to the intended real-time information of any government, autonomous or statutory organisation of the public sector and government or foreign-funded private sector organisations. It promotes transparency and accountability so far the free flow of information is concerned, curbs corruption and upholds corruption in the society with the provision of providing information to the mass people contained in government records, subject to certain specific and limited number of exceptions.

The Act requires each government institution to prepare and publish an annual report to disseminate the effort and activities taken under the Right to Information Act by any nodal agency for the fulfillment of the obligations of different sections of this Act. Under this purview this annual report is published by the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority highlighting how this organization administered its derived responsibilities under this Act during the 2018/19 fiscal year emphasizing free flow of information as one of its core values.

Institutional Purposes of BEZA

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) was established under the Bangladesh Economic Zones Act, 2010 as an autonomous organisation working under the Prime Minister's Office. The vision, mission and values of BEZA are respectively:

Vision

BEZA aspires to become a sustainable development driving force and a world class investment promoter and service provider to ensure quality of life of the people.

Mission

BEZA's mission is to persistently create value for the investors by establishing attractive investment facilities in the economic zones through One-Stop service and competitive incentive packages.

Core Values

- Customer satisfaction;
- Teamwork;
- Free flow of information;
- Participation and involvement;
- Never stop learning;
- Networking; and
- Effective Public-Private Partnership.

Background of Establishing BEZA

Bangladesh is now on the way to establish itself as the next rising star in South Asia for foreign investment. The government has implemented a number of policy reforms designed to create a more open and competitive climate for private investment, both foreign and local. Bangladesh is a winning combination of competitive market, business-friendly environment and competitive cost structure.

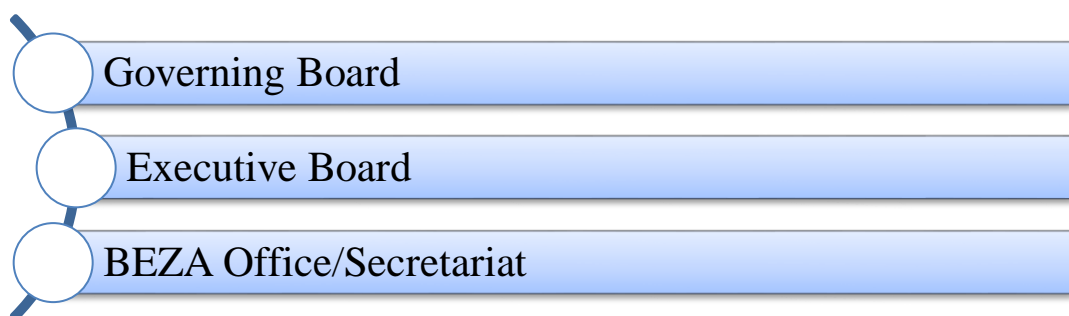
Economic Zones (EZ) in Bangladesh refers to designated areas for special economic regulations that differ from other areas in the country. These regulations tend to contain measures that are conducive to foreign direct investment (FDI). Conducting business in an EZ usually means a company receives both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives and the opportunity to pay lower tariffs. Bangladesh aims to establish 100 Economic Zones on 30,000 hectares of land in the next 15 years with an employment generation of 10 million people.

In November 2010, Government of Bangladesh established Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) under the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority Act to drive new economic zone regime. BEZA is mandated to establish, license, operate and control economic zones in Bangladesh. Moreover, the authority is committed to develop backward linkage industries, creating employment opportunities and contribute to poverty reduction program. BEZA's vision for industrial development is in line with Government's Vision 2021. Policy directives also shifted from Export processing Zone (EPZ) to Economic Zone (EZ) with more involvement of private sector.

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) is attached with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and is mandated to establish, license, operate, manage and control economic zones in Bangladesh. BEZA aims to establish economic zones in all potential areas of Bangladesh including backward and underdeveloped regions with a view to encouraging rapid economic development by proliferation and diversification of industry, employment, production and export.

Governance and Management structure

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), attached with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), was officially instituted by the government on 9 November 2010 as a nodal agency to establish, give license to operate, manage and control economic zones in Bangladesh. BEZA has a 3-tier management structure:



Roles and Responsibilities

(1) Governing Board of BEZA

The Governing Board of BEZA, which is chaired by the Honourable Prime Minister is the highest policy making body of Economic Zones. The Board is entrusted with the responsibility to:

- (a) Formulate policy regarding development, operation , management and control of Economic Zones;
- (b) Approve proposals for establishing economic Zones;
- (c) Give necessary orders or directions to BEZA to ensure efficient management of BEZA and Economic Zones and so on.

(2) Executive Board of BEZA

The Executive Board of BEZA is headed by the Executive Chairman, who has a rank of Secretary to the Government. It comprises of Executive chairman and three Executive members. The Executive Board is obligated to run day-to-day business operation of BEZA together with the following responsibilities:

- Implement the decisions taken in the meeting of Governing Board;
- Implement business plan;
- Stipulate the management rules of BEZA;
- Suggest structure of organisational management of BEZA;
- Appoint or dismiss managers and staff;
- Decide on salaries and other benefits of managers and other staff.

(3) BEZA Secretariat

The BEZA Secretariat is divided into three major wings as mentioned below -

A. Planning & Development Division

An Executive Member is assigned to oversee the activities of planning & development of BEZA. This division is divided into two departments, planning and Development under one general manager with the responsibility to:

Construction and Engineering

- Conceive the idea of new EZ project and /or construction project;
- Conduct feasibility study & prepare master plan of new project;
- Prepare and submit Development Project Pro-forma (DPP) for onward submission to the ministry;
- Prepare and submit annual works program;
- Prepare Requests For Proposal (RFP)/ prospectus for allotment of land;
- Monitor development works;
- Facilitate physical possession of plots to intended investors and developers;
- Make report returns;
- Liaise with different ministries/divisions to expedite getting approvals.

An engineering department is proposed in the new organogram headed by a Chief Engineer, who is responsible for all matters related to engineering and construction work including but not limited to, the following matters:

- Follow the provisions & requirement of The Bangladesh Economic Zones (Construction of Building) Rules 2017 and Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC);
- Manage construction and engineering works;
- Communicate with consultant engineers, contractors, tenants, related companies and organizations for construction and engineering works;
- Obtain necessary permissions and governmental approvals related to construction and engineering matters;
- In cooperation with investment promotion division , provide potential customers/investors/tenants with information related to services and guidance related to construction and engineering matters;
- Keep construction and engineering records such as design, specification, contract, drawings and communication records with consultant engineers, contractors and tenants;
- Update legal information related to construction, engineering and relevant matters.
- Approval of drawing, design, master plan as submitted by PPP Zone developer, private EZ developer and unit investors relating to all of their construction and engineering works;
- Supervise the development implementation works of PPP Zone developer, private EZ developer and unit investors;

Infrastructure Maintenance & Operation

- Operate and maintain utility structure of PPP Zone developer, private EZ developer and unit investors and the common infrastructure, utilities and facilities of the EZ;
- Manage land plots in the EZ and related matters.

Utility Providers Coordination & Fire-fighting Station

- Communicate with governmental authorities and utility providers etc. for related matters;
- Act as coordinator between the EZ and utility providers I.e water, power, gas providers;
- Manage outsourcing service of infrastructure maintenance, safety and firefighting, environment and lab monitoring;
- Guide and assist tenant/unit investors' utility connection to the common utility system of the EZ.

Environment protection and Laboratory management

- Execute Environmental Management system under ISO 14001;
- Assist the tenant/ unit investors all matters related to environment;
- Perform other related matters as instructed by the Executive Member.

B. Administration & Finance Division

An Executive Member is assigned to oversee the activities of Administration & Finance of BEZA. This division is comprised of the following departments: General administration, human resources and personnel development, estate, finance, public relation, security management including but not limited to the following matters:

General administration:

- Propose, apply and implement procurement of assets, equipment, stationery, supplies, related materials and services for operation and maintenance of office.
- Prepare and procure facilities, accommodation, entertainment and logistic provisions for activities and operation of BEZA.
- Provide support to unit investors within this scope of responsibilities.
- Study, prepare and make procedures for new businesses and functions of BEZA under instructions of Executive board.
- Monitor and report to Executive Board on implementation of working regulations of BEZA.
- Introduce and guide working regulations and scope of responsibilities of department to staff and new employees of BEZA.
- Manage and operate information, communication and computer systems of BEZA.
- Handle all matters relating to telephones, filing systems communication and documents, letters, faxes, and documents in relation with activities of BEZA.

Estate Management

- Processing procurement of land both lease and acquisition for new EZ.
- Participate joint survey of land and price calculation.
- Taking possession of acquired/leased land on behalf of BEZA.
- Fencing EZ land.
- Verification of land title, mutation and possession of land proposal by the private EZ developer.
- Complete all other formalities to secure public and private EZ land.

Human Resources and Personnel Development

- Recruit new staff under policies of BEZA and instruction of Executive Chairman.
- Propose and suggest Executive Board for new recruitment and personnel arrangement.
- Organize assessment on staff performance.
- Propose and organize appropriate training and capacity building programs.
- Perform other related matters as instructed by Executive Board.

Security management

- Maintain security and safety of the EZ, office, business building and all kinds of assets.
- Control security and traffic at gates and inside the EZ.
- Contact local police station in emergency cases.

- Cooperate with operators, clinic staff, and staff of maintenance and cleaning companies if necessary.
- Perform other related matters as instructed by the Executive Board.

Finance and Accounts Department

Chief Accounts Officer is assigned to manage the work within Finance department. The Finance department is responsible for all matters related to accounting, budgeting and financial control and treasury functions of BEZA with reporting obligation as follows:

- Collect relevant information related to the matter of accounting and treasury;
- Input data into books of accounts and accounting software manage properly the book keeping. Keep accounting books as per double entry system as required by International Accounting standard (IAS).
- Make financial statement monthly, quarterly, half yearly and annually.
- Make annual budget and financial plan as per SABRE system of Ministry of Finance and submit for approval.
- Advise and report accounting, taxation and investment matters to the Executive Chairman.
- Review and advice the matter related to financial revenue earning, accounting and taxation with other relevant department.

Management function of Finance department

- Update and improve internal accounting rules and procedures. Establish training plans and execute for the staff of other department. Monitor and report on implementation of accounting rules and procedures to Executive Board.
- Control the payment from unit investors, tenants and developers for land lease, lease of factory, office, commercial space, accommodation etc. and other utility, service charge, regulatory fees, conservancy charge as may be levied by the government from time to time.
- Daily operation work related to incoming, outgoing of money and checking the cash position and bank account balance.

Audit of Accounts

- Propose to appoint external auditor as per Bangladesh Economic Zones Act 2010 (Chartered Accountants firm) for annual audit.
- Communicate with the government auditor.
- Cooperate with internal auditor.

C. Investment Promotion and One Stop Service

An Executive Member is assigned with the responsibility to manage the work. Under his control one general manager and one manager are responsible for all matters related to investment promotion and one stop service in BEZA. They are responsible for visitor center management and One Stop Services including but not limited to, the following matters:

Marketing functions & Investment promotion

- Make marketing policy, strategy, and tactics and review them;
- Make materials and tools for marketing activities such as booklets, presentation materials, investor's guide and general guide books etc. carry out sales activities, include but not limited, locate potential customer, contact, make presentation, respond to the customers questions, make the offer sheet, negotiate about conditions and any other necessary matters for marketing activities.
- Organize road show, seminars, B2B dialogue to show case investment opportunities in the EZs of BEZA.
- Liaise with Bangladesh Missions abroad to contact with business houses and apex business bodies in the respective countries.
- Sent delegation abroad to invite potential investors from abroad.
- Use national and international press and electronic media to attract investors.
- Collect, analyze, compile of data information and disseminate to the PPP zone developers and private zone developers.
- Issue prospectus to reach the potential and prospective investors.
- Check and investigate liability and reputation of potential zone developer and unit investors before obtaining investment proposal.
- Make draft of contracts, agreement, amendment agreements, and supplement agreements with the investors.

One Stop service and Customer care functions

- Act as a contact point for the potential investors and tenants for all matters and perform after sales & service.
- Assist investors to prepare all necessary documents for license, permits for company establishment.
- Assist unit investors/ tenants to proceed with all post clearance procedures as specified by rules and regulations under One Stop Service package.
- Update the new laws, regulations, and legal news related to investors operations.
- Assist investors in their daily operation.

Policy Support:

With the active support from Prime Minister's Office and other ministries BEZA has formulated relevant rules, policies for appointment of zone developers, zone management etc. Meanwhile, Govt. has approved a bunch of Incentives for both the Zone Developers and the Unit Investors. The incentives include Tax holiday, Duty free import-export, repatriation of capital and dividends, exemption of VAT etc. Besides, Investors Guide, Operations Manual, Standard Format for Request for Proposal (RFP), Vision Document, Tariff Structure for direct allotment of land and other services have been made available to gear up investment promotion initiatives in BEZA.

sl	Major Acts, Rules, Policy, Guidelines, Regulations, Incentives for BEZA
1	Bangladesh Economic Zones Act, 2010 (Bangla)
2	Bangladesh Economic Zones Act. 2010 (English Version), 2012
3	Bangladesh Economic Zones Act. (Revised), 2015 (Bangla)
4	One Stop Service Act, 2018
5	The Foreign Private Investment (Promotion And Protection) Act, 1980
6	Bangladesh EPZ Labor Act, 2019
7	Bangladesh Economic Zones (Developer employment, etc) Rules (Bangla)
8	Bangladesh Economic Zones (Developer employment, etc) (Revised) Rules 2014
9	English Text of Bangladesh Economic Zones (Appointment of Developers, etc.) Rules, 2015 (With Amendment). (SRO No.294-Law/2015)
10	The Bangladesh Economic Zones (the procedure of Appointment of Developer) Rules, 2016 (SRO No. 44-Law/2016)
11	Bangladesh Economic Zones (Construction of Building) Rules, 2017 (SRO No. 46-Law/2017)
12	One Stop Service (Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority) Rules, 2018
13	Bangladesh Economic Zones Policy, 2015 (Bangla & English Version)
14	Bangladesh Economic Zones (Workers Welfare Fund) Policies, 2017, S.R.O No. 339-Law/2017, Date: 04 December, 2017
15	Bangladesh Economic Zones Visa and Work Permit Guidelines, 2018
16	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Employee Employment) Regulations, 2017
17	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (fund management, financial and administrative power of delegation) Regulations, 2018

Rules followed in making contracts

BEZA has to follow the various acts and procedures mentioned below, while pursuing the contract management. These procedures acts as safeguards for the authority in managing the contract as well as the parties involved to the contract –

Contract Act
BEZ Act
Appointment of Developers Rules and procedures
Private EZ policy
Environmental Law
Law Relating to labor and Gender issue
Governmental notification relating to incentives(as may be applicable depending on nature and type of agreement)

Administration of the Right to Information Act

Requests under the *Right to Information Act*

Received application during the reporting Period	1
Solved the issue during the reporting Period	1
Outstanding from the previous period	0

Sources of requests received

One (1) request was received from Public.

Disposition of completed requests

The desired information was delivered to the applicant within 20 (twenty) days from the date of received as per the provision of Right to Information Act.

Extension of time limits

There was no incident of time extension in providing the information during the reporting period.

Method of access

The applicants can apply for information through mail, e-mail or fax using the set form and choose any of these modalities to get the information. The form is available at BEZA office.

Grievances

The authority received no complaints and thereby no investigation was done in the reporting period.

Implementation and Monitoring

According to the Right to Information Act the authority has designated a higher official for providing Information to any applicant who request for information.

Conclusion

The right to information of the citizens of Bangladesh is one of the fundamental rights articulated in the Constitution of Bangladesh. The Right to Information Act is founded the ground to ensure the free and easy access to information of all citizens that establishes the short route of accountability in getting any information. The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority is also devoted to confirm the free access to information under this act.