

**National Board of Revenue**  
**PRESS RELEASE**  
**5 September 2022**  
**Comprehensive Time Release Study-2022, Bangladesh**

National Board of Revenue today released the findings of its first sector-focused Comprehensive Time Release Study (TRS). The study (TRS 2022) measures and reports average release time across different import clearance processes in three major ports of Bangladesh: Benapole Land Port, Chattogram Seaport and Dhaka Airport. The TRS 2022 was planned, designed, and conducted by a group of WCO-trained Customs officials from Bangladesh Customs with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders. The TRS capacity-building project was funded by State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) of the government of Switzerland through the WCO-SECO Global Trade Facilitation Programme (GTFP).

The TRS is a method endorsed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) for measuring the time taken by authorities to release import/export cargo and is recognized as a means of identifying bottlenecks and improving performance in import/export processes. Since entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in February 2017, members have been required to measure and publish average release times of import/export goods (Article 7.6 of the TFA).

Honourable Finance Minister Mr. A H M Mustafa Kamal, FCA, MP, in his speech said, “Reduction of time for business lies central to the facilitating trade across borders.” He also said, “Such study will help create stronger and effective customs business process in Bangladesh contributing to realizing our mission of becoming a developed nation in 2041.” H.E. Ms Suzanne Mueller, Chargée d’Affaires, Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh was also present in the dissemination programme. She said ‘Switzerland appreciates the efforts of the NBR to take ownership and institutionalise the TRS process to increase Bangladesh’s competitive advantage in the global trade market, by making trade faster and more predictable.’

The Chair, Mr. Abu Hena Md. Rahmatul Muneem, Senior Secretary, Internal Resources Division & Chairman, National Board of Revenue, said, “It is pleasing to see the homegrown experts of Bangladesh Customs led the TRS 2022.” He expected that the recommendations provided in the study would bring fruitful positive changes once they are implemented. Dr. Abdul Mannan Shikder, Member (Grade-1), Customs: Audit, Modernization & International Trade, National Board of Revenue, extended his heartfelt thanks to the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs for providing the much-needed capacity-building support to Bangladesh Customs and other Government officials in conducting this study. He hoped that successful implementation of the study recommendations would help reduce the existing release time and would function as the fore-front of trade facilitation.

The TRS 2022 found that the average time from arrival to release for sea cargo is approximately **11 days 6 hours 23 minutes**. For air cargo, the interval was around **7 days 11 hours 19 minutes** and for land cargo, it was around **10 days 8 hours 11 minutes**.

Time required for the major steps (major interventions) was also measured during the study. The major steps are – i) Arrival of cargo to B/E hardcopy submission to Customs, ii) B/E hardcopy submission to assessment, iii) Assessment to payment of duty and taxes and iv) Payment of duty and taxes to physical release of goods. The time taken in these steps are given below:

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Benapole</b>	<b>Chattogram</b>	<b>Dhaka</b>
Arrival of cargo to B/E hardcopy submission	5d 22h 28m	-	5d 11h 25m
B/E hardcopy submission to assessment	1d 7h 3m	1d 4h 17m	20h 57m
Assessment to payment of duty and taxes	2d 15h 31m	1d 5h 12m	14h 31m
Payment of duty and taxes to physical release of goods	11h 7m	5d 3h 16m	12h 26m

Note: For Chattogram, the required time for arrival of cargo is kept intentionally blank. Because, both pre- and post-arrival processing are followed in Custom House, Chattogram. For post-arrival processing, the required time for this step is 8d 1h 45m whereas the B/E hardcopy with supporting documents are submitted before arrival of ship.

In particular, the average Customs procedure time, from Customs declaration (B/E noting in ASYCUDAWorld) to release, is as follows.

For sea cargo: 8 days 0 hour 55 minutes

For air cargo: 2 days 11 hours 0 minute

For land cargo: 5 days 4 hours 30 minutes

The NBR chairman acknowledged trade's contribution to the Time Release Study, to all trade stakeholders, who provided advice and assistance from the beginning of the study.

Key findings and actions to be taken for further trade facilitation are:

**Benapole land port:**

Automation of the port activities and simplification of the Customs clearance process by addressing the duplication of work.

**Chattogram seaport:**

Coordinating port activities with Customs and OGAs, eliminating redundant steps across Customs and port processes and addressing the needs of non-intrusive inspection (NII) technology-based equipment.

**Dhaka airport (Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport):**

Improving the port's cargo handling capacity and implementing the Revised Kyoto Convention compliant risk selectivity module.

It is also intended that regular Time Release Studies continue to be conducted.

The Time Release Study Report can be downloaded from the following link of the NBR website: [https://nbr.gov.bd/uploads/publications/TRS\\_2022.pdf](https://nbr.gov.bd/uploads/publications/TRS_2022.pdf).

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