

Following is a summary of important business news published in the leading daily newspapers of Bangladesh. For the complete news, please follow the online link given below each news. Please note that the news summary doesn't reflect the opinion of BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited.

US keen to invest more in BD : Envoy

- The United States is eager to invest more in Bangladesh as the country (Bangladesh) has a potential market.
- Newly appointed US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl Robert Miller expressed his country's interest while talking to reporters after he met with Commerce Minister.
- The envoy has also emphasised that a strong Bangladesh-US trade relationship is in the interest of the Bangladeshis and American people.
- During the meeting, they discussed on Accord and Alliance issues, the minister said, adding that the envoy assured them that he will work to increase US investment in Bangladesh.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/us-keen-to-invest-more-in-bd-envoy-1549387445>

Foreign aid budget to be slashed

- The government is likely to revise down the foreign aid allocation by 15% in fiscal 2018-19 -- at a time when there is a record high level of the low-cost fund sitting idle in the pipeline.
- Foreign aid allocation would now be BDT 510.00 billion (USD 6.09 billion), down from BDT 600.00 billion (USD 7.17 billion) earmarked at the beginning of the fiscal year.
- Of the BDT 90.00 billion shaved off from this fiscal year's foreign aid allocation, BDT 50.00 billion would come from the transport sector as it finds its various mega projects falling behind schedule due to problems in land acquisition.
- One such project is the Padma Bridge Rail Link, which has failed to utilise a single paisa from its foreign aid portion in the first five months of fiscal 2018-19. The project was initially allotted BDT 30.00 billion in foreign aid, but it would now be cut down to BDT 13.00 billion.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/foreign-aid-budget-be-slashed-1698133>

Hunt is on for way to ease NPL pressure

- The central bank is trying to find a way out to ease pressure of defaulted loans that have already reached an alarming level in the country's banking system. It has already formed three committees to prepare a set of recommendations for amending three relevant pieces of law and regulations to help reduce the volume of classified loans.
- They are now working to submit the recommendations to the finance ministry for amending the Banking Companies Act, Bankruptcy Act and Negotiable Instrument Act along with Merger and Acquisition (M&A) regulation.
- The Bangladesh Bank (BB) aims to recover non-performing loans (NPLs), particularly from the wilful ones, through reforming the existing acts and regulations. The share of defaulted loans reached 11.45% at the end of September 2018 after registering at 10% during the period between 2013 and 2017.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/hunt-is-on-for-way-to-ease-npl-pressure-1549388678>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/banking/news/bb-moves-amend-bankruptcy-act-1698106>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/02/05/bangladesh-bank-to-meet-bank-mds-and-legal-experts-on-wednesday>

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/63934/multiparty-meet-today-over-legal-barriers-to-cutting-bad-loans>

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/63931/bb-to-relax-bank-loan-write-off-policy>

A handful of companies dominate pharma market

- More than 68% of the local pharmaceutical market is now being dominated by only 10 companies, although a total of 204 are registered with the authority concerned.
- The size of local pharmaceutical market stood at BDT 205.12 billion in 2018. The industry recorded a 16.51% growth between 2014 and 2018.

- Only five companies hold 46.66% of the market share. Square accounted for the highest 16.95% market share with annual sales worth BDT 34.76 billion in 2018. It is followed by Incepta Pharma with 11.08% market share, Beximco with 8.26 per cent, Renata with 5.20 per cent, and Healthcare Pharma 5.17 per cent.
- Terming the market dominance by the top 10 companies 'not a big concentration', Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Distinguished Fellow said the companies are in the business from the very beginning, both in the local and foreign markets.
- Medicines for acidity under the therapeutic class of anti-ulcerants have become the major revenue driver for the local pharmaceutical industry in the country. Drugs worth BDT 30.13 billion under this class were sold last calendar year.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/a-handful-of-companies-dominate-pharma-mkt-1549388629>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/63935/top-10-pharma-cos-keep-holding-nearly-68pc-of-market-data>

Overseas investors back to stock markets

- Net foreign investment in the Dhaka Stock Exchange bounced back in January as investors shook off the election jitters.
- Last month, foreign investors bought shares worth BDT 4.95 billion and sold shares worth BDT 3.19 billion, taking their net investment to BDT 1.75 billion.
- In December, it stood at BDT 1.01 billion in the negative, as fears of political uncertainty centring the national polls on December 30 reigned supreme. Foreign investors have started gaining confidence after the 11th parliamentary elections according to the secretary general of the Bangladesh Merchant Bankers Association.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/overseas-investors-back-stock-markets-1698118>

CDBL to stop share sales sans declaration

- The securities regulator has asked the Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL) to strictly enforce the 'mandatory declarations' requirement in the case of share transfer by the sponsor-directors and placement shareholders of listed companies.
- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) instructed the CDBL to find a way of containing the share sales executed without declarations.
- The Managing director and CEO of the CDBL, said they have already started the job of including a module in their software. The vendor appointed by the CDBL is working to develop a module so that no sponsor-director or placement holder is able to transfer his or her shares without declaration.
- As per section 34 of the listing regulations, Every sponsor or director or placement holder of an issuer of listed securities shall simultaneously submit a written report to the exchange and to the commission about his intention to buy or sell or otherwise dispose of the securities of the issuer held by him in that issuer along with his declaration.
- The government realises 5.0% tax from the sales of shares by sponsor-directors.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/cdbl-to-stop-share-sales-sans-declaration-1549389003>

Genex Infosys makes debut today

- Genex Infosys Ltd, an IT company, makes its share trading debut today (Wednesday) on the bourses under "N" category.
- The company raised a fund worth BDT 200 million from the capital market under the fixed price method by offloading 20 million ordinary shares at an offer price of BDT 10 each under the fixed price method.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/genex-infosys-makes-debut-today-1549384131>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$53.74	+0.08	+0.15%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$62.04	+0.06	+0.10%
Gold Spot*	\$1,314.88	-0.44	-0.03%
DSEX	5800.24	-27.82	-0.47%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	25,411.52	+172.15	+0.68%
FTSE 100	7,177.37	+143.24	+2.04%
Nikkei 225	20,957.37	+112.92	+0.54%

Exchange Rates

USD 1 = BDT 83.89*

GBP 1 = BDT 108.64*

EUR 1 = BDT 95.62*

INR 1 = BDT 1.17*

**Currencies and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.*

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