

*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.*

### **GDP growth to reach 8.13% this fiscal**

- The country's economy is estimated to grow 8.13% in the current fiscal year (FY), buoyed by the strong performance of the industrial and service sectors, the government's provisional data show. Finance Minister disclosed the GDP growth rate as estimated by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) after a meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC) in the city on Tuesday.
- As per the estimation of three quarters of the current fiscal year (FY), 2018-19, the provisional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate is 0.33 percentage points higher than the target of 7.8% projected in the seventh five-year plan (SFYP) and 0.27 percentage points higher than the last FY's achievement.
- The Minister said as the export, import and manufacturing sectors performed better in the current fiscal year, the country's GDP has seen a robust growth. The GDP is expected to attain double-digit growth rate within the next three or four years, he added.
- Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute, a think-tank, said the revenue collection and private sector credit growth did not match the government estimate. Normally, the private sector credit growth indicates economic growth, but here too the performance is weak, the economist said. The economy has been growing riding on manufacturing growth, and the manufacturing sector is mainly export-led. But the export growth is below the GDP growth estimated by the government, he noted.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/gdp-growth-to-reach-813pc-this-fiscal-1553018373>  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/news/gdp-growth-may-cross-record-8pc-1717699>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/67839/govt-estimates-813pc-gdp-growth>  
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/economy/2019/03/19/gdp-growth-8-13-in-2018-19-fiscal-year>

### **Per capita income hits USD 1,909**

- Bangladesh's per capita gross national income (GNI) jumped more than 9% to USD 1,909 last fiscal year from USD 1,751 a year ago, showed provisional official figures released yesterday. Provisional data showed that the per capita GDP also rose at the same pace to USD 1,827 in 2018-19 from USD 1,675 the previous year.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/capita-income-hits-1909-1717606>

### **Government likely to allow rescheduling with up to BDT 10 million down payment**

- The government is likely to give opportunity of restructuring any large defaulted loan by making down payment of up to only BDT 10 million. Officials said the new term was included in the draft bailout package proposed by the Financial Institutions Division after consulting with Bangladesh Bank and a high-powered committee appointed in June, 2018.
- According to the draft bailout package, the amount of down payment on a defaulted loan would be one% of the defaulted loan but it would not exceed BDT 10 million. As per the draft, loan defaulters would be given 15 years to repay the loan with two years of moratorium period and they would be charged with seven% interest rate.
- Experts said the proposed bailout package would benefit loan defaulters especially the wilful ones. According to the Bangladesh Bank's current policy for restructuring bad loans issued in 2015, loan defaulters get maximum 12 years to repay long-term loans and six years for short-term loans by paying interest rate at discounted rate but not less than the cost of fund plus 1%.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/67859/govt-likely-to-allow-rescheduling-with-up-to-BDT-1cr-down-payment>

### **Annual Development Programme (ADP) shrinks but projects shoot up**

- The number of development projects for this fiscal year has increased by about 32% even though allocation has shrunk, suggesting delays in implementation and reduced budget for each. The number of projects in the revised ADP has now reached 1,916 from 1,451 at the beginning of fiscal 2018-19. Apart from these, there are 985 more projects that are awaiting approval and allocation, according to a statement from the planning ministry yesterday.
- Economists recommend working with a small number of projects with high allocation for their timely implementation as it reduces costs and delays. But the government is doing the exact opposite. The number of projects shot up this year because the planning ministry went on an approval spree ahead of the general election on December 30 last

year, said an official requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter. As a result, the projects received lower amounts of allocation, he added.

- In the revised ADP, the government-owned fund was increased 0.89% to BDT 1.14 trillion, while the project aid was slashed 15% to BDT 510.00 trillion, according to the statement. Besides, the allocation for state-owned enterprises in the revised budget was kept at BDT 96.20 trillion.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/adp-shrinks-projects-shoot-1717561>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/67860/govt-okays-BDT-165-lakh-core-revised-adp>

### **Bangladesh Securities & Exchange Commission (BSEC) to bring changes to book-building rules**

- The securities regulator has decided to bring some changes to book-building method to make it more transparent and ensure 'fair' price of IPO (initial public offering) shares. At the meeting, the securities regulator also decided to form a five-member committee headed by BSEC executive director, said a BSEC statement on Tuesday. The committee will review the 'Book Building Method' of Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (Public Issue) Rules, 2015. The committee will recommend necessary changes after reviewing the book-building method, according to the statement.

- The BSEC Chairman hinted that some changes to the definition of institutional investors are being planned to ensure the transparency of the book building system. He said also made harsh remarks on the price manipulation by alleged institutional investors in book-building method, saying the book building system would be suspended or stopped if needed for the sake of capital market. Mr Hossain also warned errant institutional investors, including brokers, dealers, merchant bankers and asset management companies, saying they will be excluded from the list of institutional investors.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/bsec-to-bring-changes-to-book-building-rules-1553016765>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/67861/bsec-forms-2-bodies-to-tighten-book-building-method-placement-share>

### **Grameenphone restrictions go**

- The telecom regulator yesterday lifted the four restrictions it had imposed on Grameenphone after the penalties were challenged in the High Court. GP had been slapped with the restrictions as part of the penalties for becoming a significant market power (SMP) operator. The restrictions were imposed through two letters from the BTRC on February 10 and 18. After the imposition of the restrictions, GP challenged their legality at the High Court. The HC has stayed the restriction that had banned GP from giving adverts. It also asked why the other restrictions would not be declared illegal as the telecom regulator did not follow rules while enforcing the measures. The BTRC will now proceed as per rules, said a senior official of the regulator.

- In the letter issued by the commission on Tuesday, however, proposed twenty conditions which could be imposed on the mobile phone operator as it was declared significant market power under the SMP regulations enacted by BTRC. Under the proposed conditions, BTRC would set which activities would be allowed and which would be prohibited for the mobile phone operator. Tuesday's letter asked GP to submit its comment, if there is any, on the proposed conditions within 15 days.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/telecom/news/grameenphone-restrictions-go-1717579>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/67858/btrc-withdraws-4-smp-conditions-on-gp-after-1-month>

**World Stock and Commodities\***

<b>Index Name</b>	<b>Close Value</b>	<b>Value Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$58.89	-0.14	-0.24%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$67.56	-0.05	-0.07%
Gold Spot*	\$1,305.03	-1.53	-0.12%
DSEX	5631.29	+26.39	+0.47%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	25,887.38	-26.72	-0.10%
FTSE 100	7,324.00	+24.81	+1.32%
Nikkei 225	21,583.00	+16.15	+0.07%

**Exchange Rates**

USD 1 = BDT 84.11\*

GBP 1 = BDT 111.52\*

EUR 1 = BDT 95.45\*

INR 1 = BDT 1.22\*

*\*Currencies and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.*

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