

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.

Taka to weaken against dollar: Fitch

- Bangladeshi currency taka will face more depreciatory pressures against the US dollar mainly due to imported inflation, according to a report released by Fitch Solutions. It forecasted that the exchange rate would stand at BDT 85 per dollar this year and BDT 86.50 next year. The local currency will go on to stand at BDT 87 in 2023. The Fitch Solutions and Country Risk and Industry Research released the prediction on November 17. It earlier forecasted that the exchange would be at BDT 84.75 per dollar this year and BDT 85 next year.
- Since the last update of Fitch Solutions in August, the taka has depreciated 1.1 per cent against the dollar, taking the year-to-date exchange rate average to BDT 84.93 per dollar, it said. Elevated global inflation and more hawkish stances by major global central banks has led to weakness amongst emerging market currencies and US dollar strength, it said. Fitch added that they also believe the Bangladesh Bank will continue to intervene to ensure Bangladesh maintains its export competitiveness, while not fuelling import inflation.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/taka-weaken-against-dollarfitch-2233711>

Remittance to lose steam

- The World Bank has projected lower remittance growth for Bangladesh compared to that of India and Pakistan in 2021 due to the slower outmigration of workers who have returned home at the height of the global coronavirus pandemic. Bangladesh's remittance receipts may stand at USD 23.0 billion this year, which would be 4.54% higher year-on-year. Migrant workers sent home USD 18.88 billion during 10MCY21, up 7.0% from USD 17.61 billion during 10MCY20, Bangladesh Bank data showed. Bangladesh's slowing growth in remittances already suggests the downside risks for 2022, fueled mostly by the slow outmigration of returnee migrants, keeping remittances flat in the year, said the WB.
- The forecast came as the deployment of workers from Bangladesh to the Gulf nations fell by 19% year-on-year in 1QCY21. Another hurdle to outmigration is the slow pace of visa issuance in the GCC countries. Saudi Arabia granted 12.0% fewer work visas in 1QCY21 YoY, while Oman reported a 15% decline in Bangladeshi workers.
- The hike in remittances from more skilled Bangladeshi migrants could be a windfall for Bangladesh and its migrants, said the report. Presently, the average monthly remittance of a Bangladeshi migrant who performs manual work is USD 203 compared to USD 276 for a Pakistani, USD 396 for an Indian, USD 564 for a Filipino, and USD 533 for a Chinese.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/remittance-lose-steam-2233741>

ADB lends USD 150m for CMSEs recovery

- The Asian Development Bank lends Bangladesh USD 150 million to breathe new life into cottage, micro, and small enterprises (CMSEs), battered by the Covid-19 pandemic. Official sources said the board of directors of the Manila-based lender approved the loan Thursday, the ADB headquarters said in a statement. Some 30,000 CMSEs operated by youth, returning migrant workers, and rural entrepreneurs, particularly women, who have been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic would get the support from the fund, it said.
- A senior ERD official said they are completing the procedure of signing the USD 150 million loan deal with the ADB soon. "The fund would facilitate business recovery and employment of the youth, women and migrant returnees who have been affected by the Covid pandemic severely," he added. Youth unemployment remains at a high level in the

country, and they are more severely affected as they concentrate in sectors such as retail trade, accommodation, and food services, which were worst hit by the pandemic. About 400,000 overseas migrant workers have returned since the start of the pandemic, and many remained unemployed.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/adb-lends-150m-for-cmses-recovery-1637257408>

Ministry signs MoU to ease export, import of agri goods

- Bangladesh Trade Facilitation Project funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Ministry of Commerce on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to improve the processes for importing and exporting foods and agricultural goods, reports BSS. Md Hafizur Rahman, director-general (additional secretary), WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce, and Michael J Parr, country director, Land O'Lakes Venture37 and project director, Bangladesh Trade Facilitation Project, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective agencies, said a press release.
- Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh was present at the signing ceremony as the chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, Tapan thanked the US government for responding to the government of Bangladesh's request to WTO to assist the government agencies and private sector in addressing the challenges in trade facilitation.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/ministry-signs-mou-to-ease-export-import-of-agri-goods-1637258398>

Bepza seeks more South Korean investment

- The Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) has sought more South Korean investment in export processing zones in the country. Bepza Executive Chairman Major General Abul Kalam Mohammad Ziaur Rahman made the call when South Korea Ambassador to Bangladesh Lee Jang-keun visited Dhaka EPZ today.
- Seeking more South Korean investment in the EPZs and Bepza Economic Zone, the Bepza executive chairman said that the authority always gives priority to the business-related issues of South Korean investors to run their business smoothly in EPZ. The ambassador assured Bepza of providing the best support to increase South Korean investment in EPZs and Bepza Economic Zone, said a press release of Bepza.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/industries/investments/news/bepza-seeks-more-south-korean-investment-2233211>

BD to seek GSP up to nine yrs after LDC graduation

- Bangladesh prepares to propose at the upcoming WTO meet continuity of preferential trade treatment for six to nine years after graduating from the LDC status so that the country is not suddenly exposed to open competition. As per recent consensus of the LDC ministers, Bangladesh has decided to cut its expectations through shortening the post-graduation trade-preference tenure from previously-planned 12 years.
- A four-member delegation of the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) would place the issues on the table at the 12th ministerial conference (MC12) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), scheduled to be held on November 30-December 3 in Geneva, Switzerland. Bangladesh is going to attend as a graduating LDC the WTO ministerial conference for the first time this year.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bd-to-seek-gsp-up-to-nine-yrs-after-ldc-graduation-1637257333>

Salman urges US entrepreneurs to invest in BD

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's adviser on private industry and investment affairs Salman F Rahman said US entrepreneurs should take the opportunity of Bangladesh's highly liberal investment regime. During his meeting with US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Kelly Keiderling on Wednesday at his office, Mr Rahman briefed her about the huge reform initiatives taken by the government in the recent years, said a spokesperson of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) on Thursday.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/salman-urges-us-entrepreneurs-to-invest-in-bd-1637258200>

Banks want higher holdings in government securities

- Bangladesh's commercial banks, particularly the primary dealers (PDs), Wednesday urged the central bank to enhance their holdings in government securities to make up for the revaluation losses they count on public-debt instruments. They sought enhancement of maximum limit of statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) under 'held-to-maturity (HTM)' category. The appeal was made by the leaders of Primary Dealers Bangladesh Limited (PDBL) at a meeting held at the Bangladesh Bank (BB) headquarters in Dhaka with BB Deputy Governor A K M Sajedur Rahman Khan in the chair to help mitigate the revaluation losses on the securities.
- At the meeting, the PDBL proposed that the central bank increase the maximum limit of holding the securities of SLR under HTM at 175% instead of the existing level of 135% for minimizing their revaluation losses on the public- debt instruments. Currently, all the PD banks are allowed to meet their SLR with 135% of such securities which are treated as HTM instead of the previous 125%.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/banks-want-higher-holdings-in-government-securities-1637204724>

BTRC moves to make 4G internet faster

- The telecom regulator plans to set new standard for 4G and broadband internet speed as part of its move to ensure much-needed faster digital connectivity for the users across the country. The minimum speed for mobile internet will be 15 Mbps and that for the broadband internet will be 20 Mbps. The minimum speed under the current standard for broadband internet is 10 Mbps, while it is 7 Mbps for mobile internet.
- As per the latest decision, internet service providers and mobile phone operators that don't maintain the minimum speed will not be categorised as broadband and 4G service providers. There were 11.54 crore mobile internet users and 1.01 crore broadband internet users in Bangladesh at the end of August, BTRC data showed.
- President of the Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB) told that national-level ISPs are yet to expand their footprint up to the union level due to the high costs of transmissions. He added said ISPs were now working to implement the uniform internet rate at the customer level across the country with a view to lifting the country's broadband internet penetration to 30% by March next year and 60% by 2023. Currently, the penetration rate is 8.0% only.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/btrc-moves-make-4g-internet-faster-2233726>

Copper industry back to pre-pandemic sales

- Sales of copper products have surged back to pre-pandemic rate, thanks to a marked increase in demand both in the local and international markets following the reopening of economies around the world. The copper industry in the country registered around a 40% jump in sales in the first quarter of the current fiscal year 2021-22, said market insiders, adding the Covid induced economic downturn had dented the demand for copper products but the industry rebounded quickly along with the electronics market.
- According to the London Metal Exchange (LME), the current price of copper is about USD 9,500 per tonne while that of aluminum alloy is USD 2,400 per tonne and nickel is below USD 19,500 per tonne. In the July-October period this year, exports of copper wire jumped by 88.04% due to surging demand internationally. During the period, Bangladesh exported USD 18.24 million worth of copper wire while the target set for the period was USD 22.77 million.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/industry/copper-industry-back-pre-pandemic-sales-331687>

ITUC sees 10 areas of inaction on workers' rights in Bangladesh

- International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has alleged that Bangladesh reported to the ILO little or no progress on implementation of a roadmap to improve the workers' rights agreed earlier this year. The ITUC that represents 200 million members of 332 affiliates in 163 countries and territories also identified 10 areas of inaction by the government of Bangladesh, said a statement issued by the ITUC on Thursday. Bangladesh is supposed to report the progress of implementation of the roadmap within a timeframe set by the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Dhaka was accused of discontinuing convention 87 on freedom of association and right to organise, convention 98 on right to organise and collective bargaining, and convention 81 on labour inspection. Bangladesh on May 23 this year submitted a time-bound final roadmap of actions to the ILO while it sent the report on progress made with its timely implementation on September 30, according to labour ministry sources. In the roadmap, Bangladesh indicated four priority areas - labour law reform, trade union registration, labour inspection and enforcement and addressing acts of anti-union discrimination/unfair labour practices and violence against workers. Bangladesh made a time-bound commitment to address all the issues including labour law reform by 2022 and others by 2026.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/ituc-sees-10-areas-of-inaction-on-workers-rights-in-bangladesh-1637258149>

Stocks stay upbeat as bank shares surge

- Stocks ended higher on Thursday, maintaining the gaining streak for the fourth straight session, as investors showed buying interest in the banking sector issues. After witnessing throughout the session, DSEX, the prime index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), went up by 31.04 points or 0.43% to settle at 7,091. DSEX added more than 161 points in the past four consecutive sessions.
- Turnover, a crucial indicator of the market, stood at BDT 14.61 billion, which was 3.05% lower than the previous day's tally of BDT 15.07 billion. Losers took a modest lead over the gainers, as out of 341 issues traded, 159 declined, 152 advanced and 30 remained unchanged on the DSE trading floor. Beximco - the flagship company of Beximco Group - was the most traded stock with shares worth BDT 1.55 billion changing hands, closely followed by Fortune Shoes (BDT 938 million), Delta Life Insurance (BDT 892 million), IFIC Bank (BDT 783 million) and NRB Commercial Bank (BDT 771 million).

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/stocks-stay-upbeat-as-bank-shares-surge-1637229615>

Brokers allowed to open two additional consolidated customer's accounts

- The securities regulator has allowed stock brokers to open two additional consolidated customer's accounts (CCA) to smoothen the maintenance of investors' funds deposited for investment purposes. The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) paved the way for maintaining two additional CCAs through a directive issued on Wednesday. "Every stock broker may open two additional CCAs in its name with any scheduled bank in the same manner as mentioned in sub-rule (1) of rule 6 of the Securities and Exchange Rules, 2020," said the BSEC directive.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/brokers-allowed-to-open-two-additional-consolidated-customers-accounts-1637249192>

Baraka Power to issue zero-coupon bonds

- Baraka Power has decided to issue zero coupon bonds amounting to BDT 1.80 billion in face value to repay the existing debts. The company will issue the bonds under private placement, the company said in a filing with the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) recently. The proceeds of the issue will be utilised to repay the existing debts of the company, thereby reducing the overall finance costs in future, said the company.
- A zero-coupon bond is a debt security that does not pay interest but instead traded at a deep discount, rendering a

profit at maturity, when the bond is redeemed for its full face value. Each share of the power generation company, which was listed on the DSE in 2011, closed at BDT 25.80 on Thursday, gaining 0.78% over the previous day. Its shares traded between BDT 22.10 and BDT 33.80 in the last one year. The board of directors of the company has recommended 10% cash dividend for the year ended on June 30, 2021.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/baraka-power-to-issue-zero-coupon-bonds-1637249218>

Most listed MNCs make higher profits in July-Sept

- Most of the listed multinational companies posted profit growth in the July-September period of 2021 compared with that in the same period of the past year. According to the financial reports of 13 listed MNCs, profits of seven companies advanced and those of four declined in the July-Sept quarter of 2021 compared with that in the same period in the previous year.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/155049/most-listed-mncs-make-higher-profits-in-july-sept>

Dhaka Bank signs payroll agreement with RAK Ceramics

- Recently, Dhaka Bank Limited signed an agreement with RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) Limited for Payroll Banking Services at Dhaka Bank Coporate Head Office, Gulshan, Dhaka. Mr. Emranul Huq, Managing Director & CEO of Dhaka Bank Limited and Mr. SAK Ekramuzzaman, Managing Director of RAK Ceramics Limited signed the agreement while Mr. Mustafa Husain, EVP & Manager of Gulshan Branch, Dhaka Bank Limited and Mr. Sadhan Kumar dey, COO & CFO of RAK Ceramics Limited exchanged the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations.
- Under this agreement, employees of RAK Ceramics Limited are entitled to have Dhaka Bank's products & services on preferential terms which allow employees of the RAK Ceramics to choose from a wide range of financial products from profit bearing accounts, loans (secured/unsecured) to credit cards (local/International) etc.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/dhaka-bank-signs-payroll-agreement-with-rak-ceramics-1637246986>

PLFS starts paying back few depositors, issues no notice

- Peoples Leasing and Financial Services Limited has started partially paying back the money it owes to distressed depositors above the age of 75 without issuing any public notice to the depositors. As per the policy, the entity would for the time being only repay up to 10 per cent of the money of any distressed depositor aged above 75 years but the amount would not exceed BDT 5 lakh.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/155052/plfs-starts-paying-back-few-depositors-issues-no-notice>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 79.11	USD 30.59	63.05%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 81.26	USD 29.46	56.87%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,864.60	(USD 30.50)	-1.61%
DSEX	7,091.82	1,689.75	31.28%
S&P 500	4,699.04	942.97	25.11%
FTSE 100	7,255.96	795.44	12.31%
BSE SENSEX	59,636.01	11,884.68	24.89%
KSE-100	46,110.50	2,355.12	5.38%
CSEALL	11,024.89	4,250.67	62.75%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 85.85 BDT****1 GBP = 115.91 BDT****1 Euro = 97.62 BDT****1 INR = 1.16 BDT**

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

Analyst Certification: Each research analyst and research associate who authored this document and whose name appears herein certifies that the recommendations and opinions expressed in the research report accurately reflect their personal views about any and all of the securities or issuers discussed therein that are within the coverage universe.

Disclaimer: Estimates and projections herein are our own and are based on assumptions that we believe to be reasonable. Information presented herein, while obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, is not guaranteed either as to accuracy or completeness. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed herein constitutes a solicitation of the purchase or sale of any security. As it acts for public companies from time to time, BRAC-EPL may have a relationship with the above-mentioned company(s). This report is intended for distribution in only those jurisdictions in which BRAC-EPL is registered and any distribution outside those jurisdictions is strictly prohibited.

Compensation of Analysts: The compensation of research analysts is intended to reflect the value of the services they provide to the clients of BRAC-EPL. As with most other employees, the compensation of research analysts is impacted by the overall profitability of the firm, which may include revenues from corporate finance activities of the firm's Corporate Finance department. However, Research analysts' compensation is not directly related to specific corporate finance transaction.

General Risk Factors: BRAC-EPL will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for each company under coverage at the time of initiating research coverage and revisit this assessment when subsequent update reports are published, or material company events occur. Following are some general risks that can impact future operational and financial performance: (1) Industry fundamentals with respect to customer demand or product / service pricing could change expected revenues and earnings; (2) Issues relating to major competitors or market shares or new product expectations could change investor attitudes; (3) Unforeseen developments with respect to the management, financial condition or accounting policies alter the prospective valuation; or (4) Interest rates, currency or major segments of the economy could alter investor confidence and investment prospects.

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

Research

Salim Afzal Shawon, CFA	Head of Research	salim@bracepl.com	01708 805 221
Nazmus Saadat, CFA	Research Analyst	nazmus.saadat@bracepl.com	01708 805 229
Anika Mafiz	Research Analyst	anika.mafiz@bracepl.com	01708 805 206
Fahim Hassan	Research Associate	fahim.hassan@bracepl.com	01709 636 546

International Trade and Sales

Ahsanur Rahman Bappi	CEO	bappi@bracepl.com	01730 357 991
----------------------	-----	--	---------------

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

www.bracepl.com

Symphony, Plot No.: S.E.(F) – 9(3rd Floor), Road No.: 142

Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka – 1212

Phone: + (880)-2-9852446-50

Fax: + (880)-2-9852451-52

E-Mail: research@bracepl.com