

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.

Macro:**BB moves to help use undisbursed farm loans**

- The Bangladesh Bank has decided to form a fund using the undisbursed portion of agriculture and rural loans and utilise them to accelerate farm production. The central bank has moved to constitute the Bangladesh Bank Agricultural Development Common Fund (BBADCF), according to a circular yesterday.
- Under the initiative, banks would deposit money equivalent to the undisbursed amount of farm and rural loans to the fund. The BB would give 2% interest on the deposits. The funds of the BBADCF would then be distributed among banks in proportion to their capacity. Banks would pay back the loans to the BB, along with 2% interest, within 18 months of the fund release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bb-moves-help-use-undisbursed-farm-loans-3200296>

Export of RMG items to EU witnesses 16.27% growth during Jul-Nov

- The export of RMG items to the European Union (EU) has witnessed 16.27% growth during the July-November period of this year compared to the same period last year. As per the statistics of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), RMG export to the EU increased by 16.27%, from USD 7.81 Bn to USD 9.07 Bn in July-November 2022-23.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/export-rmg-items-eu-witnesses-1627-growth-during-jul-nov-554658>

Bangladesh could import gas from Mozambique

- Bangladesh and Mozambique have the opportunities to increase bilateral trade, such as of agricultural products and fish, alongside tourism, said MA Momen, vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), yesterday.
- Bangladesh could even import gas from the southern African nation, he said, adding that both countries were strategic business hubs and could benefit from a more robust trade and economic partnership.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-could-import-gas-mozambique-3200256>

Approval delay hinders using USD 2 Bn WB loans

- Delays in different stages of implementation have meant that the USD 2 Bn in flexible loans approved by the World Bank is yet to be used by the Bangladesh government, which can prove costly amid the dollar crisis plaguing the country.
- The World Bank approved USD 191 Mn for the Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation project, USD 358 Mn for a road safety project, USD 753.45 Mn for the Accelerating Transport and Trade Connectivity in Eastern South Asia-Bangladesh Phase 1 project, USD 500 Mn for Resilient Infrastructure for Adaptation and Vulnerability Reduction, and USD 250 Mn for a project on environmental sustainability and transformation.
- Almost all Project Evaluation Committee meetings for these loans were held between February and April of the current financial year. But these could not be presented due to delays in amendments to the Development Project Proposal by the ministries and divisions concerned.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/approval-delay-hinders-using-2b-wb-loans-554666>

Process underway to sign manpower export MoUs with Croatia, Serbia: Minister

- Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmad has said a process continues to sign memorandum of understanding (MoUs) with several European countries including Croatia and Serbia in order to export manpower from Bangladesh.
- He said this on Monday while addressing a function in the conference room of his ministry in Dhaka, which was arranged to mark the farewell of 30 workers out of 102 intended for going to Romania through Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Ltd (BOESL).

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/process-underway-to-sign-manpower-export-mous-with-croatia-serbia-minister-1671449695>

Industrial loans surge 23% in July-September

- Industrial credit disbursement increased by 23% to BDT1,310 Bn year-on-year in the July-September quarter of this year, thanks to an increase in import costs of industrial raw materials and capital equipment and low lending rates.
- Bankers said import costs have increased in the industrial sector due to the increase in the price of goods in the global market. Apart from this, more money is required in LC payments due to an increase in dollar prices in the country, which also has led to a surge in industrial loans, they added.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/industrial-loans-surge-23-jul-sep-554278>

Next budget size likely BDT 7.5 Tn

- With sights set on the upcoming general election, the government may target a larger annual budget for the next fiscal year as a coordination council on fiscal and monetary matters, and currency exchange sits Tuesday. Officials said the meeting might set a preliminary size of the budget for fiscal year 2023-24 at around BDT 7.5 Tn, up from BDT 6.78 Tn outlay of the present budget.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/next-budget-size-likely-tk-75t-1671417496>

Poor domestic resource mobilisation increases external debts: PRI

- Lack of good governance, negligence in automation and institutional failure of the National Board of Revenue have been badly impacting domestic resource mobilisation, which ultimately prompts the government to go for higher amounts of debt, the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh (PRI) said on Monday.
- "Such a situation in revenue collection is going on year after year. External debts are growing fast, as a consequence," PRI Research Director MA Razzaque said in a discussion programme at its office in the capital. It reached about USD 96 Bn in FY22 from less than USD 40 Bn in FY15, he added.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/poor-domestic-resource-mobilisation-increases-external-debts-pri-554646>

650 cars stranded at ports as importers cannot open LCs for dollar crunch

- Reconditioned vehicle importers are now in trouble over getting their 650 cars released from the Chattogram and Mongla ports as they have failed to open letters of credit after the shipments, which is allowed for reconditioned cars, due to dollar crisis.
- The BDT 2 Bn cars sourced from Japan in lots early this year were scheduled to ship to Bangladesh under several LCs, according to the Bangladesh Reconditioned Vehicles Importers and Dealers Association.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/650-cars-stranded-ports-importers-cannot-open-lcs-dollar-crunch-554350>

Betel leaf cultivation creeping up as exports expand

- Betel leaf grown in Kushtia is not only popular across Bangladesh, but also beyond the country's borders with increasing exports in the last several years encouraging more farmers to cultivate the crop. As such, betel leaf was cultivated on 2,230 hectares of land in fiscal 2021-22, up by some 4% compared to 2,140 hectares the year before, according to sources at the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Kushtia.
- Abdullah Al Mamun, agriculture officer of Mirpur upazila, said his region exports the most betel leaf with 20 tonnes of the crop having been shipped to countries in the Middle East as well as England in the previous fiscal. Meanwhile, Kushtia sadar upazila and Bheramara upazila exported 22 tonnes and 27 tonnes respectively but unlike Mirpur, the leaves were collected from various other regions as well.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/betel-leaf-cultivation-creeping-exports-expand-3200311>

Stocks:**EXCHANGE | BB gives banks more time to adjust**

- Bangladesh Bank has extended the period meant for banks to make adjustments to their overexposure in the stock market in a bid to give relief amid existing bearish trends. The central bank issued a circular in this regard yesterday. The Banking Companies Act 1991, which was amended in 2013, has limited a bank's stock market exposure to 25% of its capital, which was supposed to be brought about by 2016.
- However, some banks made investments exceeding the ceiling, so they were ordered to sell shares to abide by the order. Considering the fact that the stock market is now bearish, the central bank extended the adjustment period several times, the last being by August 31 of the current year. Now, it has been extended to December 31 of 2023.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/bb-gives-banks-more-time-adjust-3200306>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 76.16	USD 0.95	1.26%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 80.74	USD 2.96	3.81%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,785.58	(USD 43.62)	-2.38%
DSEX	6,238.99	-517.67	-7.66%
S&P 500	3,817.66	-948.52	-19.90%
FTSE 100	7,361.31	-23.23	-0.31%
BSE SENSEX	61,806.19	3,552.37	6.10%
KSE-100	40,970.82	-3,625.25	-8.13%
CSEALL	8,626.21	-3,599.80	-29.44%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 104.40 BDT****1 GBP = 126.85 BDT****1 Euro = 110.73 BDT****1 INR = 1.26 BDT**

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