

Weekly Market Update

Capital Market Overview

The market closed in green this week. The benchmark index DSEX (+0.34%) gained 21.09 points and closed the week at 6,215.05 points. The blue-chip index DS30 (+0.26%) gained 5.65 points and stood at 2,199.05 points. The Shariah-based index DSES (+0.32%) gained 4.30 points and stood at 1,357.58 points. The large cap index CDSET (+0.12%) gained 1.41 points and closed at 1,215.43 points. DSEX, DS30, DSES and CDSET showed YTD returns of +0.13%, +0.17%, -0.09%, +0.08%, respectively.

Total Turnover During the Week (DSE): BDT 21.2 billion (USD 198 million)
Average Daily Turnover Value (ADTV): BDT 4.2 billion (Δ% Week: +87.2%)
Market P/E: 17.2x

Daily Index Movement during the Week

The market performed five sessions during this week. The market started on a negative note (-0.03%) on Sunday. It remained negative on Monday (-0.01%). However, it turned positive on Tuesday (+0.22%) and stayed positive (+0.07%) on Wednesday. Lastly, the market closed on a positive note (+0.09%) on Thursday.

Sectoral Performance

- Most of the financial sectors registered negative performance this week. General Insurance experienced the highest loss of -0.68% followed by Mutual Fund (-0.11%), Bank (-0.11%), NBF1 (0.00%), and Life Insurance (+2.90%).
- Non-financial sectors posted mixed performance this week. Pharmaceutical booked the highest gain of 0.68% followed by Telecommunication (0.00%). Food & Allied experienced the highest loss of 0.38% followed by Engineering (-0.03%), and Fuel & Power (-0.03%).

Macroeconomic arena

• Small businesses to get easy loans. Apparel makers for raising garment accessories manufacturing capacity to achieve USD 100 Bn exports by 2030. Economic zones create 50,000 jobs so far. Cenbank eyes stabilising forex market in new monetary policy. BGMEA seeks Bangladesh mission's support to promote trade opportunities in Canada. Worker outflow hits record high but remittance falls. World Bank cuts Bangladesh's growth forecast to 5.2% for FY23. Foreign loans turn sour for private borrowers. SC disposes of 13 appeals of telcos. Half-yearly monetary policy too soon. Bangladesh a 'true global champion'. Seven months into FY, project priority list found not working. FBCCI wants tariff wall lowered by 10% in 7 years. Ctg Custom House earns BDT 4.50 Bn from auctions in 5 years. Results of 2022's labour force survey expected in March. Loan rescheduling rose 50% in Jul-Sep. Interbank lending rate goes past 9% cap for liquidity crunch. Develop skills of farmers for more productivity. To finalise USD 4.5 Bn loan, top IMF official due in Dhaka 14 Jan.

• WB agency offers USD 1 Bn guarantee for food imports. Plastic product shipment climbs 41%. Traders want alternatives to LC to keep imports normal. Bangladesh working to implement IMF conditions to get USD 4.5 Bn loan. Banglabandha port reopened to import yarn from Nepal. Tipu seeks British investment in spl economic zones, hi-tech parks. Develop transition strategy with private sector: DCCI. Banks' interest rate rising within regulatory ceiling. Stimulus for large, small industries: BDT 500 Bn fresh funds see tepid disbursement. Matarbari will become regional hub in South-Asian economy: Experts. BGMEA leaders want tenure extension. Bangladesh's economy 35th largest in the world: Visual Capitalist. Bank branches go past 11,000 mark for first time. Labour welfare largely neglected as few companies share profit. Comforter-quilt market expands as lifestyle changes. USD 7 Bn more Korean soft loan for metro, highways expected. Bank financing rising for green, sustainable projects. Bringing GDP-inflation balance biggest challenge in 2023: Salehuddin. Quick steps needed to ensure good governance in banks, say economists. Balance of payments under stress. NBR to purchase 6 more container scanners.

Stock Market arena

• BRACBANK | Brac Bank to borrow USD 50 Mn loan from German finance institution. BANKASIA | Bank Asia, BB sign deal on agri refinance fund. EMERALDOIL | Emerald Oil to issue shares for new sponsors at one-third of market value. PUBALIBANK | Ali becomes Pubali Bank's new MD. FUWANGFOOD | Fu-Wang Foods to produce puffed rice. EXCHANGE | Nine nominated as members for Shariah council. FARCHEM | HC approves Far Chemical merger. EXCHANGE | DSE organises awareness programme to speed up trading of government securities. EXCHANGE | CSE revises Shariah Index, effective from Jan 22. WALTONHIL | Walton products attract visitors at US show. NRBCBANK | NRBC Bank, Upay launch fund transfer service. PUBALIBANK | Pubali Bank, BB sign deal on refinance loan. AAMRANET | Aamra Networks, Aamra Tech get nod to issue stock dividends.

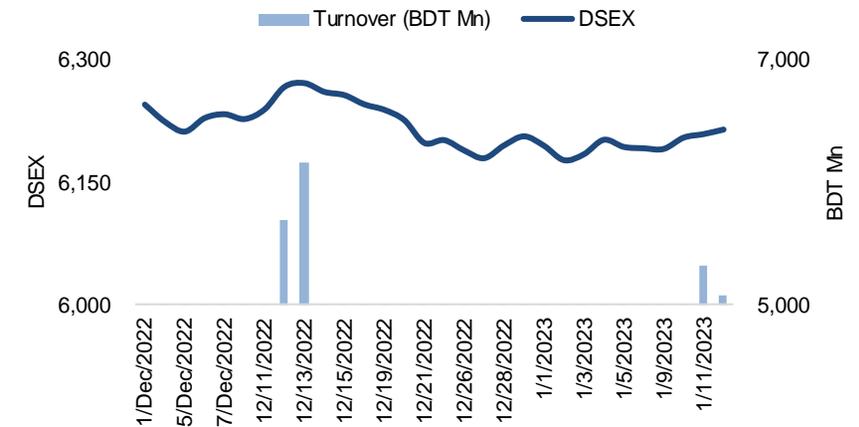
Table 1: Index

Index	Closing*	Opening*	Δ(Pts)	29-Dec-2022	Δ% Week	Δ% YTD
DSEX	6,215.05	6,193.96	+21.09	6,206.81	+0.34%	+0.13%
DS30	2,199.05	2,193.40	+5.65	2,195.30	+0.26%	+0.17%
DSES	1,357.58	1,353.28	+4.30	1,358.84	+0.32%	-0.09%
CDSET	1,215.43	1,214.02	+1.41	1,214.42	+0.12%	+0.08%

Table 2: Market Statistics

		This Week	Last Week	% Change
Mcap	Mn BDT	7,546,920	7,606,088	-0.8%
	Mn USD	70,532	71,085	
Turnover	Mn BDT	2,124	1,1330	+87.2%
	Mn USD	198	106	
Average Daily Turnover	Mn BDT	4,243	2,266	+87.2%
	Mn USD	40	21	
Volume	Mn Shares	334	176	+89.5%

Figure 1: DSEX & Turnover in last four weeks



Research Associate
Md. Tanvir Ahmed

(880) 1708805201

mtanvir.ahmed@bracepl.com

Research Associate
Billal Hossain

(880) 1708805229

billal.hossain@bracepl.com

Table 3: Top Ten Gainers

Company Name	Close*	Open*	Δ%	Mcap**	Turnover**	PE	PB
JHRML	93.3	72.3	+29.0%	11,690	774.7	28.0x	3.0x
BPML	90.2	77.6	+16.2%	15,676	1,310.3	24.2x	12x
EHL	88.0	77.9	+13.0%	8,214	567.8	14.3x	12x
BSC	126.1	111.8	+12.8%	19,235	1,353.0	8.7x	16x
NAVANAPHAR	85.7	76.4	+12.2%	9,206	533.6	22.8x	18x
MEGHNALIFE	78.2	69.9	+11.9%	3,316	380.5	NM	NM
PRAGATILIF	147.4	133.4	+10.5%	5,085	576.0	NM	NM
GENEXIL	87.6	79.7	+9.9%	9,947	977.4	25.3x	4.8x
ADNTEL	125.6	114.4	+9.8%	8,120	608.2	42.3x	4.4x
AAMRANET	55.3	50.4	+9.7%	3,428	556.0	24.2x	15x

Table 4: Top Ten Losers

Company Name	Close*	Open*	Δ%	Mcap**	Turnover**	PE	PB
ORIONINFU	372.2	422.4	-11.9%	7,578	647.0	NM	25.1x
BDTHAIFOOD	42.9	47.3	-9.3%	3,496	192.3	NM	3.0x
MONOSPOOL	229.9	250.9	-8.4%	2,158	135.5	34.3x	5.0x
KOHINOOR	413.7	436.9	-5.3%	12,675	39.7	38.2x	7.6x
RENWICKJA	866.5	910.9	-4.9%	1,733	0.7	NM	NM
LIBRAINFU	783.8	823.9	-4.9%	1,177	0.4	NM	0.6x
JUTESPINN	301.8	317.1	-4.8%	513	0.6	NM	NM
NORTHERN	219.2	230.3	-4.8%	470	8.4	NM	2.7x
SAVAREFR	234.3	246.1	-4.8%	326	0.0	NM	2.5x
MIRACLEIND	29.8	31.3	-4.8%	1,049	0.2	NM	10x

Table 5: Top Ten Most Traded Shares

Company Name	Close*	Open*	Δ%	Mcap**	Turnover**	PE	PB
BSC	126.1	111.8	+12.8%	19,235	1,353.0	8.7x	16x
BPML	90.2	77.6	+16.2%	15,676	1,310.3	24.2x	12x
GENEXIL	87.6	79.7	+9.9%	9,947	977.4	25.3x	4.8x
ORIONPHARM	85.9	81.1	+5.9%	20,101	877.7	21.3x	0.9x
INTRACO	39.5	39.9	-1.0%	3,880	803.9	32.0x	3.1x
JHRML	93.3	72.3	+29.0%	11,690	774.7	28.0x	3.0x
SEAPEARL	223.0	212.2	+5.1%	26,927	655.5	82.6x	17.1x
ORIONINFU	372.2	422.4	-11.9%	7,578	647.0	NM	25.1x
ADNTEL	125.6	114.4	+9.8%	8,120	608.2	42.3x	4.4x
PRAGATILIF	147.4	133.4	+10.5%	5,085	576.0	NM	NM

Table 6: Most Appreciated YTD in BRAC EPL Universe

Company Name	Close*	YTD %Δ	Mcap**	PE	PB
ADNTEL	125.6	+10.1%	8,120	42.3x	4.4x
EGEN	55.5	+6.5%	4,163	38.5x	2.5x
UNIQUEHRL	60.6	+5.0%	17,841	16.2x	0.7x
BERGERPBL	1,733.9	+0.7%	80,415	26.1x	7.0x
MTB	16.8	+0.6%	15,015	3.5x	0.7x
SHAHJABANK	18.9	+0.5%	20,422	5.6x	0.9x
RECKITBEN	4,764.0	+0.1%	22,510	30.5x	35.0x
BXPBARMA	146.3	+0.1%	65,266	12.8x	16x
IDLC	46.5	-	19,330	10.6x	1.1x
DBH	57.8	-	11,270	11.1x	15x

*BDT

**BDT Mn

Table 7: Sector Indices

Sector Name	Week Close*	Week Open*	Year Open*	Δ% Week	Δ% YTD
Bank	1,428.3	1,429.9	1,427.09	-0.11%	+0.08%
NBFI	1,926.4	1,926.5	1,927.24	-0.00%	-0.04%
Mutual Fund	849.9	850.9	852.07	-0.11%	-0.25%
General Insurance	3,151.9	3,173.4	3,177.87	-0.68%	-0.82%
Life Insurance	2,628.8	2,554.8	2,492.91	+2.90%	+5.45%
Telecommunication	4,945.6	4,945.6	4,945.60	-	-
Pharmaceutical	3,753.6	3,728.2	3,754.47	+0.68%	-0.02%
Fuel & Power	1,692.9	1,693.4	1,694.29	-0.03%	-0.08%
Cement	2,319.0	2,319.6	2,319.67	-0.03%	-0.03%
Services & Real Estate	1,937.5	1,852.1	1,782.23	+4.61%	+8.71%
Engineering	4,489.6	4,491.0	4,503.40	-0.03%	-0.31%
Food & Allied	21,145.0	21,225.1	21,247.80	-0.38%	-0.48%
IT	3,160.7	2,965.5	3,004.33	+6.58%	+5.21%
Textile	1,605.6	1,609.6	1,621.87	-0.24%	-1.00%
Paper & Printing	10,852.2	10,364.2	10,388.08	+4.71%	+4.47%
Tannery	3,055.0	3,088.6	3,093.43	-1.09%	-1.24%
Jute	13,459.8	14,135.6	14,850.17	-4.78%	-9.36%
Ceramics	697.0	699.3	704.74	-0.32%	-1.09%
Miscellaneous	4,101.6	4,060.4	4,071.46	+1.01%	+0.74%

Table 8: Sector Trading Matrix

Sector Name	Daily average this Week	Daily average last Week	% Change	% of Total Turnover	PE	PB
Bank	44.0	52.4	-16.06%	+1.20%	7.7x	0.7x
NBFI	5.3	1.8	+199.95%	+0.15%	NM	4.5x
Mutual Fund	2.9	2.5	+14.91%	+0.08%	NM	0.8x
General Insurance	159.8	67.2	+137.69%	+4.36%	15.4x	1.5x
Life Insurance	496.1	187.0	+165.32%	+13.54%	NM	NM
Telecommunication	1.0	2.3	-57.89%	+0.03%	15.4x	4.9x
Pharmaceutical	734.8	391.6	+87.64%	+20.05%	18.6x	2.4x
Fuel & Power	196.4	147.4	+33.20%	+5.36%	14.4x	1.1x
Cement	1.7	3.4	-50.71%	+0.05%	33.5x	2.5x
Services & Real Estate	334.0	203.4	+64.23%	+9.11%	43.3x	10x
Engineering	136.4	173.1	-21.18%	+3.72%	38.6x	1.8x
Food & Allied	144.9	91.0	+59.17%	+3.95%	21.4x	7.4x
IT	624.2	245.2	+154.56%	+17.03%	29.4x	2.8x
Textile	78.0	11.2	+593.99%	+2.13%	30.7x	10x
Paper & Printing	306.2	149.3	+105.07%	+8.35%	47.0x	2.1x
Tannery	11.1	9.5	+17.09%	+0.30%	39.2x	3.0x
Jute	8.8	6.3	+40.66%	+0.24%	NM	116.2x
Ceramics	81.0	90.2	-10.12%	+2.21%	33.7x	1.9x
Miscellaneous	298.0	74.6	+299.26%	+8.13%	12.4x	1.8x

Table 9: Least Appreciated YTD in BRAC EPL Universe

Company Name	Close*	YTD %Δ	Mcap**	PE	PB
OLYMPIC	122.8	-1.0%	24,552	19.5x	2.5x
BATASHOE	946.0	-0.7%	12,941	36.6x	3.5x
IPDC	57.6	-	21,375	24.4x	3.3x
LANKABAFIN	26.0	-	14,010	16.6x	1.3x
ACI	260.2	-	19,829	NM	2.0x
LINDEBD	1,397.7	-	21,271	20.0x	3.6x
UPGDCL	233.7	-	135,475	13.6x	3.8x
SUMITPOWER	34.0	-	36,308	10.0x	0.9x
MJLBD	86.7	-	27,462	13.1x	2.0x
LHBL	64.8	-	75,257	18.4x	4.1x

Important News: Business & Economy

Small businesses to get easy loans

- The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) teamed up with Bengal Commercial Bank yesterday to extend loan assistance to help cottage, small and medium entrepreneurs run their businesses.
- "We have already signed agreements with 15 associations to ensure that small and medium entrepreneurs get loans on easy terms," said the Managing Director of the Bengal Commercial Bank, Tarik Morshed. "Last year, around 23% of our disbursed loans went to the SME sector. We want to distribute at least 55% to the SME sector this year," he said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/small-businesses-get-easy-loans-3218776>

Apparel makers for raising garment accessories manufacturing capacity to achieve USD 100 Bn exports by 2030

- Apparel exporters have called for further raising garment accessories manufacturing capacity in the country so that they can achieve the target of USD 100 Bn in clothing exports by 2030.
- "Increasing productivity and the capacity to locally manufacture the accessories are a must to achieve the USD 100 Bn apparel export target," Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Faruque Hassan said. Bangladesh exported apparel items worth USD 43 Bn in FY22 and has a target of raising it to USD 100 Bn by 2030.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/apparel-makers-raising-garment-accessories-manufacturing-capacity-achieve-100b-exports>

Economic zones create 50,000 jobs so far

- The economic zones (EZs) across the country have already created 50,000 jobs and will create more in near future as new industrial units are set to go into operations there, said Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) on Tuesday.
- "Around 50,000 people have so far been employed in the economic zones," said BEZA Executive Chairman Shaikh Yusuf Harun. Six more companies are likely to begin commercial operations at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar within the next six months, he added.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/economic-zones-create-50000-jobs-so-far-1673411206>

Cenbank eyes stabilising forex market in new monetary policy

- The Bangladesh Bank is planning to reduce the gap in multiple dollar rates to a maximum of 2% from the existing 7% in the upcoming monetary policy for the next six months of the current fiscal year, scheduled for announcement on 15 January.
- At present, there are four kinds of dollar rates in the market: a maximum of BDT 107 for importers, BDT 102 for exporters, BDT 107 for remitters, BDT 100 at which the Bangladesh Bank sells a dollar. Previously, one rate was maintained for dollar sales, which was used as a reference rate.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/cenbank-eyes-stabilising-forex-market-new-monetary-policy-566090>

BGMEA seeks Bangladesh mission's support to promote trade opportunities in Canada

- The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has sought the support of the Bangladesh High Commission in Canada to explore more trade opportunities, including apparel exports, in the North American country. Bangladesh High Commissioner in Canada Dr Khalilur Rahman paid a visit to BGMEA President Faruque Hassan in Dhaka Wednesday.
- They talked about the current state of affairs in the readymade garments (RMG) industry, especially how the sector had been navigating through a rough patch in recent times amid a depressed global economy and rising inflation.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bgmea-seeks-bangladesh-missions-support-to-promote-trade-opportunities-in-canada-1673457545>

Worker outflow hits record high but remittance falls

- Bangladesh sent the highest number of migrant workers in its history in 2022 thanks to a surge in demand for labourers in the Middle Eastern countries but remittance receipts did not go up proportionately.
- More than 1.135 Mn Bangladeshis left the country for jobs abroad last year, nearly doubling from 617,000 migrant workers who flew abroad the previous year, data released by the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) showed.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/worker-outflow-hits-record-high-remittance-falls-3218836>

World Bank cuts Bangladesh's growth forecast to 5.2% for FY23

- The World Bank has forecast a 5.2% growth for Bangladesh's gross domestic product (GDP) in the current fiscal year – down from the 7.2% growth in the previous year.
- "In Bangladesh, growth is expected to slow to 5.2% in FY2022/23 due to rising inflation and its negative impact on household incomes and firms' input costs, as well as energy shortages, import restrictions, and monetary policy tightening," the World Bank said in its latest edition of Global Economic Prospects released on Tuesday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/world-bank-lowers-bangladesh-growth-forecast-further-to-52pc-for-fy23-1673414558>

Foreign loans turn sour for private borrowers

- Once considered a much cheaper source, foreign commercial loans are now costlier than even local currency loans, driving private sector borrowers to turn to local banks and ramping up the ongoing liquidity crisis.
- At a time of rising interest rates in advance and emerging markets during a period of tight global financial conditions, the effective interest rate for foreign borrowing now stands at 8.30%, while the maximum rate for local loans is 9%. Borrowers turning to local banks which are already in liquidity crisis. Depreciation fears another factor in foreign currency loans.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/foreign-loans-turn-sour-private-borrowers-566530>

SC disposes of 13 appeals of telcos

- The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday disposed of 13 appeals of mobile phone operators Grameenphone, Robi and Banglalink regarding some payments to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), including VAT on spectrum and licence fees.
- Khandakar Reza-E-Raquib, representing the BTRC, told The Daily Star that Grameenphone, Robi and Banglalink would have to pay around BDT 25 Bn to the BTRC over licence renewal and spectrum assignment fees and revenue sharing following the SC verdict.
- Grameenphone will have to pay around BDT 14 Bn, Robi BDT 5 Bn and Banglalink BDT 6 Bn, he said. But Grameenphone's lawyer, Mustafizur Rahman Khan, said it was not clear whether the mobile phone operators would have to pay any amount to the BTRC.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/telecom/news/sc-disposes-13-appeals-telcos-3217656>

Half-yearly monetary policy too soon

- Bangladesh's central bank is agog to launch the country's half-yearly monetary policy Sunday, while many targets last set for up to December have gone missing largely for global and local disarrays.
- The monetary-policy targets were actually meant for containing the inflationary pressures on the economy, which surged significantly higher -- even touched nearly 10% during last few months of the calendar year to December.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/half-yearly-monetary-policy-too-soon-1673405611>

Bangladesh a 'true global champion'

- New World Bank Country Director to Bangladesh and Bhutan Abdoulaye Seck yesterday lauded the economic development of Bangladesh over the years and termed the country as a 'true global champion' on various fronts such as GDP growth, poverty alleviation, and women empowerment.
- Seck opined that the economic capacity of Bangladesh is much better compared to other countries in Asia. He also praised the various time-befitting steps of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in tackling the pandemic.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-true-global-champion-3217666>

Seven months into FY, project priority list found not working

- A preliminary decision has been made to go back to the drawing board with development projects in the seventh month of the current fiscal year, as it seems the first project line-ups were not effective, according to planning officials, raising flags about the outcomes of the belt-tightening in development spending since July last year.
- Furthermore, a proposed BDT 150 Bn deep cut in the revised annual development scheme by foreign funding is also causing headaches for the country's strained forex reserve, prompting the planning minister to speak out against it at an assessment meeting on Tuesday.
- With the meeting with 43 ministries and divisions, Planning Minister MA Mannan advocated for more spending from foreign development funds as it will give a boost to the foreign currency reserve by 30%.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/seven-months-fy-project-priority-list-found-not-working-565986>

FBCCI wants tariff wall lowered by 10% in 7 years

- The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) wants the import duty to be slashed by 10% from the existing 25%, gradually by 2030 to help the country comply with the World Trade Organisation's tariff structure.
- In its proposals sent to the Tariff Commission, the FBCCI also seeks reduction in import duty to as low as 1%-5% for machinery, essential goods and basic raw materials.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/fbcci-wants-tariff-wall-lowered-10-7-years-565974>

Ctg Custom House earns BDT 4.50 Bn from auctions in 5 years

- The auction branch of Chattogram Custom House, the country's largest customs station, has earned BDT 4.50 Bn crore in the past five years since 2018 from auction sales of undelivered goods imported through Chattogram port.
- According to the data of Chattogram Custom House, 2022 saw the highest revenue from auctions during the period as 1,381 lots of goods were sold in 42 auctions, which generated revenue worth BDT 1.30 Bn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/nbr/ctg-custom-house-earns-tk450cr-auctions-5-years-565898>

Results of 2022's labour force survey expected in March

- The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) is expected to release its Labour Force Survey (LFS)-2022 by the end of March this year, according to a top official of the planning ministry. The government survey provides data on a quarterly basis on the overall scenario of the country's labour market, including employment and unemployment status of the population.
- It also provides estimates of the structure of employment, time-related underemployment, non-economic activities, non-conventional forms of work, volunteer work and the key labour market indicators in Bangladesh, according to the BBS.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/results-2022s-labour-force-survey-expected-march-3217596>

Loan rescheduling rose 50% in Jul-Sep

- Banks rescheduled BDT 55.51 Bn of their defaulted loans in the July-September quarter last year, which is nearly 50% –or BDT 18.45 Bn – higher than the previous quarter. According to the central bank data, in the July-September quarter, state-owned banks rescheduled BDT 8.85 Bn, private banks BDT 45.24 Bn, and specialised banks BDT 0.17 Bn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/loan-rescheduling-rose-50-jul-sep-565958>

Interbank lending rate goes past 9% cap for liquidity crunch

- Cash-strapped banks are borrowing from cash-rich lenders paying more than 9% in interest rate, which is above a cap set by the central bank, as an unprecedented liquidity crunch has hit the banking sector of Bangladesh. Some lenders have recently faced a cash reserve ratio (CRR) shortage, forcing them to secure funds at a higher interest rate from others.
- For example, a bank yesterday took a loan amounting to BDT 150 Mn, the maturity of which is 14 days, at a 10% interest rate. A similar loan would cost 4% a year earlier.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/interbank-lending-rate-goes-past-9-cap-liquidity-crunch-3217671>

Taiwanese firm invests USD 17 Mn in Bay Economic Zone

- Makalot Industrial Co Ltd, a Taiwanese readymade garment manufacturer, is going to invest USD 17 Mn to produce sports shoes and apparel items at the Bay Economic Zone.
- The company has secured registration under the name of Makalot (BD) Ltd to invest in Bangladesh, according to a press release from the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza). Makalot (BD) has rented 10,000 square metres of space at the zone, a privately-owned industrial estate for leather and leather goods, at Kaliakair in Gazipur to set up the factory.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/taiwanese-firm-invests-17m-bay-economic-zone-3217636>

Bangladesh expands cargo carrying capacity by sea

- Bangladesh's entrepreneurs, encouraged by prospects, tax and VAT benefits, expanded their capacity in oceangoing shipping sector, with the total number of vessels rising to 91, the highest so far, at the end of 2022 from 80 ships a year ago. With the increase, oceangoing ships now have a carrying capacity of nearly 3 Mn tonnes, said industry insiders yesterday.
- Tax exemption on income earned by oceangoing vessels carrying the Bangladeshi flag until 2030 and value added tax (VAT) exemption on the import of vessels of up to 25 years old attracted investment in the sector over the last couple of years. "This sector has really done well. We have become competitive after reduction of taxes by the National Board of Revenue (NBR)," said Azam J Chowdhury, chairman of Bangladesh Ocean Going Ship Owners' Association (BOGSOA).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-expands-cargo-carrying-capacity-sea-3216916>

Rid Dhaka of vehicles over 15 years old: Barvida

- Old vehicle importers yesterday urged Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to gradually phase out from Dhaka vehicles which were over 15 years old for a healthier capital.
- The Bangladesh Reconditioned Vehicles Importers and Dealers Association (Barvida) also demanded a reduction in vehicle registration fee which was increased last week. The Barvida also wanted the authority to cancel a "dual registration system", meant first for importers when the vehicles arrive and then for customers when the vehicles are sold.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/rid-dhaka-vehicles-over-15-years-old-barvida-3217586>

Develop skills of farmers for more productivity

- Bangladesh should give priority on the efficient skills development of farmers to increase agricultural productivity and reduce the cost of cultivation, said MA Momen, vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI).
- "Bangladesh has a lot of potential in the agriculture sector. Now we have to move towards mechanisation of agricultural production, food processing, storage, and testing," he said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/develop-skills-farmers-more-productivity-3217581>

To finalise USD 4.5 Bn loan, top IMF official due in Dhaka 14 Jan

- Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Antoinette Monsio Sayeh will arrive in Dhaka on 14 January as the USD 4.5 billion loan agreement will be finalised during her visit, according to finance ministry officials. During her five-day visit, Sayeh will review the current financial condition of the country and assess the rationale of the loan programme, the officials said.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/imfs-dmd-due-dhaka-14-jan-finalise-45bn-loan-deal-565626>

WB agency offers USD 1 Bn guarantee for food imports

- The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (Miga), a wing of the World Bank Group, has offered to guarantee USD 500 Mn to USD 1 Bn in foreign loans to ease imports of essentials and improve food security in Bangladesh during rising commodity prices and dollar crisis.
- Miga, the political risk insurance arm of the World Bank Group, has also expressed willingness to guarantee foreign currency loans from foreign lenders to set up an export development fund for the ready-made garment industry.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/wb-agency-offers-1b-guarantee-food-imports-565342>

Plastic product shipment climbs 41%

- The shipment of plastic products rose 41% year-on-year to USD 100.17 Mn in the first six months of the current financial year as orders surged following the post-pandemic recovery and manufacturers made a foray into new export destinations, official figures showed.
- The earnings compared to USD 71.06 Mn in the July-December half of a year earlier. Of the receipts, PVC (polyvinyl chloride) bags fetched USD 16.66 Mn in July-December, up 37.23% year-on-year, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/plastic-product-shipment-climbs-41-3215816>

Traders want alternatives to LC to keep imports normal

- Business leaders have urged the commerce ministry to consider setting up trade credit and currency swap systems as alternatives to letters of credit (LCs) for importing goods as they have been facing problems in this regard recently.
- "We need to explore the potential of alternatives to LCs. Systems like trade credit or buyer's credit, deferred payment, usance LC and currency swap may be preferred," said Md Sameer Sattar, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), at a meeting with the commerce minister at the secretariat yesterday.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/traders-want-alternatives-lc-keep-imports-normal-565298>

Bangladesh working to implement IMF conditions to get USD 4.5 Bn loan

- Bangladesh government is working to gradually implement almost all conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to get a USD 4.5 Bn loan from the Washington-based lender, to meet the foreign exchange crisis, said a senior official of the finance ministry on Monday.
- As per the conditions, Bangladesh Bank (BB) will leave control of the Bangladesh currency's exchange rate with the US dollar to the floating market. BB also includes allowing the private sector to import fuel and increasing electricity prices at the retail level, reports UNB.
- Besides, a long-term plan will be made to make the prices of imported goods, including energy products, use-based and to increase the tax-GDP ratio. A decision has already been taken from the highest level of the government regarding the implementation of these conditions, said the official speaking on condition of anonymity as he is not authorised to talk to the media.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/bangladesh-working-to-implement-imf-conditions-to-get-45b-loan-1673272603>

Banglabandha port reopened to import yarn from Nepal

- Bangladesh has again allowed traders to import yarn from neighbouring Nepal through the Banglabandha Land Port – a major port in Northern Bangladesh – after a long restriction.
- The National Board of Revenue issued a statutory regulatory order last week to this end. "Only acrylic yarn has been provisioned to be imported to the country through the port. Nepal had a request to open the port for all kinds of yarn. Local importers also had the same demand," a senior revenue official, wishing to remain unnamed, told The Business Standard.
- "The door has been opened for only export-oriented traders only," he added and noted that the Bangladesh Land Port Authority will soon take necessary steps accordingly.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banglabandha-port-reopened-import-yarn-nepal-564978>

Tipu seeks British investment in spl economic zones, hi-tech parks

- Mentioning that Bangladesh is now the best profitable destination for making investments, commerce minister Tipu Munshi on Monday sought British investments in special economic zones and hi-tech parks in Bangladesh.
- 'The investment procedures have been simplified in Bangladesh while the country has been providing a set of facilities for attracting foreign investment,' Tipu made the urge when visiting British MP Rushanara Ali met him at his secretariat office in the city on Monday.
- The commerce minister mentioned that there was a huge potential for making investments in the country's energy, railway, telecommunications, information technology, pharmaceuticals, light engineering, services, education and RMG sector.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/191243/tipu-seeks-british-investment-in-spl-economic-zones-hi-tech-parks>

Develop transition strategy with private sector: DCCI

- The government should formulate a "transition strategy" with the private sector to address any detrimental effect, such as a loss in exports, arising from Bangladesh's United Nations status graduation in 2026, said the DCCI yesterday.
- Once it comes to be known as a developing nation from a least developed country (LDC), Bangladesh will lose preferential market access to different export destinations, said Sameer Sattar, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/develop-transition-strategy-private-sector-dcci-3216801>

Banks' interest rate rising within regulatory ceiling

- Banks' lending and deposit rates have been increasing gradually as demand for funds has risen in the sector amid a liquidity shortage. However, the 9% lending rate cap does not allow banks to raise the interest rate as per the demand for credits, bankers said.
- According to Bangladesh Bank data, weighted average deposit rate was 3.97% in June 2022 that increased for the five consecutive months to settle at 4.22% in November. The lending rate was 7.09% in June 2022 that increased continuously to reach 7.18% at the end of November. Some banks offered high interest rates to get deposits as they were going through a liquidity crisis, the bankers said.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/191259/banks-interest-rate-rising-within-regulatory-ceiling>

Stimulus for large, small industries: BDT 500 Bn fresh funds see tepid disbursement

- Two of the government's 28 Covid-19 stimulus packages saw a fresh injection of BDT 500 Bn in the ongoing financial year, but only 4% of the fund was disbursed between July and October.
- The two packages each aimed at providing working capital to large industries and service sector firms and cottage, micro, small, and medium enterprises (CMSMEs) saw a collective disbursement of BDT 21.51 Bn as of October, according to a finance ministry report.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/stimulus-large-small-industries-tk-50000cr-fresh-funds-see-tepid-disbursement-3215996>

Matarbari will become regional hub in South-Asian economy: Experts

- The government is constructing a deep seaport at Matarbari of Cox's Bazar to help the country handle growing volumes of exports and imports and ease the pressure on the country's principal seaport Chattogram. The government is also constructing a Coal-based Power Plant, an LNG Terminal, and the development of highways.
- Experts concerned expect that Matarbari will become the most important export-import hub in the South-Asian region in future as the region is bustling with a number of mega projects, including Deep-Sea Port, reports BSS. Construction works for the dream deep-sea port project is going on in full swing. With the pandemic is almost retreating, the work is on without any break. The project is likely to be completed by 2026 next.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/matarbari-will-become-regional-hub-in-south-asian-economy-experts-1673174535>

BGMEA leaders want tenure extension

- Rather the board in a meeting held at the BGMEA office on Sunday decided to extend the tenure of the current board for the next six months. It cited excuses of bad business conditions following the Russia-Ukraine war, severe fallouts of the Covid-19 and lower inflow of work orders from international clothing retailers and brands.
- Faisal Samad, leader of Forum, another panel of the BGMEA, said he would also submit an application to the DTO this week asking not to extend the tenure of the current board as the BGMEA constitution does not allow it.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bgmea-leaders-want-tenure-extension-3216921>

Bida provides 67 services to investors through OSS

- Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) is providing 67 services to investors through its One Stop Service (OSS), said its chief yesterday. At present, 23 organisations are involved in these processes, said Bida Executive Chairman Lokman Hossain Miah.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bida-provides-67-services-investors-through-oss-3216341>

Country-wise private sector debt of Bangladesh

- Bangladesh's private sector's medium and long-term debt from foreign countries stood at USD 8.09 Bn at the end of September 2022. The sector had the highest volume of loans from China at USD 2.28 Bn, Bangladesh Bank data showed. Hong Kong came second with loans of USD 1.26 Bn, and the United Kingdom was placed third with loans of USD 0.85 Bn.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/country-wise-private-sector-debt-bangladesh-3216426>

PM emphasises signing PTA, FTA with Brazil, 3 other S American countries

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday (8 January) stressed the need for boosting trade and business cooperation between Bangladesh and Brazil. There is a huge prospect of business expansion between the two countries, she said when Brazilian Ambassador to Bangladesh Paulo Fernando Dias Feres paid a courtesy call on her at Ganabhaban.
- She emphasised signing preferential trade agreement (PTA) or free trade agreement (FTA) with Brazil and three other MERCOSUR (The Southern Common Market) countries – Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay – soon, as Bangladesh will graduate into a developing country in 2026.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/pm-emphasises-signing-pta-fta-brazil-and-three-other-south-american-countries-564542>

Call money rate reaches new high at 6.80%

- The average call money rate – the interest rate at which a bank borrows from another overnight – reached 6.80% on Sunday from the previous day's 6.70%.
- The rate reached 6.70% on Thursday from the previous day's 5.77% after the central bank allowed banks to raise the rate to maximum 6.75% amid the liquidity crisis marking the highest in six and a half years, according to the Bangladesh Bank, which has been keeping data on the call money rate since May 2016.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/call-money-rate-reaches-new-high-680-564766>

Power tariff hike to drive up production cost, stoke inflationary pressures.

- Any increase in the retail tariffs of electricity will drive up the production cost and lead to a further spiral in inflation, worsening the condition of lower-income groups, said presidents of two chambers. "A hike in electricity tariff will only exacerbate inflation and increase the sufferings of lower-income people," said Anwar-ul Alam Chowdhury (Parvez), president of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI).
- He made the remarks while speaking to The Daily Star after a technical evaluation committee of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday recommended raising retail electricity prices by 15%.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/power-tariff-hike-drive-production-cost-stoke-inflationary-pressures-3215786>

20 goods account for 51% of total import spending

- Of all the money spent behind the 4,500 types of goods imported through the Chattogram port in the first five months of fiscal year 2022-23, more than 51% or BDT 1,046 Bn was spent for only 20 products.
- The 20 include old ships and scrap, diesel, furnace oil, crude fuel oil, palm oil, crude soybean oil, soybean seed, wheat, lentil, cotton, fertiliser and cement clinker. Their import has increased by 52% year-on-year. According to Custom House Chattogram, about 37.28 Mn tonnes of goods worth BDT 2,053 Bn were imported in the July-November period. The 20 products were of 21.36 Mn tonnes.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/20-goods-account-51pc-total-import-spending-3215136>

Formalities eased for opening NRBs' taka accounts

- The central bank has simplified formalities for the opening non-resident investor's taka accounts (NITAs). Commercial banks are using different sets of documents for opening NITAs that may create ambiguity among the applicants, said the BB in a notice yesterday.
- In order to bring uniformity in the opening of NITAs, banks have been advised to obtain the applicant's valid passport copy, photograph, proof of address, reliable source of income, and the copy of the nominee or authorised person's passport or national identification card.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/formalities-eased-opening-nrbs-taka-accounts-3215881>

Livestock resources boom, but their health care remains ignored

- In the last one decade, Bangladesh's livestock sector increased by around 80 Mn to 432.4 Mn, and burgeoning further – changing the agri landscape dominated by crop cultivation, boosting the national protein supply chain and generating employment in rural Bangladesh.
- But an acute shortage of veterinary professionals stands in the way of the changes, deterring cattle farming from being a sustainable sector and, ultimately, leaving the entire protein supply chain at risk.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/livestock-resources-boom-their-health-care-remains-ignored-564586>

Ctg port asks importers to take quick delivery of dangerous goods

- The Chattogram port authorities have called upon importers to take quick delivery of dangerous goods in order to keep port activities normal. Currently, 1,571 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of dangerous goods brought in by importers are lying inside the port, according to the letter signed by the port's terminal manager.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/ctg-port-asks-importers-take-quick-delivery-dangerous-goods-564794>

Startups' tough time to continue in 2023, perhaps even beyond

- According to the LightCastle compilation of disclosed deals, Bangladeshi startups received USD 103 Mn in funding in 2022, which peaked at USD 415 Mn in 2021, including the USD 250 Mn Softbank investment in Bkash.
- Alongside the three-fourth drop in investment amount, the number of investment deals dropped to 27 from 33, and most of the bigger ticket investments were found to have been concentrated in the year's first half.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/startups-tough-time-continue-2023-perhaps-even-beyond-564494>

High plot price drives away entrepreneurs from Rajshahi Bscic-2

- Entrepreneurs have shied away from allotting plots in the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation industrial city-2 (Bscic-2) in Rajshahi due to high prices.
- People concerned say the authorities published notices on 28 July 2022 for the allotment of 286 plots in Rajshahi Bscic-2. The last date for submitting applications was 12 September. But only 38 plots in the industrial city have been allotted, so far. Entrepreneurs say the plot price in Rajshahi Bscic-2 has been fixed at BDT 1,136.27 per sqft which is the highest among the BSCIC industrial cities in the country.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/industry/high-plot-price-drives-away-entrepreneurs-rajshahi-bscic-2-564478>

Narrow gap in dollar buy- sale rates

- Apparel exporters have demanded that the government fast narrow down the gap between the rates at which the US dollar is bought and sold, citing that they were incurring losses for volatility in the exchange rate. The local garment exporters demanded that the gap be a maximum of one taka, saying that banks were doing brisk business giving the excuse of a scarcity of dollars in the market.
- Last week, the Bankers Association of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealer's Association (BAFEDA) declared the exchange rate on export receipts at BDT 102 per dollar from BDT 101.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/narrow-gap-dollar-buy-sale-rates-3215986>

Bangladesh's economy 35th largest in the world: Visual Capitalist

- According to Canada-based online publication 'Visual Capitalist', Bangladesh has emerged as the 35th largest economy in the world. Earlier, the IMF revealed that Bangladesh and India were the only two South Asian countries considered to be part of the 50 largest economies.
- Citing IMF statistics, Visual Capitalist published the report titled 'The Top Heavy Global Economy' on December 29, 2022. It has listed countries in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). Renowned economist Dr Atiur Rahman has said that Bangladesh's economy reached this stage due to its macroeconomic stability and 6-plus GDP growth over the last 12/13 years.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladeshs-economy-35th-largest-the-world-visual-capitalist-3214901>

Bank branches go past 11,000 mark for first time

- Branches of banks in Bangladesh have gone past the 11,000-mark for the first time despite expanding digitalisation in the financial sector, central bank data showed. Scheduled banks had 11,030 physical branches in October, according to the Bangladesh Bank review of e-banking and e-commerce statistics.
- The review showed a bank branch serves 15,332 persons on average while every 12,745 persons receive digital financial services using an ATM.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bank-branches-go-past-11000-mark-first-time-3215126>

Labour welfare largely neglected as few companies share profit

- Workers' well-being is still greatly ignored in the country as most companies are, reportedly, reluctant to comply with the legal obligation to contribute 5% of their profits to the welfare of their employees.
- Even most of the profit-making listed companies have refrained from forming and distributing funds for the welfare of their workers and are not donating money to the workers' welfare foundation, according to sources at the Dhaka Stock Exchange. There are over 300 listed companies in the country and the majority of them are in profit.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/labour-welfare-largely-neglected-few-companies-share-profit-564442>

Use green funds for leather sector compliance

- The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) should form a fund with support from Green Climate Fund to enable leather goods manufacturing processes that do not affect the environment, suggested Tofazzel Hossain Miah, principal secretary to the prime minister.
- By availing loans from the BSCIC fund, tanners can set up their own effluent treatment plants (ETPs) and ensure compliance to other regulations, he said during a visit to Savar Tannery Industrial Estate yesterday. Approvals of Leather Working Group, a global body for compliance and environmental certification in the leather and leather goods sector, bear a lot of significance in terms of taking the country forward, said Miah.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/use-green-funds-leather-sector-compliance-3214961>

RMG accessories businesses want 5-yr tenure for business-related licences.

- Garment accessories manufacturers and exporters on Sunday demanded an increase of tenure to five year of all licences required to do business to reduce cost and hassle of business in the country.
- 'At least 32 licences are required to start a business in Bangladesh and businesses have to spend additional money and face hassle to renew the licences every year,' Mohammad Moazzem Hossain Moti president of Bangladesh Garments Accessories and Packaging Manufacturers and Exporters Association said at a press conference on the day.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/191175/rmg-accessories-businesses-want-5-yr-tenure-for-business-related-licences>

Bangladesh advances in internet speed

- Bangladesh has advances seven spots in a global ranking on mobile download speeds, reaching 119th position. The country recorded 13.95 Mbps in November last year, better than the 10.42 Mbps recorded in November 2021, according to Speedtest Global Index published recently.
- The country also improved its global ranking for fixed broadband download speeds, gaining three spots to stand at 102nd by recording 34.85 Mbps. The index includes internet speeds in some of the world's largest cities across the globe.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-advances-internet-speed-3213761>

Comforter-quilt market expands as lifestyle changes

- Consumers in Bangladesh are increasingly switching to comforters, quilts and blankets from traditional duvets in order to stay warm throughout the chillier winter nights and amid a change in lifestyle, drawing a substantial investments and big companies to the segment.
- About 100 companies, including a dozen of big corporations, have invested heavily in the business in the last five years. With an annual increase of 15% to 20% in the last five years, the market size of locally manufactured comforters, quilts and blankets now stands at BDT 5 Bn, according to industry people.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/comforter-quilt-market-expands-lifestyle-changes-3213841>

USD 7 Bn more Korean soft loan for metro, highways expected

- After receiving assurance for USD 3 Bn in development loans in five years, between 2022 and 2026, from the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of the Export-Import Bank of Korea, Bangladesh now expects another USD 7 Bn from the development cooperation agency's new window – Economic Development Promotion Facility (EDPF) – in the 2023-2027 period.
- The government wishes to get USD 1 Bn to USD 1.5 Bn from the EDPF – a fund designed to support large infrastructure projects in developing countries – every year as this loan is much cheaper compared to that from any other development aid agency, officials of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) have said.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/7b-more-korean-soft-loan-metro-highways-expected-563850>

Bank financing rising for green, sustainable projects

- Bangladesh's banks are increasingly extending finance for green and sustainable initiatives taken by businesses in an attempt to encourage environment friendly investments and mitigate the effects of climate change. From July to September of fiscal year 2022-23, banks had provided BDT 26.70 Bn to green initiatives such as bringing energy efficiency at factories and eco-friendly brick kilns and agricultural schemes.
- The amount of disbursement was up 78% year-on-year, according to Bangladesh Bank data. Such financing by banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) stood at 75.48 Bn from January to September of 2022, accounting for 4.20% or of all term loans.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bank-financing-rising-green-sustainable-projects-3215001>

Bringing GDP-inflation balance biggest challenge in 2023: Salehuddin

- Former central bank governor Salehuddin Ahmed said Bangladesh's biggest challenge in 2023 will be to achieve a balance between GDP growth and inflation. "We need three things. First, the capacity, which is not satisfactory. Besides, there are transparency and good governance," he said at the unveiling of the fourth edition of Banking Almanac (2020-21), a research book containing information on banks and financial institutions in Bangladesh.
- While presiding over the event, Salehuddin, also chairman of the editorial board of the Almanac, called upon the planning minister to take quick, visible, and effective steps in these matters.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bringing-gdp-inflation-balance-biggest-challenge-2023-salehuddin-564318>

Quick steps needed to ensure good governance in banks, say economists

- The government should take proper, visible and fast actions to ensure good governance in the banking sector, said economists yesterday. They spoke at the unveiling of the fourth edition of Banking Almanac, a source of information on financial institutions in the country, at the Dhaka Reporter's Unity in the capital.
- The banking sector is facing monumental challenges because of corruption, higher non-performing loans, the volatility in the foreign exchange regime, and liquidity crunch. "The government should publish all activities that have happened in the banking sector. Though it may face some criticism if the government does so, it will help remove the problems," said Salehuddin Ahmed, a former governor of the central bank.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/quick-steps-needed-ensure-good-governance-banks-3215041>

Balance of payments under stress

- The financial account of the balance of payments (BoP) turned negative in the first five months of the current fiscal year, highlighting the challenges Bangladesh is facing in protecting its foreign currency reserves from depletion as funds outflows exceeded inflows.
- The crisis facing the BoP may accelerate the depletion of the country's foreign currency reserves, which stood at USD 33.63 Bn on January 4, down from USD 44.95 Bn a year earlier.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/balance-payments-under-stress-3215151>

Amnesty to bring back black money yields no result

- The maiden tax amnesty offered by the government to bring back laundered money home has seemed to have brought no result since none secured the facility in the first six months of the current fiscal year.
- In the past, governments offered opportunities to whiten untaxed money generated in the country. In June, the government unveiled the scope to legalise the money that has been laundered abroad, the first of its kind. The funds can be legalised by paying a 7% tax.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/amnesty-bring-back-black-money-yields-no-result-3215141>

Gold price hits record high

- The price of gold has hit BDT 90,714 per bhuri, the highest in the history of Bangladesh, as Bangladesh Jewellers' Association (Bajus) decided to hike prices of the precious metal by 3% from today. Before the hike, the price of each bhuri (11.66 grams) of 22-carat gold was BDT 88,382 or BDT 7,580 each gram, according to a Bajus press release.
- "We have decided to increase prices as we have to pay higher to buy from the international market. The increased cost of dollars has also fueled gold prices," said MA Hannan Azad, chairman of the Bajus standing committee on pricing and price monitoring.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/gold-price-hits-record-high-3215146>

Accountants must adopt new tech for 4IR: Experts

- Accountants must adapt to new technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as 4IR, as traditional accounting is set to be phased out soon, experts at a discussion in the capital yesterday said. "A great change is anticipated within just five years. Traditional accounting is unlikely to exist there. Hence, we must be ready for the new technologies such as blockchain," said Sharifa Khan, secretary of the Economic Relations Division.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/accountants-must-adopt-new-tech-4ir-experts-563870>

Govt to allow commercial farming of vannamei

- The government is going to allow commercial cultivation of non-native vannamei species of shrimp, also known as whiteleg shrimp, as experimental farming in three farms in the southern coastal region showed severalfold higher yields compared to black tiger shrimp.
- The development comes as a technical panel, formed by the Department of Fisheries (DoF) earlier to assess the feasibility of the whiteleg shrimp culture in Bangladesh, suggested taking necessary steps to grow the shrimp commercially to catch up with the export market.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/govt-allow-commercial-farming-vannamei-3213826>

Banks to be asked to set aside dollars

- Amidst a fall in the letters of credit (LCs) for key essential commodities, the commerce ministry yesterday said it would request banks to retain some dollars to facilitate the import.
- Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi shared the decision at a press conference in the ministry after a meeting with businesspeople regarding stocks and supplies of seven basic commodities – soybean and palm oil, sugar, lentil, onion, chickpeas and dates.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/banks-be-asked-set-aside-dollars-3213031>

NBR to purchase 6 more container scanners

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) is finally going to purchase six container scanners worth BDT 3.27 Bn from a Chinese company which will boost examination of export and import consignments and curb duty evasion through false declarations.
- Four of the new scanners will be installed in the Chattogram port and one each at the Benapole customs house and Bhomra land customs station, according to the NBR. They are expected to play an important role in the prevention of smuggling as well as faster clearance of goods from ports.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/nbr-purchase-6-more-container-scanners-3212981>

Important News: Capital Market

BRACBANK | Brac Bank to borrow USD 50 Mn loan from German finance institution

- Brac Bank Limited is going to get USD 50 Mn loan from a German development finance institution to support SMEs, women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. To this end, Brac Bank has signed an agreement with the Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (DEG) to take the long-term loan, the bank said in a press release today.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/brac-bank-borrow-50m-loan-german-finance-institution-3218126>

BANKASIA | Bank Asia, BB sign deal on agri refinance fund

- Bank Asia Limited has signed a participatory agreement with Bangladesh Bank (BB) under a refinance scheme of BDT 50 Bn for the agriculture sector aiming to ensure food security of the country. Under this agreement, Bank Asia will disburse agricultural credit to the marginal farmers at an interest rate of 4% through its own network, said a press release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/bank-asia-bb-sign-deal-agri-refinance-fund-3218686>

EMERALDOIL | Emerald Oil to issue shares for new sponsors at one-third of market value

- Emerald Oil Industries has decided to issue fresh shares for its new sponsor-directors at a face value of BDT 10 each against their investment at a time when the shares are traded in the secondary market at more than three times higher rates.

- As per the decision, Emerald Oil Industries will issue 36.2 Mn new shares, which are almost half of the existing shares, in favour of Minori Bangladesh, allowing the new investors to secure a majority stake in the company's board.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/emerald-oil-issue-shares-new-sponsors-one-third-market-value-566526>

PUBALIBANK | Ali becomes Pubali Bank's new MD

- Mohammad Ali has been appointed as the managing director and chief executive officer of Pubali Bank Limited by the board of directors. Ali has been holding the position of additional managing director and chief operating officer of the bank since July 1, 2020, said a press release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/ali-becomes-pubali-banks-new-md-3218691>

FUWANGFOOD | Fu-Wang Foods to produce puffed rice

- Fu-Wang Foods, one of the leading listed confectionary makers, has announced that it would produce puffed rice, which is called muri in Bangla, and sell it under the name "Fuwang Muri". In a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website yesterday, the company said its board of directors had decided to set up a production line to produce puffed rice/muri.
- The product is expected to be available in markets at the end of February this year, said the company. An estimated BDT 3 Mn will be invested in the project and daily production capacity will be 10 tonnes, it added.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/fu-wang-foods-produce-puffed-rice-3217631>

EXCHANGE | Nine nominated as members for Shariah council

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has recently nominated nine members for the Shariah council that has been formed to tap more Islamic investors in the country's stock market. As per the rules, five out of the nine nominated are Shariah scholars, namely Professor Dr Mohammad Abdur Rashid, Mufti Shahed Rahmani, Mufti Yousuf Sultan, Mufti Dr Waliur Rahman Khan, representative of Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh, and Mawlana Shah Wali Ullah.
- In the last five years, new Shariah-based securities such as Mudraba perpetual bonds, Sukuk bonds, and Shariah-compliant mutual funds have been issued in the stock market. But since there was no Shariah council, any dispute arising in the management of these securities could not be resolved.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/nine-nominated-members-shariah-council-564778>

FARCHEM | HC approves Far Chemical-SF Textile merger

- The High Court has allowed Far Chemical Industries Limited – a publicly listed textile-based chemical firm – to merge with the non-listed SF Textile Industries Limited. According to a stock exchange filing by Far Chemical on Sunday, all existing equity shares of both Far Chemical and SF Textile will be cancelled.

- As per the amalgamation rules, Far Chemical's existing shareholders will get the shares at a 1:3 ratio. In simple words, they will get one new share of post-merger Far Chemical, against their three shares held in the company before the merger. The pre-merger Far Chemical currently has 218,093,423 ordinary shares. For the share allocation at 1:3 ratio, 72,697,808 new shares will be issued at BDT 10 each by the post-merger Far Chemical.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/hc-approves-far-chemical-sf-textile-merger-564774>

EXCHANGE | DSE organises awareness programme to speed up trading of government securities

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) held an awareness programme on Monday titled “The basics of government securities and trading on the stock exchange platform” as part of a series of initiatives aiming to speed up trading of government securities.
- The premier bourse held the awareness programme with the participation of heads of operations and authorised representatives of TREC holders at the DSE premises.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/dse-organises-awareness-programme-to-speed-up-trading-of-government-securities-1673276960>

EXCHANGE | CSE revises Shariah Index, effective from Jan 22

- The Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) has reviewed its Shariah --- an index comprised of Shariah-compliant stocks based on performance of the listed companies. The new index will come into effect from January 22. The port city bourse reviews the index twice in a year, according to a statement of the port city bourse on Sunday.
- Since the Muslim law prohibits alcohol, gambling, prostitution, interest-bearing financial transactions and many other restrictions, companies engaged with such businesses are not investable to Shariah adherents.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/cse-revises-shariah-index-effective-from-jan-22-1673182405>

WALTONHIL | Walton products attract visitors at US show

- Bangladesh's electrical and electronics manufacturer Walton has received a huge response from visitors and buyers at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas in the United States. This is the first time that a Bangladeshi company is taking part in the world's largest and most influential tech event like the CES.
- On the spot, the company has struck a business deal with one of the largest online marketplaces in the US. Through this marketplace, Walton products will be available for sales in the American market from February or March this year, according to a press release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/walton-products-attract-visitors-us-show-3215046>

NRBCBANK | NRBC Bank, Upay launch fund transfer service

- NRBC Bank and mobile financial service provider Upay jointly launched a service by which bank account holders are able to transfer funds to any Upay wallet using NRBC Planet. SM Parvez Tamal, chairman of NRBC Bank, inaugurated the service at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently, said a press release.
- To avail the service, bank's account holders will need to use their NRBC Planet app credentials to log in and complete the transaction by adding or choosing a Upay wallet customer account as beneficiary, entering amount and submitting customer's NRBC Planet app OTP.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/nrbc-bank-upay-launch-fund-transfer-service-3215036>

PUBALIBANK | Pubali Bank, BB sign deal on refinance loan

- Pubali Bank Limited and the Bangladesh Bank signed an agreement on disbursement of loans under a refinancing scheme worth BDT 50 Bn for food security of the country.
- Mohammad Ali, managing director (current charge) of Pubali Bank, and Md Abul Kalam Azad, director of the agriculture credit department of Bangladesh Bank, signed the agreement at the latter's headquarters in Dhaka yesterday, said a press release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/pubali-bank-bb-sign-deal-refinance-loan-3215831>

AAMRANET | Aamra Networks, Aamra Tech get nod to issue stock dividends

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has consented to Aamra Networks Limited and Aamra Technologies Limited's decision to issue stock dividends for the last fiscal year but rejected a similar move by Tosrifa Industries Limited.
- In a filing on the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday, Aamra Networks said the BSEC had accorded its consent for raising the paid-up capital through the issuance of a 5% stock dividend for the year that ended on June 30.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/aamra-networks-aamra-tech-get-nod-issue-stock-dividends-3213756>

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BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

Research

Salim Afzal Shawon, CFA	Head of Research	salim@bracepl.com	01708 805 221
Anika Mafiz	Research Analyst	anika.mafiz@bracepl.com	01708 805 206
Hossain Zaman Towhidi Khan	Senior Research Associate	hztowhidi.khan@bracepl.com	01708 805 224
Fahim Hassan	Research Associate	fahim.hassan@bracepl.com	01709 636 546
Billal Hossain	Research Associate	billal.hossain@bracepl.com	01708 805 229
Md. Tanvir Ahmed	Research Associate	mtanvir.ahmed@bracepl.com	01708 805 201
Syed Tawsifuzzaman	Research Associate	s.tawsifuzzaman@bracepl.com	01708 805 202

International Trade and Sales

Ahsanur Rahman Bappi	CEO	bappi@bracepl.com	01730 357 991
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BRAC EPL Research

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