

*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.*

### **Lockdown from tomorrow**

- The government has decided to impose a week-long lockdown from tomorrow (Monday) as Covid-19 casualties have kept mounting alarmingly in recent days. During lockdown days, people will not be allowed to go outside home without emergency needs. Public and private offices, courts, shopping malls will remain shut while passenger trains, vessels and domestic flights will not operate during the period. Like utility and emergency services, factories and industries will remain open and workers can work on a rota basis complying with health protocols.
- After analysing the outcome, he said, the government will decide whether to extend the shutdown. The number of daily infections and deaths from the deadly pathogen has suddenly taken a dangerous turn over the past several days. Saturday saw the third-highest single-day spike of infections and fatalities as some 5,683 new cases were recorded in the last 24 hours while 58 people succumbed to the respiratory disease.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/lockdown-from-tomorrow-1617471404>

### **RMG owners decide to run factories at full capacity**

- Readymade garment (RMG) exporters said that they will run factories at full capacity, maintaining health guidelines, despite the government's recent directive to reduce the workforce in all organisations by half amid the surge in Covid-19 infections and deaths. Expressing concern over the government directive, they say full-fledged factory operations are needed to ship goods on time in order to avoid possible order cancellations or deferred payments. In a letter to the secretary to the labour ministry, on Thursday, exporters said factories would continue production at full capacity following health safety protocols.
- BGMEA Director who is responsible for monitoring workers' issues, said they had already instructed all the member factories to maintain health guidelines. The BGMEA letter said the factories were able to keep the Covid-19 infection rate below 0.03% among RMG workers during the first wave as health guidelines had been maintained. It said work orders had fallen by 30-40% due to the second wave of the pandemic in the West and buyers were creating pressure to promptly deliver the existing orders.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/rmg-owners-decide-run-factories-full-capacity-225955>

### **Stock markets to remain open during lockdown**

- The country's stock markets –Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) and Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE)- will remain open during the 7-day nationwide lockdown, announced by the government in the wake of surging coronavirus cases. For the sake of the investors, the stock market will remain in operations if banks stay open during the lockdown, DSE Deputy General Manager said. Earlier in the day, Bangladesh government imposed a 7-day countrywide lockdown, starting from Monday, primarily as Covid-19 situation has taken a very dangerous turn here.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stock/dse-remain-open-during-lockdown-226189>

### **Current account surplus drops by USD 652mn in February**

- The current account deficit has started to shrink on the back of a rise in import payments. In February, the current account surplus dropped by USD 652 million. In July-January of the current fiscal year, Bangladesh posted a current account surplus of USD 2.21 billion, which declined to USD 1.56 billion in the July-February period, according to the latest balance of payment data released by the Bangladesh Bank on Thursday. The balance of payment was in deficit of USD 2.11 billion in the first eight months in the last fiscal year as the payment for imports, which was going at a normal pace, was much higher during that time with no Covid-19 impacts.
- But, towards the end of the last fiscal year, the pandemic blow to imports, subsequently economic activities coming to a grinding halt and a fall in domestic demand led to a decline in the import payments. That is why the current account balance registered a surplus, rather than a deficit. From last January, imports started to increase with the pandemic slowing down. The import growth continued in February too. Thus, in the first eight months of FY21, the country's import payments increased by 2% to USD 37.07 billion over the same period a fiscal year ago. On the other hand, during the same period, export earnings fell by 1.28% to USD 25.27 billion year-on-year.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/current-account-surplus-drops-652m-february-225505>

### **Remittance jumps yet again, grows 50% year-on-year in March**

- Bangladesh's remittance inflow leaped 50% in March when compared to the same period last year. The trend of high inflow started at the beginning of the current fiscal year (FY2020-21), but had gradually slowed down until the jump last month. Bangladesh received USD 1.92 billion in remittance this March, central bank sources said, adding that the country received more remittance in the first nine months of the current fiscal year (USD 18.6 billion) than the entire inflow (USD 15.43 billion) of previous FY. Commenting on the jump in remittance inflow, Finance Minister said that the continued trend of high remittance inflow is the result of a number of measures, such as an easier process of remitting money and the 2% incentive facility.
- Meanwhile, Centre for Policy Dialogue's (CPD) Distinguished Fellow said that in March last year, the remittance inflow dropped by 12% compared to March 2019. The jump may seem like a big one when compared to March 2020, but it is not much compared to March 2019. Bangladesh received USD 1.46 billion in remittance in March 2019, and USD 1.27 billion in March 2020. Besides, in the July-March period of current fiscal year, the country received USD 18.6 billion in remittance, which is 35% higher than the same period in previous FY – standing at USD 13.77 billion.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/remittance-jumps-yet-again-grows-50-year-year-march-225460>

### **Japanese firms in BD up 4 times in 10 years**

- The number of Japanese companies operating in Bangladesh has increased around four times in 10 years as the government ensured better business climate for the foreign investors in the country, reports BSS. A total of 321 Japanese firms are currently running their businesses in the country which was 83 in 2010, as per the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). Due to the upward trend of Bangladesh's per-capita income and increasing the domestic demand, JETRO Country Representative said many Japanese entrepreneurs are expanding their businesses in different fields, including electric and consumer products, of the country.
- Japanese entrepreneurs were also showing their keenness to invest in the country's manufacturing, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), infrastructure development and tech and digital based startup companies, he added. He said Japanese firms were also investing in different projects under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) method.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/japanese-firms-in-bd-up-4-times-in-10-yrs-1617464023>  
<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/number-japanese-firms-bangladesh-4-times-10-years-226234>

### **Japan confirms largest-ever loan package for BD**

- Bangladesh became the largest recipient country of Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) or Yen Loan commitment in Japan's fiscal year 2020 (April 2020 – March 2021). The Japan government committed 373,247 million Japanese Yen (USD 3,393 million) loan to the Bangladesh government in their FY2020. The total loan includes project loans and financial assistance for Covid-19 recovery measures. The ERD also recently requested the Japan government to include six projects to their 42nd Yen Loan Package for the Japanese financial year 2021.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/japan-confirms-largest-ever-loan-package-for-bd-1617464098>  
<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/foreign-aid/bangladesh-largest-japanese-oda-loan-recipient-country-japans-fy2020-225850>

### **BSEC plans to delist 8 more OTC cos under exit scheme**

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission has moved to delist eight more companies trading on the over-the-counter market after repaying general investors' claims as per the commission's exit plan directive. It would also send 15 OTC companies to the small medium enterprise platform and 25 others to the alternative trading board of the stock exchanges. The eight companies which would be delisted under exit plan are Arbee Textiles, Chic Tex, Eagle Star Textile Mills, German Bangla JV Food, M Hossain Garments Washing & Dying, Maq Enterprises, The Engineers and Tulip Dairy & Food Products.
- The BSEC has planned to transfer Bangladesh Hotels, Bengal Biscuits, Gachi Hata Aquaculture Farms, Himadri Limited, Mona Food Products, Padma Printers & Color, Rangamati Food Products, Wonderland Toys, Yousuf Flour Mills, Hill Plantation, Dhaka Fisheries, Azadi Printers, Gulf Foods, Meghna Shrimp Culture, and Phoenix Leather Complex to the SME board. BSEC officials said that the 15 companies would be allowed to raise capital through repeat public offerings (RPO) to address their capital need.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/134362/bsec-plans-to-delist-8-more-otc-cos-under-exit-scheme>

**World Stock and Commodities\***

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$61.45	\$12.93	26.65%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$64.86	\$13.06	25.21%
Gold Spot*	\$1,728.87	(\$166.23)	-8.77%
DSEX	5,270.53	(131.54)	-2.43%
S&P 500	4,019.87	263.80	7.02%
FTSE 100	6,737.30	276.78	4.28%
BSE SENSEX	50,029.83	2,278.50	4.77%
KSE-100	44,300.95	545.57	1.25%
CSEALL	7,193.28	419.06	6.19%

**Exchange Rates**

**USD 1 = BDT 84.82\***

**GBP 1 = BDT 117.31\***

**EUR 1 = BDT 99.76\***

**INR 1 = BDT 1.16\***

*\*Currencies are taken from XE Currency Converter and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.*

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