

*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.*

### **Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) audit claim unfounded: Grameenphone**

- Grameenphone yesterday demanded that the telecom regulator withdraw its recent claim of BDT 125.8 billion from the operator, terming the unpaid amount unearthed by audit as “unfounded and without any legal basis”.
- Earlier on April 2, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) issued a demand letter against Grameenphone claiming BDT 84.94 billion and another BDT 40.85 billion for the National Board of Revenue, to be paid within 10 working days. The claim came after the information and systems audit, conducted by Toha Khan Zaman & Co., on the country's leading operator's books from its inception in 1997 until June 2015.
- The telecom regulator's position on the claim remains ambiguous: it is neither withdrawing the claim nor pressing for the payment. It has remained mum on the matter to date. Now, the BTRC has raised fresh claim for a period that overlaps with the earlier demand, Grameenphone said in a statement. Subsequently, the operator has requested that the demand be withdrawn and discussions be held with a view to finding an amicable resolution.
- About the NBR's portion of the demand, representing approximately 32% of the total claim, Grameenphone also pointed out that the BTRC has no authority to raise any demand on behalf of the NBR.
- Grameenphone also keeps the right to apply before the commission to revise the process and to find an amicable solution but from the BTRC's perspective it has completed all the formalities.
- A senior official of the telecom regulator said Grameenphone was not cooperative with the auditing firm and even barred the auditors from entering into its system. But the CEO of Grameenphone said the operator extended “full cooperation” to the auditors.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/telecom/news/btrc-audit-claim-unfounded-gp-1730818>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/70090/gp-refrains-from-paying-govts-audit-demand>

### **Savings certificates become a headache: Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management**

- Astronomical sales of national savings certificates has become a grave concern for policymakers and bankers, as their high interest means the government's interest burden is soaring and banks are being deprived of deposits, said the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management. The government's savings tools are now offering interest rates between 11.04% and 11.76% in contrast to 5% to 8% rate given by banks.
- This has prompted savers to flock to NSCs, so much that the government's target of borrowing BDT 261.97 billion from the tool this fiscal year was met in just the first seven months. Between July and February, the net sales of the savings tools stood at BDT 356.02 billion, up 7.49% year-on-year, according to data from the Department of National Savings.
- The above market interest rate on NSCs may make government borrowing from the channel unsustainable, said the BIBM report. It is also impacting the growth of bank deposits, which in turn may create liquidity problem for the banking sector.
- The report, which was unveiled yesterday at a seminar, went on to suggest a floating rate based on the average interest rate of government securities (treasury bills and bonds) along with some additional basis points for the savings instruments.
- A portion of wealthy people may be parking their money heavily in the instruments, forcing the government to borrow more from the tools than its budgetary target, according to deputy governor of the central bank.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/savings-certificates-become-headache-bibm-1730803>

### **Corporate tax: Bangladeshi entrepreneurs pay highest in South Asia**

- As per direction of the current budget, a company doing business in Bangladesh has to pay 35% corporate tax, which is 25% for a publicly traded company while the maximum rate extends up to 45% for some sectors. Bangladeshi entrepreneurs pay the highest corporate tax among the South Asian countries, which they point out as an impediment in the way of attracting new investments. Businesses in other South Asian countries are paying corporate tax ranging between 6% and 15% whereas Bangladesh's corporate tax rate is higher than the global average as well as the Asian average rate.

- According to Tax Foundation data, a Washington-based think tank on US tax policies, the worldwide average statutory corporate income tax rate, measured across 208 jurisdictions, is 23.03% and the Asian average corporate tax rate is 20.65%. Vietnamese entrepreneurs pay 20% corporate tax while it is 24% in Malaysia, 25% in China, 25% in Indonesia, 25% in Myanmar, 29% in Pakistan, 30% in India and 30% in Philippines, according to data of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI).

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/04/17/corporate-tax-bangladeshi-entrepreneurs-pay-highest-in-south-asia>

### **Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) proposes financing urea factory in northern region**

- The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) has proposed to finance the first ever urea fertilizer factory to be established in the northern part of Bangladesh. If it is implemented, farmers of the country's biggest crop and vegetable hub will get hassle-free and timely delivery of the important agriculture input, officials said. The production capacity of the proposed factory will be equivalent to the under-construction Ghorasal Polash Urea Fertilizer Plant.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/jbic-proposes-financing-urea-factory-in-northern-region-1555438651>

### **No TIN required to open BO accounts**

- National Board of Revenue (NBR) chairman said on Tuesday the taxpayers' identification number (TIN) will not be made mandatory for stock market investors to open beneficiary owner (BO) accounts.
- He said this at a pre-budget meeting held at the NBR headquarters against a backdrop of the confusion arisen after publication of a news story that stated, "NBR would make TIN obligatory to open BO accounts".

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/no-tin-to-open-bo-accounts-1555436934>  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/tax-and-customs/news/tin-not-mandatory-bo-accounts-nbr-1730812>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/70089/tin-not-must-for-all-stock-investors-nbr>  
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/04/17/nbr-chairman-tin-not-mandatory-for-opening-bo-account>

### **Prime Bank to see 'total change' in two years, says the bank's CEO**

- Prime Bank Limited will be a totally new and different bank within the next two years trailblazing innovative retail and wholesale products, new business model, and digital transformation, the bank's managing director (MD) said in an interview.
- He said the country's banks and financial institutions are undergoing through digital transformation, and Prime Bank is also not away from digital wave. He said Prime Bank is designing unique digital products for wholesale, large corporate and commercial clients.
- Speaking on the transformation, he said among other changes, the bank is planning massive transformation in its human resources.
- As part of the bank's digital transformation, the bank launched a new savings instrument - Prime DiGi - in February, which allows customers to open accounts online and without any initial deposit. Prime DiGi offers various services, including balance inquiry, account statement, fund transfer, credit card payment, utility bill payment, mobile recharge, insurance premium payment, and transaction history. Rehal Ahmed said the beginning of Prime DiGi was very successful. In the first month, thousands of people opened accounts without coming to the bank branches physically.
- The CEO said that the bank was devising new consumer and SME (small and medium enterprises) products to materialize the potentials. The bank is planning to start agent banking very soon to expand services in unbanked areas.
- The Prime Bank MD further said the bank has been going through consolidation phases during the last three year.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/prime-bank-to-see-total-change-in-two-years-1555437857>

### **Doreen Power acquires 99.90% shares of Chandpur Power**

- The board of Directors of Doreen Power Generations and Systems Limited in its board meeting held recently has decided to acquire 99.9% shares of Chandpur Power Generations Limited. The company had 60% ownership before this decision, said a statement.
- Due to lower demand of electricity in national grid, both production and supply of electricity have reduced. As a result, EPS has slightly decreased in the current period compared to last year, as per company source.

- Currently, the company is supplying 176 MW electricity in the national grid from its existing five power plants. Chandpur Power, a 115 MW under construction power plant will commence its commercial operation in next financial year. The management of the company expects that it will generate yearly sales revenue of about BDT 6,000 million to BDT 7,000 million by utilizing only 70% of its installed capacity and company will earn about BDT 800 million net profit from this revenue. And 99.99% of this net profit will be added with Doreen Power's current profit.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/doreen-power-acquires-9990pc-shares-of-chandpur-power-1555437938>

### S. S. Steel Limited included in DSEX

- S. S. Steel Limited has been included in DSEX, the core index of the prime bourse effective from April 23.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/s-s-steel-limited-included-in-dsex-1555437905>

### World Stock and Commodities\*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$63.71	-0.18	-0.28%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$71.53	-0.02	-0.03%
Gold Spot*	\$1,290.90	-4.30	-0.33%
DSEX	5,326.39	+64.78	+ 1.23%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	26,412.30	+269.25	+1.03%
FTSE 100	7,437.06	+19.11	+0.26%
Nikkei 225	22,190.71	+320.15	+1.46%

### Exchange Rates

**USD 1 = BDT 84.17\***  
**GBP 1 = BDT 110.23 \***  
**EUR 1 = BDT 95.22 \***  
**INR 1 = BDT 1.22\***

\*Currencies and Commodities are taken from xe.com.

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