

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.

Germany to give 120m Euro for power distribution modernization project

- Germany will provide 120 million Euro in loan to assist Bangladesh in modernizing the distribution grid infrastructure to contribute to a safer and stable electricity supply in the country, in continuation of development cooperation between the two countries. A loan agreement on the "Modernisation of Power Distribution-Smart Grids Phase I" was signed between the Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh, and KfW Development Bank, as a representative of the German Development Cooperation.
- The Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board and the West Zone Power Distribution Co Ltd will implement the project. The project is likely to increase energy efficiency and reduce losses to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/govt-signs-120-million-euro-loan-agreement-kfw-development-bank-320692>

Japan to provide USD 5m to promote primary education

- Bangladesh and Japan yesterday signed an exchange of notes and grant agreement on the "Japanese Grant Aid for the Fourth Primary Education Development Programme". Japan will provide USD 5 million as a grant to implement the project.
- Under the Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-4), the grant will be utilised for curriculum revision and textbook development, teacher education and continuous professional development and fiduciary system and budget.
- Japan is the single-largest bilateral development partner providing financial support for the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. Till June 2021, the support has reached USD 16.16 billion in Official Development Assistance disbursements.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/japan-provide-5m-promote-primary-education-2206556>

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/govt-signs-120-million-euro-loan-agreement-kfw-development-bank-320692>

Australia keen to assist Bangladesh with energy resources

- Australia released the first "Low Emissions Technology Statement" under the technology investment roadmap and they are keen to cooperate with Bangladesh. Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Jeremy Bruer said that his country will drive a clean-energy supply-chain initiative for the Indo-Pacific region and can assist countries like Bangladesh with energy resources, including renewable, to help fuel Bangladesh's growth.
- High Commissioner Bruer said Australia has the potential to be a major supplier of LNG (liquefied natural gas) to Bangladesh. According to him, the long-term emissions reduction strategy is backed by Australian government investment of USD 20 billion in low emissions technologies in the decade to 2030.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2021/10/25/australia-keen-to-assist-bangladesh-with-energy-resources>

Dollar keeps rallying despite Bangladesh Bank interventions

- Dollar rally continues in the face of repeated interventions by the Bangladesh Bank to keep foreign currency market stable with its latest sales of USD 740 million to banks just in 19 days of this month – more than double the amount it injected into the market in August.
- Taka has lost its value by BDT 0.85 per dollar between July and October, which crossed BDT 90 for the first time ever in the kerb market on Monday. According to Bangladesh Bank, the interbank dollar exchange rate on Monday was BDT 85.65. On the other hand, different money exchange houses traded the greenback at BDT 89.9-90.1 in the open market, according to local exchange houses.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/dollar-price-kerb-market-crosses-tk90-320713>

Contracted foreign suppliers slash LNG sale to Bangladesh

- Contracted foreign suppliers slash liquefied natural gas (LNG) sale to Bangladesh as spot-market prices are overshooting contract rates, it is alleged, amid a sort of gambling with energy on the global market to cash in on post-corona business rebound.
- Qatar's Qatargas and Oman's Oman Trading International (OTI) are the long-term suppliers of LNG to Bangladesh. The long-term LNG suppliers are providing a minimum quantity of the gas to state-run Petrobangla as the contract price of the fuel is cheaper than spot-market rates.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/contracted-foreign-suppliers-slash-lng-sale-to-bangladesh-1635187283>

IFC in to help build digital banking, financial inclusion

- The International Finance Corporation is in for creating a secure digital banking structure and accelerating financial inclusion of all segments of Bangladesh's population under a deal signed with Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) for implementing and scaling up electronic Know Your Customer (eKYC) project. The eKYC is a foundational regulatory arrangement for conducting customer due diligence during new client on boarding process for collecting and verifying customer data electronically.
- Under the existing KYC protocol for opening new accounts, customers need to present their national identity (NID) cards in person and financial institutions (FI) must authenticate and keep a record manually photocopying and printing the NID. Once in place, the eKYC infrastructure will not only cut time and cost of client on boarding but also help reach more customers digitally, thus, reducing the number of unbanked people, particularly the underserved such as small business owners and women entrepreneurs.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/ifc-in-to-help-build-digital-banking-financial-inclusion-1635186342>

a2i, UNCDF, MSC launch FinLab BD for sustainable pro-poor growth

- Access to Information (a2i) Programme, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and MicroSave Consulting (MSC) have launched the Financial Innovation Lab Bangladesh (FinLab BD) to serve the low and moderate-income populations of Bangladesh by advancing sustainable pro-poor growth.

- State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak inaugurated the FinLab BD at a programme on Sunday. He stated that FinLab Bangladesh will enhance financial inclusion of low and moderate-income people through technology and a digital-first approach.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/a2i-uncdf-msc-launch-finlab-bd-for-sustainable-pro-poor-growth-1635166765>

New private ICD gets NBR approval

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) approved a new private inland container depot (ICD) in a bid to enhance container-handling capacity in the Chattogram Port. The ICD would be set up at an estimated cost of BDT 3.0 billion. It is 41 km away from the zero point of the port.
- The NBR's Customs Wing approved Baylink Containers Limited's bid on Sunday to establish the off-doc. The new off-doc would help to enhance capacity of container handling in the port and ease congestion. Currently, there are some 19 ICDs in the Chattogram Port, handling all export goods and 38 import goods.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/new-private-icd-gets-nbr-approval-1635187016>

Bangladesh Trade and Investment Summit begins on Tuesday

- Weeklong 'Bangladesh Trade and Investment Summit-2021' will begin on Tuesday. Policymakers, business leaders and investors from across the world will join the virtual event. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the summit virtually as the chief guest from Ganabhaban in Dhaka. Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi and Prime Minister's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman Fazlur Rahman join the inaugural ceremony as special guests.
- DCCI President Rizwan Rahman said that 552 companies from 38 countries will participate in 450 business to business (B2B) match-making sessions, which will help to explore new business opportunities and attract FDI in Bangladesh. Moreover, he informed that six webinars are scheduled to be held on different trade and investment-related issues in participation with the representatives from the business community, experts from local and international and policymakers will participate to share their insights on these issues.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bangladesh-trade-and-investment-summit-begins-on-tuesday-1635176881>

Local industry concerned over cotton shortage

- At a press conference held by Bangladesh Cotton Association (BCA), leaders of the country's cotton traders expressed concern over the uncertainty of availability of cotton and its rising high price fueled by the gap between supply and demand. They called on readymade garment exporters to be cautious about the rising price of the industrial raw material and to negotiate accordingly in time of receiving their work orders.
- They also requested the government to take necessary measures, including setting up of foreign missions in the cotton producing countries especially some of the West African countries and encouraging both foreign and local investment in garment production based on manmade fibre.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/local-industry-concerned-over-cotton-shortage-1635186150>

BGMEA seeks cash incentive on 20% value addition condition

- Apparel exporters have now demanded that the government relax the condition of at least 30% value addition for woven items to stay eligible for a 4% cash incentive as well as all subsidies. In a letter to Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi this month, Faruque Hasan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), proposed cutting the value addition rate to 20%.
- The BGMEA has also requested the commerce ministry not to cancel the back-to-back LC facility for non-bond exporters. The unavailability of such a benefit will lead to closures of 387 factories and subsequent job losses for 2.58 lakh workers. The association also demanded that the commerce minister take necessary steps to duty-free imports of all types of fibres by local spinning mills subject to certification through the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/bgmea-seeks-cash-incentive-20-value-addition-condition-320821>

BB sets deadline to apply for refinancing tourism sector's stimulus loans

- Scheduled banks in the country will be able to apply for refinancing loans they have disbursed under the Covid-19 stimulus package, announced to pay salaries and allowances to employees of hotels, motels and theme parks in the tourism sector, from 1 November this year to 31 October next year.
- The central bank announced an incentive package of BDT 1,000 crore to pay salaries and allowances to employees of hotels, motels, theme parks in the tourism sector until 15 July this year. Entrepreneurs in the tourism sector will be able to avail loans under this package for a period of one year at 4% interest.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/bb-sets-deadline-apply-refinancing-tourism-sectors-stimulus-loans-320737>

E-com clients may get back BDT 2.14b

- The government is going to take steps to pay back BDT 2.14 billion stuck at different payment gateways by e-commerce customers within the next three months. Government agencies are working to pay back the money that was paid in advance by customers from July 01 until October 14 as per commerce minister Tipu Munshi.
- The commerce minister further stated that a process is underway to develop automation software by the ICT division to pay back the money to the affected consumers. However, no decision was taken regarding the settlement of the money that was due before July.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/e-com-clients-may-get-back-tk-214b-1635186599>

DU partners AFC Agro to produce Covid vaccine

- Dhaka University (DU) and AFC Agro Biotech Ltd have agreed to jointly work for innovation of various vaccines, including development and production of Covid-19 vaccine (DUBD-vac). As per the agreement, both the institutions will jointly conduct advanced level research on biological sciences including genetic engineering and biotechnology as well as producing various medicines. JND biotech and Emergent biotech, two biotech companies in the US, will provide support and cooperation in this regard.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/du-partners-afc-agro-to-produce-covid-vaccine-1635186650>

KDS Accessories revenue rose 15%

- KDS Accessories Limited, a concern of Chattogram based KDS Group, reported a 15% growth in revenue to BDT 221.79 crore in the fiscal year 2020-21 as the country's overall export increased. In the last fiscal year, about USD 38.75 billion were earned from exports, recording a 15% growth, compared to USD 33.67 billion in FY2019-20.
- It also declared a dividend at 15% cash to the shareholders for the last fiscal and posted 8% growth in net profit to BDT 15.69 crore. Its earnings per share stood at BDT 2.20. The company is scheduled to hold its annual general meeting on 9 December 2021.
- The company also announced that its new business expansion project has been completed and commercial production has started on 24 October this year. The new project will contribute to an added production of 30 lakh pieces of carton box and the revenue is expected to increase by BDT 25 crore.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/kds-accessories-revenue-rose-15-320779>

IPO road show of Asiatic Laboratories held

- Asiatic Laboratories Limited started its journey to Initial Public Offering (IPO) under book building method. The company arranged a road show programme on Sunday in the capital. Representatives of Issue Manager and Registrar of Issue, Underwriters, Merchant Banks, Fund Manager, Bond Manager, Insurance Company, DSE-CSE Trec Holders, Mutual Funds, NBFIs and other representatives were also present on the occasion.
- To gain market share and to become a reputed pharmaceutical company in Bangladesh Asiatic Laboratories Limited is participating in the IPO for BDT 950 million subject to the approval of BSEC through Book Building Method. After spending on the IPO, the company will use the rest of the money to build new factory buildings, capital machinery and partially repayment of loans.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/ipo-road-show-of-asiatic-laboratories-held-1635182561>

DSE sees biggest fall in 7 months

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) on Monday saw the biggest single-day fall in share prices in almost seven months as nervous investors continued on a selloff fearing further correction of recent bubbles. Stocks registered the sharp fall although the securities regulator came forward last week with a set of measures, including reinvestment of the market stabilization funds, to salvage the market from the ongoing freefall.
- The market opened sharply lower, and the DSEX - the DSE core index - plunged 120.41 points or 1.71% to settle at 6,885.29. It was the biggest single-day slide in around seven months - since April 4 this year, when the DSEX lost 181.54 points as investors dumped holdings amid growing tensions over impact of the virus-induced lockdown across the country.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/dse-sees-biggest-fall-in-7-months-1635187085>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 83.62	USD 35.10	72.34%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 85.90	USD 34.10	65.83%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,807.77	(USD 87.33)	-4.61%
DSEX	6,885.29	1,483.22	27.46%
S&P 500	4,566.48	810.41	21.58%
FTSE 100	7,222.82	762.30	11.80%
BSE SENSEX	60,967.05	13,215.72	27.68%
KSE-100	45,429.22	1,673.84	3.83%
CSEALL	10,046.80	3,272.58	48.31%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 85.53 BDT****1 GBP = 117.75 BDT****1 Euro = 99.29 BDT****1 INR = 1.13 BDT**

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