

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.

BSEC raises circuit breaker's lower limit

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has raised the market circuit breaker's lower limit to 5% from existing 2% with effect from today. Last month the regulator lowered the circuit breaker's lower limit to 2% from 10% in an attempt to stop any free fall of the stock market index amid the global chaos following the start of the Russia-Ukraine war.
- However, the lowering of the circuit breaker turned the market illiquid and turnover of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) dropped to its lowest in a year in the current week. Responding to this, the BSEC increased the lower limit. As a result, the stocks will be allowed to fall by at most 5% in a day instead of 2%.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/organisation-news/news/bsec-raises-circuit-breakers-lower-limit-3009156>

Digital payments to boost Bangladesh GDP by 1.7%: Report

- Digital payments can boost Bangladesh's annual GDP by 1.7%, an addition of USD 6.2 billion (BDT501 billion) annually to the economy, according to a new report by the United Nations-based Better Than Cash Alliance and its member, the Bangladesh government's flagship programme a2i.
- According to the report, 53% of the USD 6.2 billion will come from digitising just 30% of micro-merchant transactions in the retail sector; 45% from digitising credit disbursements in the agricultural sector; and the remaining from scaling digital wages in the informal ready-made garments (RMG) sector.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/digital-payments-boost-bangladesh-gdp-17-report-406790>

Transactions thru MFS grow by 23.8% in Feb

- The amount of money transacted through mobile financial services increased by 23.8% or BDT 131 billion year-on-year in February as the country's MFS operators are bringing many more services under their umbrella.
- Customers have also found making different kinds of payments through the MFS convenient amid a growing digital financial ecosystem. The latest Bangladesh Bank data showed that the amount of transactions through the MFS rose to BDT 682 billion in February 2022 from BDT 551 billion in the same month of 2021.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/168590/transactions-thru-mfs-grow-by-238pc-in-feb>

Plastics industry to overcome skilled manpower crises by next year

- The plastics sector is a huge one with 1.2 to 1.5 million people involved in the industry and exporting over USD 1 billion worth of goods, said the FBCCI President, adding that the government will allocate 90 acres of land for the plastics industry in the chemical village which is at its last stage.
- BPGMEA president Shamim Ahmed said the size of the local plastics market is BDT 400 billion of which plastic toy manufacturing is a sub-sector. He said toy exports amounted to USD 37 million in FY2018-19 which increased to USD 33 million in FY2019-20. This rose to USD 36 million in FY2020-21.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/plastics-industry-overcome-skilled-manpower-crises-next-year-406854>

Govt to discourage luxury imports

- Bangladesh Bank will impose special conditions on the import of luxury items, such as high-end cosmetics, apparels and electronics, to discourage these purchases during times of global economic uncertainty.
- Bangladesh's current account deficit reached USD 12.83 billion in the first eight months of the current fiscal year while it was a surplus of USD 825 million during the same period the year before. The deficit is a result of rising imports with receipts for between July and February in the ongoing fiscal year valued at USD 58.77 billion while it was USD 40 billion during the same period in FY 2020-21.
- Proposals were also made for increasing the Letter of Credit (LC) margin up to 100% to discourage people from importing luxury and/or unnecessary products. As such, Bangladesh Bank has already instructed banks to impose at least a 25% margin on the opening of LCs for non-essential items.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/govt-discourage-luxury-imports-3009081>

BB orders banks to track shipments

- Bangladesh Bank yesterday asked banks to track shipments of goods which are exported with a view to tackling trade-based money laundering. Banks have to hire third parties with experience in operating the tracking system on vessels laden with exports, according to a Bangladesh Bank notice.
- Bangladesh lost approximately USD 8.27 billion on an average annually between 2009 and 2018 due to trade-based money laundering, according to a Global Financial Integrity (GFI) report released in December last year. The average loss of customs and taxes during the decade was 17.3% of Bangladesh's international trade, said the GFI in its report "Trade-Related Illicit Financial Flows in 134 Developing Countries 2009-2018".

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/bb-orders-banks-track-shipments-3009136>

Forex reserve dwindling amid high import bills

- Bangladesh's capacity to pay import bills has deteriorated at an alarming rate amid the fall of the country's foreign exchange reserve in recent months against an unusual surge in imports. The country's foreign exchange reserve exceeded USD 48 billion in August 2021, but the treasure dipped by nearly USD 4 billion to USD 44.05 billion on April 13, 2021.
- With the reserve in August 2021, Bangladesh was capable of paying import bills for 8.39 months, but the drop in reserve worsened the country's capacity in recent months. Bangladesh Bank data showed that the country in February this year was capable of paying import bills for 6.44 months when its foreign exchange reserve was USD 45.95 billion.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/168612/forex-reserve-dwindling-amid-high-import-bills>

Four state-owned banks urged to inject fresh funds into capital mkt

- The securities regulator has requested four state-owned commercial banks to inject fresh funds into the capital market through formation of special fund. The state-owned commercial banks which have been requested to inject fresh funds through special fund are Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali. The securities regulator has also requested the banks to provide information regarding investments made through their portfolios as of April 18, 2022.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/four-state-owned-banks-urged-to-inject-fresh-funds-into-capital-mkt-1650473209>

Sonali Paper's rights offer gets BSEC nod

- The stock market regulator has approved Sonali Paper & Board Mill's application to raise nearly BDT 109.82 million through rights issue. As per the regulatory approval, the company will issue over 10.98 million rights shares of BDT 10 each for raising the said amount.
- As per the rights offer documents, Sonali Paper's earnings per share stood at BDT 4.07 (Diluted EPS) and net asset value per share of BDT 235.27 (with assets revaluation) and BDT 10.93 (without assets revaluation), considering cash and bonus shares for the year ended on June 30, 2021. Currently, the company's paid-up capital is BDT 219.63 million while authorised capital is BDT 500 million and total number of securities is BDT 21.96 million.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/sonali-papers-rights-offer-gets-bsec-nod-1650473487>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 102.75	USD 27.54	36.62%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 107.79	USD 30.01	38.58%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,951.73	USD 122.53	6.70%
DSEX	6,554.87	-201.78	-2.99%
S&P 500	4,459.45	-306.73	-6.44%
FTSE 100	7,629.22	244.68	3.31%
BSE SENSEX	57,037.50	-1,216.32	-2.09%
KSE-100	45,943.16	1,347.09	3.02%
CSEALL	8,135.25	-4,090.76	-33.46%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 86.07 BDT****1 GBP = 112.31 BDT****1 Euro = 93.21 BDT****1 INR = 1.12 BDT**

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