

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.

Bangladeshi company to set up backward linkage industry in IEPZ

- Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) and Adnan Fibre Limited on Sunday signed an agreement to this effect at BEPZA Complex in Dhaka. Adnan Fibre will invest USD 20.66 million to produce 25,000 tonnes of Polyester Staple Fibre (PSF) per annum. The company will produce PSF from the PET Flex (PET Bottle) which will be collected locally.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladeshi-company-to-set-up-backward-linkage-industry-in-iepz-1644144827>

Patenga Container likely to open in June: CPA Chairman

- Patenga's new container terminal in Chattogram is expected to open in June, said Chattogram port authority chairman rear admiral M Shahjahan. After the opening of the terminal, it'll be possible to handle 145 million TEUS containers in a year. At present, Chattogram Port has the capacity to contain 50,000 TEUs containers. Now there are 39,000 TEUS containers at the port.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/162006/patenga-container-likely-to-open-in-june-cpa-chairman>

Bangladesh won't fall into Chinese debt trap, says Foreign Minister Momen

- Bangladesh will not fall into the so-called Chinese debt trap as the volume of its loan from China is not that big, said Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen on Saturday. The minister said that a country needs to take 40% of its debt from a particular source to be in the debt trap, which in this case is only around 5%.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh-wont-fall-into-chinese-debt-trap-says-foreign-minister-momen-1644117500>

Cut corporate tax by 2.5pc next fiscal year

- The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) urged the government to cut the corporate tax rate by 2.5 percentage points in the next fiscal year to align it with the regional average rate. The corporate tax rate in Bangladesh is 30 per cent while the average rate is 29% in Pakistan, 24% in Sri Lanka, and 20% in Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand, according to a DCCI paper.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/cut-corporate-tax-25pc-next-fiscal-year-2956146>

Digital business identification launched for e-commerce firms

- The commerce ministry today launched the digital business identification (DBID) for the e-commerce companies with a view to check irregularities in the sector. Every e-commerce company will now have to obtain the DBID for doing business. At the launching, some 11 companies were given the DBID certificates. More than 1,600 e-commerce companies and nearly five lakh financial commerce companies are involved in Bangladesh's e-commerce business.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/digital-business-identification-launched-e-commerce-firms-2955641>

Apparel exports likely to fetch USD50 billion in 2022: BGMEA president

- The country's apparel exports are likely to fetch USD 50 billion in 2022, says Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association President. He added that during last November and December, RMG manufacturers exported nearly USD 4.0 billion worth of garments a month. The BGMEA president said the direct connectivity with Europe would reduce business costs by 40% and cut shipment time to 16 days. He hoped more European shipping lines would launch such services on their routes.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/apparel-exports-likely-fetch-50-billion-2022-bgmea-president-367303>

Entrepreneurs demand equal tariff facilities like RMG on fire safety equipment import

- The government has only allowed the readymade garment (RMG) sector to import fire safety equipment at reduced rates even though workers in all sectors have equal rights to safety and security and therefore there should be no such discrimination in the tariff rate on the import of fire safety equipment, said entrepreneurs at a meeting.
- Niaz Ali Chisty said due to high tax incidence, it is often not possible for small and medium entrepreneurs to take adequate fire protection measures. Besides, separate permits required for the import of carbon dioxide, foam, dry powder and other fire-resistant gases and chemicals result in harassment and delay for importers. As there is no laboratory of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution in Chattogram, chemicals have to be sent to Dhaka for testing, which takes an additional eight to 10 days, incurring extra cost, he added.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/entrepreneurs-demand-equal-tariff-facilities-rmg-fire-safety-equipment-import-367318>

Large conglomerates expanding ceramic footprints

- Ceramic market in the past six years got at least BDT 4,000 crore investments by five large companies such as Sheltech, DBL and Greatwall Ceramic – raising the total market investment to BDT 10,000 crore. According to the Bangladesh Ceramic Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association, ceramics logged BDT 6,000 crore sales in FY21. Of it, tableware and bathroom fittings jointly amounted to BDT 1,000 crore. Local manufacturers in that year sold BDT 4,300 crore tiles, while the item worth BDT 700 crore was imported.
- Meghna recently entered the tiles market with BDT 500 crore investment, while Akij expanded production to tableware last month after logging bright records in tile-making. Meanwhile, agri-consumer giant Pran-RFL is revving up to enter the ceramic market that has clocked around 100% growth in the last six years. The company will manufacture tiles initially, according to market sources.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/industry/large-conglomerates-expanding-ceramic-footprints-367366>

Agro Organica files for a BDT 10cr QIO

- Agro Organica Limited has applied to the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) for a Qualified Investors Offer (QIO) to raise BDT 10 crore under the fixed price method from the SME board of the stock exchanges. Agro Organica Limited started commercial operation in October 2015. The factory is situated at BSCIC Industrial Area, Nowhata, Sherpur.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/agro-organica-files-tk10cr-qio-367282>

Stock regulator orders action against NRB Bank CFO, others

- The securities regulator has asked the NRB Bank to take departmental action against its chief financial officer (CFO) Kamrul Hasan and others concerned as they executed unauthorised share transactions. The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) instructed the bank last week through a letter to its managing director. The bank will have to inform the BSEC within February 28 after ensuring compliance of the instruction.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/stock-regulator-orders-action-against-nrb-bank-cfo-others-1644117073>

New shareholders enter Fareast Life board

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has again reconstructed the board of scam-hit Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company Ltd. The BSEC earlier revoked the previous board of 10 independent directors formed last September.
- The regulator on Thursday has approved two new shareholder firms Tradenext International Ltd and Jupiter Business

Ltd and an individual sponsor Al-Haj Md Helal Uddin Miah to join the board. Tradenext International and Jupiter Business Ltd are two associate companies of BEXIMCO.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/new-shareholders-enter-fareast-life-board-367372>

Food makers hit by falling profits as raw material prices rise

- Profits of listed biscuit makers plunged year-on-year in the last October-December period owing to a rise in raw material prices. In contrast, milk, juice and fish processors logged higher profits. Profit of ice cream makers and tea companies more than doubled. The overall profit of listed food processors dropped 8.6% to BDT 42 crore in 2QFY22.
- Olympic Industries and Bangas, which own some of the best-selling biscuit brands, showed profit drops of 39 per cent and 78 per cent respectively in the three months. Executive director of Olympic Industries told that palm oil and sugar prices soared 80% and 30% respectively over the past year. He added that the company is already trying to adjust the prices but are cautious as this is a very competitive market.
- Although the ice cream industry was also hit by the raw material price hike, an increase in sales along with discounts saved the day, according to the managing director of Lovello Ice-Cream. Golden Harvest, another ice cream producer, returned to a profit of BDT 6.4 Mn. A year earlier, the company had incurred losses of BDT 60.0 Mn.
- Among those who were able to rake in higher profits are: National Tea Company, Rangpur Dairy and Food Products, the Agricultural Marketing Company (Pran), Gemini Sea Food, Apex Foods, Beach Hatchery and Fine Foods.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/food-makers-hit-falling-profits-raw-material-prices-rise-2956081>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 92.31	USD 17.10	22.74%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 93.27	USD 15.49	19.92%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,808.28	(USD 20.92)	-1.14%
DSEX	7,064.29	307.63	4.55%
S&P 500	4,500.54	-265.64	-5.57%
FTSE 100	7,516.40	131.86	1.79%
BSE SENSEX	58,644.82	391.00	0.67%
KSE-100	45,909.65	1,313.58	2.95%
CSEALL	12,762.60	536.59	4.39%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 85.98 BDT****1 GBP = 116.24 BDT****1 Euro = 98.36 BDT****1 INR = 1.15 BDT**

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