

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.

Macro:**AIIB to lend Bangladesh USD 4.5 Bn in 5 yrs**

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will provide USD 4.5 Bn to Bangladesh during the next five years, the ministry of finance said Tuesday. The loan is expected to help finance efforts to face climate change-induced problems, and play a pivotal role in creating a bridge between public-and private-sector investments, said a press release, issued after the eighth annual meeting of the bank in Egypt Monday-Tuesday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/aiib-to-lend-bangladesh-45b-in-5-yrs>

Japanese, Chinese firms to build 370MW solar power plants

- Two Japanese companies and one Chinese firm have received approval from Bangladesh to invest in three solar-based power plants. The plants will have a combined capacity to produce 370 megawatts of electricity. The government will purchase power for 20 years. Currently, Bangladesh's power generation capacity stands at 23,871MW. Of the amount, 1,194 MW comes from renewable energy sources.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/japanese-chinese-firms-build-370mw-solar-power-plants-3429696>

Japan to provide USD 1,500 Mn more for Matarbari power plant

- Japan will provide JPY 217.56 Bn (approximately USD 1.5 Bn) more in 7th tranche under the 44th Japanese Loan Package (2nd batch) for the Matarbari Ultra Super Critical Coal-Fired Power Project. Under the project, 'Exchange of Notes' and 'Loan Agreement' for 7th tranche of Matarbari Ultra Super Critical Coal-fired Power Project under the 44th Japanese ODA Loan Package (2nd batch) were signed today between the Government of Bangladesh and the Government of Japan.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/japan-to-provide-1500m-more-for-matarbari-power-plant>

Exporting mango trees to Dubai: Bangladeshi farmers tap into afforestation programmes in Gulf countries

- According to data from the Bangladeshi government, Qatar has been the largest export destination for Bangladeshi fruit saplings, but the UAE is rapidly gaining ground. "The UAE is a big potential... Especially saplings of mangoes are very popular," said Kamrul Hasan, commercial counsellor at the Bangladesh Consulate General in Dubai.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/exporting-mango-trees-dubai-bangladeshi-farmers-tap-afforestation-programmes-gulf-countries>

Bangladesh again tops in ship recycling despite 65% decline

- Bangladesh maintains the position as the top ship recycling nation despite a 65% decrease in its shipbreaking activities, reports the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Accounting for over one-third of global ship recycling, the country saw a reduction from 8.02 Mn tonnes in the previous year to 2.8 Mn tonnes in the 12 months leading up to January 2023.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bangladesh-again-tops-ship-recycling-despite-65-decline-708262>

Govt allows trade unions in economic zones

- In response to international pressure, the government has finally decided to allow trade unions in the factories within the country's economic zones to ensure labour rights. Stakeholders say the government's decision has been influenced by pressure from the United States, the European Union, and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), despite objections from both domestic and foreign entrepreneurs who have invested in the economic zones.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/govt-allows-trade-unions-economic-zones-708534>

Amusement parks turn over BDT 50 Bn annually

- Investment in Bangladesh's amusement and theme park segment is on the rise as investors are pumping money into the fast-expanding industry to serve visitors, according to industry people. About BDT 120 Bn has been invested in the sector in the last two decades and about 0.6 Mn people have been employed directly, according to the Bangladesh Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (BAAPA).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/amusement-parks-turn-over-tk-5000cr-annually-3429701>

Largest private data centre for financial sector opens today

- Felicity IDC Limited (FIDC) -- a tier 3, PCI-DSS-certified internet data centre (IDC) -- is going to open for cloud service today (Saturday). It is specially designed for the country's financial sector. The data centre, located in Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City in Gazipur's Kaliakoir, has over 100,000 square feet of space, 5MW power and 500 racks, which is ten times greater in capacity and size than the second-largest data centre in the private sector, claims the CEO of Felicity.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/largest-private-data-centre-for-financial-sector-opens-today>

BB moves to stem slide in reserve

- The Bangladesh Bank will not be making any drastic policy changes ahead of the national election scheduled for January, putting all its focus on tackling the depleting foreign exchange reserves and refraining from printing money to give loans to the government. But after the polls, the banking regulator will be embarking on its long-term plan to reform reserve management and the banking sector under the new government.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/bb-moves-stem-slide-reserve-3429601>

Govt goes slow on AIIB project loans, opts for budget support

- The China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved loans worth USD 4.62 Bn for Bangladesh, but the government seems cautious about project loans from the organisation considering repayment pressure amid dollar crisis. The government instead is willing to secure budget support to replenish the fast-depleting reserves.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/govt-goes-slow-aiib-project-loans-opts-budget-support-709398>

Bank's CSR spending in health rises by BDT 1.52 Bn in Jan-June

- The corporate social responsibility (CSR) expenditure of banks and NBFIs in the health sector has increased more than threefold in the first half of 2023, compared to the spending in the second half of last year. According to a Bangladesh Bank report on CSR spending released yesterday, the banking sector spent BDT 2.16 Bn on the health sector from January to June, up by 238% or BDT 1.52 Bn, from BDT 640 Mn during the last six months of 2022.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banks-csr-spending-health-rises-tk152cr-jan-june-708606>

BB asks 15 banks to improve financial health

- Bangladesh Bank yesterday passed directives on 15 banks through its observers and coordinators to improve their financial health. At the end of 2017, the bank's bad loans stood at BDT 58.18 Bn. Then it rose to BDT 149.5 Bn, which is about 11.4% of the banking sector's total default loans, at the end of March of this year.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bb-asks-15-banks-improve-financial-health-3429881>

Lack of skilled recipients limits tech transfers

- A major lift in digital technologies has happened in Bangladesh for absorption of technical know-how from Chinese technical assistance and investments, although the technology transfer remains limited for skills deficiency. Investment promoters and industry people are of such view in evaluation of the spinoffs that could be derived from the execution of megaprojects in the country with China's capital investment and application of high technologies in implementation works.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/lack-of-skilled-recipients-limits-tech-transfers>

New law permits taxmen to disclose undeclared assets

- Taxmen now have the authority to disclose information about undeclared assets and income of tax-evaders in the current financial year, as the restrictions on taxpayer-information privacy have been eased under the new tax law. This new provision, integrated into the Income Tax Law-2023, grants tax officials the unprecedented authority to release data regarding undeclared income and assets of taxpayers once these have been identified through investigation or inspection.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/new-law-permits-taxmen-to-disclose-undeclared-assets>

Forex reserves fall to USD 21.15 Bn

- Macroeconomists and policy analysts have listed paying deferred dues, the tendency of FDI profits being taken abroad by investors, declining inward remittance flow, capital flight, and money laundering as reasons behind Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves slipping to USD 21.15 Bn. According to the central bank, a week ago on September 21, the reserve was USD 21.45 Bn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/forex-reserves-fall-2115-billion-708690>

Harsher bilateral loans set to make external debt repayment tougher

- Bangladesh is facing the prospect of an increased pressure on its balance of payment from a surge in debt repayment burden in coming years as foreign borrowing is seeing a rapid shift from flexible multilateral loans to stricter bilateral ones. According to data from the Economic Relations Division (ERD), by the end of the fiscal year 2022-23, multilateral lenders' share in Bangladesh's foreign loans was 59%, which was 69% in the fiscal year 2018-19.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/harsher-bilateral-loans-set-make-external-debt-repayment-tougher-709266>

Nearly 11,000 Bangladeshi firms members of Dubai chamber

- The number of new Bangladeshi companies joining the Dubai Chamber of Commerce has surged 47% year-on-year to 1,044 in the first half of this year, said the chamber. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) chamber unveiled the list of nationalities behind new member companies amidst widespread allegations in Bangladesh of illegal fund transfers abroad. The transfers are allegedly being made mainly through trade misinvoicing and hundi, an informal mechanism of money transfer to redirect remittances sent by Bangladeshis abroad.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/nearly-11000-bangladeshi-firms-members-dubai-chamber-3429691>

BDT as headline currency in airfares: BD defers decision until mid-January

- The government has once again deferred a decision to use taka as headline currency in fixing airfares in Bangladesh until next January 16. According to officials, this is for the second time the deadline has been extended due to "procedural delays". In an April 16 circular, civil aviation and tourism ministry asked all local and foreign airlines operating in Bangladesh to charge airfares in taka, effective from July 01.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bdt-as-headline-currency-in-airfares-bd-defers-decision-until-mid-january>

Six months on, still no progress in setting new wages for RMG workers

- Garment factory owners have yet to prepare their proposal to set new wages for workers with only a few days remaining to fix wages within stipulated time after the formation of the wage board on 9 April. According to labour law, new wages have to be fixed within six months after the formation of a wage board. But the owners say they could not make their proposal as they need more time to review their business situation amid the ongoing global economic slowdown.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/six-months-still-no-progress-setting-new-wages-rmg-workers-709734>

BB imposes 10% source tax on inward remittance

- The Bangladesh Bank (BB) on Wednesday said banks will deduct tax at source from inward remittance against service and revenue sharing. The banks will deduct the tax at the rate of 10%. The Foreign Exchange Policy Department of the BB issued the circular. It's worth noting that workers' remittances will be exempt from this source tax.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/bb-imposes-10pc-source-tax-on-inward-remittance>

Paperfly aborts flight

- In a heartbreaking turn of events, Paperfly, a third-party logistics e-commerce firm, ceased its operations just last week, painting a sombre picture of what could have been the torchbearer of last-mile delivery excellence across the nation. This abrupt halt has left a staggering 1,000 individuals at a risk of being jobless.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/paperfly-aborts-flight-709738>

Stocks:**APEXFOOT | Apex Footwear makes record sales in FY23 on stronger footing at home and abroad**

- Apex Footwear witnessed record sales and sales growth in FY23. The country's leading shoemaker's export soared more than 35% year-on-year to USD 7.14 Bn while domestic sales jumped 22.25% to USD 9.40 Bn in FY23, compared to the previous fiscal year. The reason why the company recorded higher sales in the domestic market was that the year saw three Eid festivals, which was an exception, said Dilip Kajuri, deputy managing director and chief financial officer of Apex Footwear.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/apex-footwear-makes-record-sales-in-fy23-on-stronger-footing-at-home-and-abroad>

EGEN | eGeneration profit hits four-year high on growing demand for IT services

- eGeneration Ltd posted a profit of BDT 108.75 Mn in fiscal year 2022-23, the highest in four years, driven by the increasing demand for software and IT-enabled services, as more and more local business entities are embracing automation. The IT company reported EPS of BDT 1.45 for the FY'23 as against BDT 1.43 a year ago, according to a filing with the stock exchange.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/egeneration-profit-hits-four-year-high-on-growing-demand-for-it-services>

LINDEBD | Linde to invest USD 17 Mn to build oxygen plant at BSMSN

- Linde Bangladesh Ltd – a leading medical and industrial gas producer in the country – will set up an oxygen plant on five acres of land at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN). The company will invest about USD 17 Mn to set up the plant that will employ 70 people and produce medical oxygen as well as other industrial gases.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/linde-invest-17m-build-oxygen-plant-bsmsn-708430>

OIMEX | Oimex Electrode allowed to issue 6 Mn new shares for current directors

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has permitted Oimex Electrode Limited to issue 6 Mn fresh shares for its existing directors in order to increase the company's paid-up capital. Currently, the company's paid-up capital is BDT 670.9 Mn. The shares will be issued at BDT 10 each against a share money deposit.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/oimex-electrode-allowed-issue-60-lakh-new-shares-current-directors-709706>

LHBL | LafargeHolcim launches rain water harvesting project

- LafargeHolcim Bangladesh Ltd (LHBL), a building material solution provider of the country, recently launched a project styled "Rain Water Harvesting for Safe Drinking Water for the Community" near its plant in Chhatak, Sunamganj.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/organisation-news/news/lafargeholcim-launches-rain-water-harvesting-project-3431226>

BBS, BBSCABLES, NAHEEACP | Three cos of BBS Group see income wiped out

- FY23 seems to have gone very badly for the BBS Group as its two companies experienced a sharp decline in profit while another company suffered a huge loss. Of the companies, the profit of BBS Cables and Nahee Aluminum Composite Panel nosedived 88% and 72% respectively year-on-year while BBS incurred a loss of BDT 54.69 Mn in FY23, according to stock exchange filings on Wednesday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/three-cos-of-bbs-group-see-income-wiped-out>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 90.79	USD 15.58	20.72%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 92.20	USD 14.42	18.54%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,848.63	USD 74.48	4.20%
DSEX	6,284.63	77.63	1.25%
S&P 500	4,288.05	448.55	11.68%
FTSE 100	7,608.08	156.34	2.10%
BSE SENSEX	65,828.47	4,987.73	8.20%
KSE-100	46,252.02	5,831.57	14.43%
CSEALL	11,335.61	2,833.12	33.32%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 110.10 BDT****1 GBP = 134.31 BDT****1 Euro = 116.57 BDT****1 INR = 1.33 BDT**

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