

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:**Govt issues first batch of special bonds**

- The government today issued special bonds, the second time after fiscal 2012-13, worth of BDT 30.16 Bn to two banks in order to clear arrears on behalf of fertiliser importers.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/govt-issues-first-batch-special-bonds-3511091>

Interest rates on treasury bills hit record as govt borrows more

- The interest rate of treasury bills in Bangladesh has spiked in recent months, indicating that the lending rates will rise further in the days ahead.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/interest-rates-treasury-bills-hit-record-govt-borrows-more-3511161>

Financial account deficit swells as outflows intensify

- The deficit in the financial account of Bangladesh widened further in July-November as international currency outflows continued unabated amidst the drastic fall in trade credits and short-term loans, central bank figures showed.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/financial-account-deficit-swells-outflows-intensify-3511181>

Budget execution on slow lane amid election impact

- The execution of budget for the current fiscal year (FY 2023-24) is on the slow lane as only 11% of the total outlay spent during the first quarter (Q1), official data showed, apparently reflecting the impact ahead of the national election.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/budget-execution-on-slow-lane-amid-election-impact>

Global food prices fall, BD bucks the trend

- Global food prices fell by an average of 13.7% in 2023 compared to the previous year, according to data, as Bangladesh defied the trend by experiencing a puzzling 10.06% increase during the same period.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/global-food-prices-fall-bd-bucks-the-trend>

Bangladesh's economic growth to slow to 5.6% in FY24: UN

- The real GDP growth in Bangladesh is expected to slow to 5.6% in the ongoing fiscal 2023-24, down from an estimated 6% growth a year ago, says the United Nations.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bangladeshs-economic-growth-slow-56-fy24-un-770738>

VAT from large firms rises 21% in 5 months

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has reported a 21% year-on-year rise in VAT collection from large companies in the first five months of the fiscal 2023-24, thanks to price hike in gas and tariff increase in tobacco, which resulted in higher sales prices and, consequently, more VAT collected.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/nbr/vat-large-firms-rises-21-5-months-770210>

New company registration drops as uncertainty grips business climate

- Wannabe entrepreneurs are facing an uphill battle as domestic political turmoil and global uncertainties have strangled Bangladesh's business landscape, with fewer companies registering and even fewer managing to take off.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/new-company-registration-drops-uncertainty-grips-business-climate-771282>

Sector & Industry:**RMG | Garment exports earned record USD 47.38 Bn in 2023**

- Apparel exports from Bangladesh hit a milestone last year fetching an all-time high of nearly USD 47 Bn, eclipsing the previous record set in 2022 by about 10.27%, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/garment-exports-earned-record-4738b-2023-3512736>

ENERGY | Gas supply set to rise as Excelerate finishes its FSRU overhaul

- Gas supply across Bangladesh is set to rise this week as US-based Excelerate Energy will resume LNG re-gasification at its expanded capacity floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) after a two-month overhaul, sources said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/gas-supply-set-to-rise-as-excelerate-finishes-its-fsru-overhaul>

TEXTILE | An unlikely product brings USD 400 Mn a year: cotton waste

- The export of cotton waste from Bangladesh is rising rapidly on the back of higher demand for recycled garments globally amid growing consumer awareness and their lower prices in the domestic market.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/unlikely-product-brings-400m-year-cotton-waste-3512731>

BANK | Banks bank on money multiplier

- A latest report of the Finance Division shows as of the end of September 2023, the money multiplier - defined as M2 money-supply balance divided by the base money supply or reserve money - stood at a record-high level of 5.45, as compared to 5.07 at the end of June.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/banks-bank-on-money-multiplier-1704649494>

ENGINEERING | Ship-breaking industry saw decade's lowest imports in 2023

- The ship-breaking industry in Bangladesh, which holds the top global position, experienced a tumultuous year in 2023, importing the lowest amount of scrap ships in a decade due to the ongoing dollar crisis and a slowdown in both the national and international economy.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/industry/ship-breaking-industry-saw-decades-lowest-imports-2023-770830>

BANK | Liquidity crunch widens fault lines in banking system

- A majority of banks in Bangladesh are depending on the call money market and central bank to fund their activities due to an intensifying liquidity crisis in the banking sector.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/liquidity-crunch-widens-fault-lines-banking-system-3511166>

TEXTILE | Spinners worst hit in 2023 in a decade, battered by global yarn price fall

- Spinners had the worst year in a decade in 2023 as yarn became cheaper in the global market, dragging most companies in the red.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/spinners-worst-hit-in-2023-in-a-decade-battered-by-global-yarn-price-fall-1704555416?date=07-01-2024>

HEALTHCARE | Tough choice: Health beats education in household expenses

- Rising medical costs are forcing Bangladeshi families to make tough choices, as a recent survey shows. Health spending has surged more than 202%, taking precedence over education, as households grapple with the increasing burden of healthcare costs.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/tough-choice-health-beats-education-household-expenses-770110>

TRADE | Businesses worried as shipping costs surge due to Suez route changes

- The freight charges for shipping a 20-foot container between Chattogram and Europe or the US have already skyrocketed by 20%-40%, they said. In some cases, freight costs, including insurance and high fuel costs, have doubled.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/businesses-worried-shipping-costs-surge-due-suez-route-changes-770838>

Stocks:**AOL | BDT 170 Mn profit, yet Associated Oxygen declares only BDT 10 Mn dividend**

- The board of directors of Associated Oxygen Limited, despite the company making a profit of BDT 174.6 Mn in the 2022-23 fiscal year, declared only BDT 11 Mn as cash dividend to shareholders, which is nearly 6% of the profit.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/tk17cr-profit-yet-associated-oxygen-declares-only-tk1cr-dividend-771366>

EXCHANGE | IPO subscriptions of two cos open this month

- After a dismal performance in 2023, the primary market may get a boost this year as two companies -- Best Holdings and NRB Bank -- are going to raise funds through initial public offering (IPO) in the first month of the New Year.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/public/stock-corporate/ipo-subscriptions-of-two-cos-open-this-month-1704480777>

EXCHANGE | Stabilisation Fund to lend stock intermediaries fresh BDT 1 Bn after polls

- The Capital Market Stabilization Fund (CMSF) is set to lend fresh BDT 1 Bn to the stock market intermediaries after the national election scheduled on 7 January, with a view to increasing fund injection in the capital market.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/stabilisation-fund-lend-stock-intermediaries-fresh-tk100cr-after-polls-769634>

EPGL | Raw material shortage eats into Energypac Power's business in Jul-Sep

- Publicly listed Energypac Power Generation PLC, in the July-September quarter of the ongoing 2023-24 fiscal year, reported a significant year-on-year decline in both its revenue and profit owing to a raw materials crisis.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/raw-material-shortage-eats-energypac-powers-business-jul-sep-770734>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 73.21	USD 1.56	2.18%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 78.13	USD 1.09	1.41%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,042.89	(USD 20.09)	-0.97%
DSEX	6,244.17	-2.32	-0.04%
S&P 500	4,697.24	-72.59	-1.52%
FTSE 100	7,689.91	-43.33	-0.56%
BSE SENSEX	72,026.15	-214.11	-0.30%
KSE-100	64,537.28	2,157.87	3.46%
CSEALL	10,761.61	107.45	1.01%

Exchange Rates

1 US Dollar = 109.59 BDT

1 GBP = 139.12 BDT

1 Euro = 119.69 BDT

1 INR = 1.32 BDT

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