

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:**Bangladesh's RMG export potential to EU USD 60 Bn by 2030**

- Bangladesh has the potential to increase its export earnings to USD 22.5 Bn from major non-RMG products to the European Union by enhancing its supply-side capacity, suggests a study. Additionally, earnings from ready-made garment exports could rise up to USD 60 Bn to the EU market through the diversification of garment items, according to the study of the Research and Policy Integration for Development Bangladesh (RAPID).
- In FY23, Bangladesh's exports to the world market were more than USD 55 Bn, where RMG's share was USD 47 Bn and non-RMG's share was USD 8.5 Bn. Currently, Bangladesh exports more than 400 types of products to around 200 countries.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/bangladeshs-rmg-export-potential-eu-60b-2030-698818>

BDT 42.82 Bn project for developing Mongla Port

- The government is going to implement a project with Chinese funds for the development of Mongla Port. Of the BDT 42.82 Bn Mongla Port development project, the Chinese government will provide 88% or BDT 37.82 Bn in loan under a government-to-government mechanism, according to the Ecne meeting agenda.
- The objectives of the project are to enhance the port's container-handling capacity with modern facilities and build container terminal (jetty), container delivery yard, and container yard (near the jetty). Once the project is completed, it will be possible to provide the port users with modern services, according to an assessment of the Planning Commission.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/tk-4282cr-project-developing-mongla-port-3416556>

ADB sees strides in utilising funds, challenges too

- The amount of uncontracted and undisbursed funds in Bangladesh has decreased compared to the previous year, indicating progress in utilising these funds for various projects, according to a report of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). However, the ADB advises Bangladesh to take significant steps to improve awarding contracts and fund disbursement, enabling greater access to the bank's funds in the future.
- The report notes that over the last decade, Bangladesh's portfolio has surged from USD 5.3 Bn in 2013 to USD 13.01 Bn as of 31 August 2023, with a compound annual growth rate of 9.39%. This growth is expected to continue due to the ADB's increasing annual lending to Bangladesh, as highlighted in a review of its projects.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/adb-sees-strides-utilising-funds-challenges-too-698822>

Finance minister assures parliament of steps to control inflation

- Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal on Monday said due to the steps taken by the government, inflation will be brought under control. "The balance of payment will improve and the exchange rate of foreign currency will stabilise," the finance minister said. The finance minister said the government has various plans to control inflation, improving the balance of payment situation and stabilising the exchange rate of foreign currency and is implementing them.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/finance-minister-assures-parliament-steps-control-inflation-698718>

Govt's bank borrowing decreases in August

- The government's borrowing from the banking sector decreased in August as implementation of the ADP is yet to start in full swing at the beginning of the new fiscal year. According to central bank data, the government borrowed BDT 35.10 Bn from the banking sector in August last year, which was BDT 5.40 Bn in August this year.
- According to a central bank report, in August, the government borrowed BDT 132.74 Bn from commercial banks mainly through treasury bills, and repaid BDT 127.33 Bn to the central bank. Economists said increased government borrowing from commercial banks could further fuel inflation as the money supply to the private sector decreases.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/govts-bank-borrowing-decreases-august-698806>

Dhaka commits to buy 10 planes from Airbus

- Bangladesh has committed to buying 10 new A350 airplanes from Airbus, a multinational aerospace corporation, as the two countries forge a new strategic partnership. The two countries also signed a letter of intent for space partnership between Airbus and Bangladesh Satellite Company Ltd. The letter includes a clause about buying the Bangabandhu-2 Earth Observation Satellite System. Bangladesh's first satellite Bangabandhu-1 was also manufactured by a French company. Besides, a credit facility agreement was also signed with Agence Française de Développement, under which France will provide EUR 184 Mn to support urban governance and infrastructural development in Bangladesh.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/dhaka-commits-buy-10-planes-airbus-3416396>

Payra port's first terminal likely to open by October

- The Payra sea port's first terminal is expected to be up and running by October, facilitating transport of goods from mother vessels and speeding up operations in the country's third major seaport. The terminal, built on the banks of the Rabnabad channel, will have the capacity to simultaneously load three 200-metre-long mother vessels. The 650-metre main terminal will have a 0.325 Mn square metre backup yard and a 10,000 square metre container freight station facility. Two more terminals are also under construction.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/industries/ports-and-shipping/news/payra-ports-first-terminal-likely-open-october-3416496>

Online pharmacy MedEasy raises USD 750,000

- MedEasy, a Dhaka-based online pharmacy startup, has managed to raise USD 750,000 in seed funding to expand services. The startup's future plan is to introduce subscription-based features, a digital vital sign monitoring system and an appointment-booking marketplace, according to a press release. The seed funding round was led by Seedstars International Ventures, Doha Tech Angels, Startup Bangladesh Limited, Accelerating Asia, and nVentures.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/online-pharmacy-medeasy-raises-750000-3416626>

Anti-harassment committees inactive in apparel industry: Study shows

- The anti-harassment committees are not carrying out their responsibilities in the apparel industry, despite it being the largest industry with a workforce of 3.5 Mn people, according to a study. As a result, the garment sector is still lagging behind in ensuring a safe working environment for the female workers, who comprise 60% of the workforce, said Associate professor Mostafiz Ahmed of Jagannath university. Despite being subjected to sexual harassment at work, most of the workers do not speak out due to social stigma and the fear of losing their jobs, he added.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/anti-harassment-committees-inactive-apparel-industry-study-shows-698610>

Nagad hikes cash-out charges, adds new fees

- Mobile financial service provider Nagad has announced an increase in charges for cash-outs while introducing new fees for fund transfers. The rates and fees came into effect from September 8, according to a company official. In a statement, Nagad explained most of the services are still free of charge like before. The new charge comes less than six months after Nagad Managing Director Tanvir A Mishuk told The Daily Star that they would offer free-of-charge cash withdrawal services to its account-holders by this year in order to accelerate Bangladesh's financial inclusion drive.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/nagad-hikes-cash-out-charges-adds-new-fees-3416651>

How is life when inflation outpaces wage growth

- Soaring food prices have placed a heavy burden on lower-income people, compelling them to spend a significant portion of their wages on groceries, when their income growth has significantly lagged behind the food inflation. A Willis Towers Watson survey found Bangladeshi workers' wage growth remains 5% points less than the food inflation.
- In this scenario, low-income individuals, including the working population of the country, are compelled to consume less food than necessary and reduce their cost of living by decreasing their demand. Experts express concerns about the potential long-term consequences, such as malnutrition and a lack of education, for a significant portion of the population.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/how-life-when-inflation-outpaces-wage-growth-698830>

63 years of unpaid rents get in way of Ctg custom reconstruction

- The reconstruction of buildings and facilities of the Chattogram Custom House hit a roadblock as the Chattogram Port, the landowner, demanded that the customs authorities clear unpaid rent for over six decades first. The NBR has undertaken the initiative to demolish the old and dilapidated buildings at the customs house and construct new buildings and facilities at a cost of BDT 7.15 Bn.
- According to the Port Authority Act, the customs house is obligated to pay annual rent for an 8.33-acre plot of land at the port on which it was built in 1960. However, over the course of 63 years, customs has not made a single payment, resulting in a total outstanding due of BDT 136.1 Mn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/63-years-unpaid-rents-get-way-ctg-custom-reconstruction-698250>

Local firms equally dissatisfied with business climate

- Like Japanese and Chinese companies operating in Bangladesh, domestic firms as well as those from other countries are not happy with the overall business climate in the country, said a number of entrepreneurs, heads of chambers and experts. Policy inconsistency, complicated customs procedures, shipment delays, lack of service-oriented attitudes among government officials, and prevalence of informal payments aimed at ensuring quick services from regulators and facilitating agencies are all blamed for the poor business environment.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/local-firms-equally-dissatisfied-business-climate-3416671>

Stocks:**EBL | EBL, Mastercard launch 'WEAREBL' payment solution**

- Eastern Bank PLC, in collaboration with Mastercard, yesterday unveiled "WEAREBL," the country's first wearable payment device featuring cutting-edge NFC technology. Users can tap and pay, all with one stylish device by upgrading their phone into a payment powerhouse with a pop-socket.
- By using this device equipped with contactless payment options, Mastercard cardholders will be able to make safe, secure and fast transactions. The product will meet the rising demand of contactless payment solutions for local users, the bank said in a press release.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/banks/news/eb1-mastercard-launch-wearebl-payment-solution-3416476>

EXCHANGE | Minimum BDT 3 Mn investment must for trading SME shares from Oct

- Following a High Court order, the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) is going to implement the minimum investment limit of BDT 3 Mn for an investor to be eligible for trading on its SME board from October this year. In November last year, an investor filed a writ in the High Court challenging the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission's directive that set BDT 3 Mn as the minimum required investment to be qualified for trading on the SME board. As the writ was dismissed by the High Court, the securities regulators' directive requiring minimum BDT 3 Mn of investment for trading small and medium companies' shares has been reinstated.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/minimum-tk30-lakh-investment-must-trading-sme-shares-oct-698814>

PLFSL | Troubled NBF1 People's Leasing calls AGM after six years

- Publicly listed People's Leasing and Financial Services Limited, a troubled NBF1, has called its AGM after six years, following a directive from the High Court. People's Leasing, which commenced operations in 1996, has been reportedly facing a wide range of financial scams since 2004. It has been counting losses and has not been able to repay depositor's money despite maturity of their funds.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/troubled-nbfi-peoples-leasing-calls-agm-after-six-years-698810>

RENATA | Renata to launch Parkinson's drug in Germany in widening footprint in EU

- Renata Ltd has received approval for one of its brands to export medicines to Germany. The permission enables its subsidiary company in Europe, Renata Pharmaceuticals Ireland to launch its first brand in Germany - Cabergoletten (Cabergoline 1mg and Cabergoline 2mg), a drug used to treat symptoms of Parkinson's disease.
- One of the leading drug manufacturers in Bangladesh, Renata has been heavily focused on research and development (R&D) of complex generics for several years, said Mr Kabir. Renata will file over 25 new product applications across regulated markets, including the EU, Canada, Australia, the USA and the UK.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/renata-to-launch-parkinsons-drug-in-germany-in-widening-footprint-in-eu>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 87.60	USD 12.39	16.47%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 90.87	USD 13.09	16.83%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,922.96	USD 148.81	8.39%
DSEX	6,283.86	76.86	1.24%
S&P 500	4,487.46	647.96	16.88%
FTSE 100	7,496.87	45.13	0.61%
BSE SENSEX	67,127.08	6,286.34	10.33%
KSE-100	45,889.50	5,469.05	13.53%
CSEALL	11,386.73	2,884.24	33.92%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 109.66 BDT****1 GBP = 137.21 BDT****1 Euro = 117.85 BDT****1 INR = 1.32 BDT**

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