

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:**Cenbank likely to hike repo rate once again**

- As part of this maneuver, the central bank is contemplating an increase in the repo rate, the benchmark rate at which banks borrow from the central bank, by 25 to 50 basis points.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/cenbank-likely-hike-repo-rate-once-again-775070>

Dollar bond rates hiked 2% to attract investment

- The Ministry of Finance has raised the interest rates on the country's existing foreign bonds—USD premium and USD investment bonds—by a maximum of 2%.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/foreign-currency-bond-rates-increased-2-boost-dollar-inflow-774846>

Inflation falls slightly to 9.41% in December

- The overall inflation in Bangladesh stood at 9.41% in December, which was 9.49% in November, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data released today.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/worldbiz/global-economy/inflation/inflation-falls-slightly-941-december-774606>

DEE toll modest BDT 307 Mn as mainly cars drive

- Bangladesh's maiden elevated expressway has earned a modest BDT 307 Mn from tolls as private cars mainly ply the overhead road since partial opening of its Airport-Tejgaon section four months ago.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/dee-toll-modest-tk307m-as-mainly-cars-drive>

Sector & Industry:**HEALTHCARE | Health sector inflation jumps in Dec after months in negative territory**

- After a surprising few months of negative trends, national and rural level inflation in the health sector experienced a notable upswing in December and returned to positive territory.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/health-sector-inflation-jumps-dec-after-months-negative-territory-774974>

ENERGY | At least 15% power plants mostly sat idle

- At least 15% of the country's 71 independent power producers were sitting idle for 80% of the time last fiscal year, raising questions about their need. Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) purchased electricity from the mostly idle power plants at rates much higher than the average purchase price of BDT 14.62 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/environment/natural-resources/energy/news/least-15pc-power-plants-mostly-sat-idle-3519341>

TELECOM | Mobile phone production drops for first time amid currency surprises

- The local production of handsets dropped in 2023, the first decline since domestic manufacturing began in Bangladesh in 2017, owing to the higher US dollar rate, an increase in taxes, and lower sales amid an erosion of purchasing power of consumers.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/mobile-phone-production-drops-first-time-amid-currency-surprises-3519311>

Stocks:**WALTONHIL | Walton directors declare to sell shares to increase free-float**

- To comply with regulatory obligations, directors of Walton Hi-Tech Industries have so far declared to sell a total of 0.575 Mn shares as part of an initiative to increase the company's free-float shares to 10% in the secondary market of the stock exchanges.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/walton-directors-declare-sell-shares-increase-free-float-775002>

BARKAPOWER | Baraka Power's corporate sponsor to sell 0.3 Mn shares

- Fusion Holdings (Pvt.) Limited, one of the corporate directors of the company, has expressed its intention to sell 0.3 Mn shares out of its holding of 19.78 Mn shares of the company.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/baraka-powers-corporate-sponsor-sell-3-lakh-shares-774618>

INTRACO | BSEC relaxes lock-in period of Intraco's converted shares

- The securities regulator has reduced the lock-in period for the convertible shares of Intraco Refueling Station which will be converted from Intraco Refueling Convertible Bond.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/bsec-relaxes-lock-period-intracos-converted-shares-774978>

EXCHANGE | BSEC makes physical presence of chairman, MD mandatory at AGMs

- To ensure accountability to the shareholders, the stock market regulator has mandated the physical presence of a minimum of 25% of board members, including the chairman and managing director, at the general meeting of a listed company.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/bsec-makes-physical-presence-chairman-md-mandatory-agms-774454>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 72.76	USD 1.11	1.55%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 78.46	USD 1.42	1.84%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,054.27	(USD 8.71)	-0.42%
DSEX	6,302.81	56.32	0.90%
S&P 500	4,783.83	14.00	0.29%
FTSE 100	7,624.93	-108.31	-1.40%
BSE SENSEX	72,568.45	328.19	0.45%
KSE-100	64,638.55	2,259.14	3.62%
CSEALL	10,610.53	-43.63	-0.41%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 109.72 BDT****1 GBP = 140.01 BDT****1 Euro = 120.31 BDT****1 INR = 1.32 BDT**

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