

*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:****Hefty interest payments to cost BDT 1.22 Tn**

- Significant rises in domestic and overseas borrowings make the government earmark some BDT 1.22 Tn for hefty interest payments in the upcoming budget, and officials see no letup in liability increases in the near future. Experts see high debt stock, interest-rate rise and depreciation of the local currency behind the rise in debt-service costs. The estimated budgetary allocation for interest payments accounts for an increase by BDT 85 Bn or 7.5% compared to the allocation in the outgoing budget, they said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/hefty-interest-payments-to-cost-tk-122-trillion>

**NEC sits today on BDT 2.3 Tn ADP; buildings get lion's share**

- The National Economic Council (NEC) meets today (18 May) to consider a proposed BDT 2.3 Tn Annual Development Programme (ADP) for the next fiscal year (FY26), with the lion's share of funds earmarked for public sector residential and nonresidential building construction. According to Planning Commission sources, allocations for development projects are made based on economic codes. A review of the codes for 1,111 projects listed in the next ADP shows construction of various buildings secured the highest funds — 439.54 Bn, or 14.42% of the total outlay.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/nec-sits-today-tk23-lakh-cr-adp-buildings-get-lions-share-1144931>

**Govt finishes USD 290 Mn loan negotiation with WB**

- Bangladesh has completed negotiations with the World Bank (WB) to get a USD 290 Mn loan to combat air pollution by operating environment-friendly electric buses and improve air quality, officials said. The government would purchase 100 such buses, as well as set up 12 vehicle inspection centres (VICs) and 20 vehicle emission detectors in Dhaka and outside the capital, they said. Three government agencies - the Department of Environment (DoE), the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA), and the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) - would implement the project, officials at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) and the implementing bodies said.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/govt-finishes-290m-loan-negotiation-with-wb-1747418551>

**Govt to withdraw mandatory radiation test this year: Commerce secy**

- The government is planning to withdraw the mandatory radiation test primarily to reduce import costs and processing time, said Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman today (17 May). He made the remark at an event, on US reciprocal tariffs and the way forward for Bangladesh, jointly organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) in the capital's Motijheel.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/govt-withdraw-mandatory-radiation-test-year-commerce-secy-1144521>

**BD's move to join trade blocs**

- Rising protectionism and tariff wars among the world's leading economies in recent years have put the case for multilateralism at a disadvantage. Encouraging local manufacturing by reducing reliance on imported goods or the so-called policy of import substitution might now gain a stronger ground. Unfortunately, the opposite is true. No doubt, high tariffs on imported items raise relative profitability of industries serving the domestic market in the short run. But in the long run, it hampers production for overseas markets, that is, exports.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/editorial/bds-move-to-join-trade-blocs-1747401134>

**10 ministries brace for budget cuts**

- The allocation for the top 10 ministries and divisions is set to be trimmed by 13% in next fiscal year's annual development programme (ADP) due to the government's cost-cutting measures and shying away from mega and low-priority projects. In the budget for next fiscal year, BDT 163.10 Bn would be earmarked for the ministries, which is about 70% of the total ADP allocation, The Daily Star has learnt from planning ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/bangladesh-budget-2025-26/news/10-ministries-brace-budget-cuts-3897121>

**India halts import of Bangladeshi garments, processed foods via land ports**

- India has restricted the import of at least seven categories of Bangladeshi goods, including readymade garments, fruits and processed foods, through its land ports – just a month after Bangladesh banned yarn imports via the same route.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/india-now-restricts-land-port-imports-garments-fruits-and-other-select-items-bangladesh>

**Sector & Industries:****BANK | Govt borrows BDT 1.08 Tn from commercial banks in 11.5 months of FY25**

- The government has borrowed BDT 1.08 Tn from scheduled banks in the first eleven and a half months of FY25, up by 57% from the previous fiscal year, according to the monthly report on government domestic borrowing by the Bangladesh Bank. The report shows that as of 12 May, the amount of outstanding loans from the scheduled banks has reached BDT 4.85 Tn, which was BDT 687.06 Bn during the same period in FY24.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/govt-borrows-tk108-lakh-crore-commercial-banks-115-months-fy25-1144976>

**RMG | US-Bangladesh FTA talks begin, RMG may see major boost**

- In a potentially transformative development for bilateral trade, the United States has agreed in principle to pursue a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Bangladesh. Stakeholders anticipate that such an agreement would grant duty-free access to Bangladeshi exports, notably including its crucial readymade garments (RMG) sector, thereby providing a significant impetus to the nation's exports to the lucrative American market.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/us-bangladesh-fta-talks-begin-rmg-may-see-major-boost-1145001>

**INSURANCE | Insurance growth hit a three-year low in 2024**

- By the end of 2024, the insurance sector's premium collection growth dropped to a three-year low of 7.3%, down from 9.1% in 2023. The decline is attributed to the sector's struggle to gain client trust amid persistent economic uncertainty.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/insurance-growth-hit-three-year-low-2024-1144971>

**Stocks:****MTB | Mutual Trust Bank's Q1 profit rises 11%**

- The private commercial lender made a profit of BDT 850 Mn in the January-March quarter, up 11% year-on-year, according to its financial statement. The increase follows a 10% year-on-year growth in consolidated profit in 2024, when the bank made BDT 5.7 Bn. Its earnings per share (EPS) rose to BDT 0.87 in the January-March quarter, up from BDT 0.78 in the same period a year ago.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/mutual-trust-banks-q1-profit-rises-11-3896791>

**JAMUNABANK | Jamuna Bank's profit goes up 9% in Q1**

- The bank's profit grew 18% year-on-year to BDT 2.7959Bn in 2024. For the January-March quarter of 2025, the bank's consolidated earnings per share (EPS) stood at BDT 2.04, up from BDT 1.86 (restated) in the same period a year earlier, according to a recent disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/jamuna-banks-profit-goes-9-q1-3896801>

**BDFINANCE | Bangladesh Finance profit drops 75% in Jan-Mar**

- Bangladesh Finance Limited, a non-bank financial institution, posted consolidated earnings per share (EPS) of BDT 0.05 for the first quarter (January–March) of the current year 2025. This marks a significant decline by 75% from BDT 0.20 in the same period of the previous fiscal year, according to the company's financial report filed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) today (17 May).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/bangladesh-finance-profit-drops-75-jan-mar-1144926>

**Stock and Commodities\***

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 62.49	(USD 8.94)	-12.52%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 65.41	(USD 8.98)	-12.07%
Gold Spot*	USD 3,203.65	USD 595.17	22.82%
DSEX	4,820.47	-395.97	-7.59%
S&P 500	5,958.38	51.44	0.87%
FTSE 100	8,684.56	563.55	6.94%
BSE SENSEX	82,330.59	4,130.66	5.28%
KSE-100	119,649.14	4,390.14	3.81%
CSEALL	16,379.39	434.78	2.73%

**Exchange Rates**

**1 US Dollar = 122.02 BDT**

**1 GBP = 162.04 BDT**

**1 Euro = 136.22 BDT**

**1 INR = 1.43 BDT**

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