

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:**MoUs signed with Japan for bilateral trade, investment**

- The governments of Bangladesh and Japan signed three memorandums of understanding (MoUs) today to enhance bilateral trade and investment between the two countries. Bangladesh Special Economic Zone Ltd (BSEZ Ltd) signed the first MoU with Bangladesh IRIS Co Ltd—a Bangladesh-Japan joint venture company promoting education for children—to purchase land and get the right to use the land inside BSEZ of phase 2.
- A separate economic zone for Japanese entrepreneurs was inaugurated at Araihasar in Narayanganj in December last year. The BSEZ Ltd signed the second MoU with Brac Kumon Ltd to provide the schoolgoing children near the BSEZ areas with the education opportunity.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/mous-signed-japan-bilateral-trade-investment-3376446>

CMT manufacturing: Central bank clarifies terms of incentives for apparel exports

- The Bangladesh Bank has clarified the conditions for getting export incentives for garment products manufactured under the cut-make-trim (CMT) process. From now on, local value addition on the export of garment products made under CMT manufacturing will have to be calculated using a new method to be eligible for incentives, the central bank's Foreign Exchange Policy Department (FEPD) said in a new guideline issued Sunday (23 July). Under the CMT manufacturing process, foreign buyers purchase the raw materials of garment products and send those to Bangladesh for the local exporters do the tailor work, according to central bank officials.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/cmt-manufacturing-central-bank-clarifies-terms-incentives-apparel-exports-670206>

Income generation: BDT 13.93 Bn project likely for 1,000 CHT villages

- A BDT 13.93 Bn project is well underway to generate income and employment opportunities in some 1,000 villages in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT) region. Officials concerned said CHT Regional Council under the Ministry of CHT Affairs has undertaken the project for developing some infrastructures and implementing income-generating activities in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari districts.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will lend financial support to the project, according to a ministry official. "We'll work to develop skills of hilly rural residents and mobilise community organisations for non-farming activities," said a senior official. The project will facilitate agricultural production of high-value, eco-friendly crops, and also ensure adequate storage and marketing in the hill districts.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/income-generation-BDT -1393b-project-likely-for-1000-cht-villages>

Forex reserves slip further

- Bangladesh's foreign currency reserves have slipped further as per the definition of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) balance of payments and investment position manual. The central bank began publishing the gross international reserves (GIR) in line with the manual on July 12 to ensure that the country's dollar stockpile is reported accurately. On the day, it stood at USD 23.58 Bn. On July 19, the GIR fell to USD 23.45 Bn, central bank data showed. Bangladesh's reserves have been under strain for months due to higher imports against the lower-than-expected export earnings and remittances.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/forex-reserves-slip-further-3376961>

Import volume dips, price rises at Ctg port in FY23

- Although the volume of merchandise imported through Chattogram port decreased by 3.86%, the total import bill of the goods jumped by 10% in fiscal 2022-23. In the just concluded FY 23, 88.5 Mn tonnes of goods with the value of BDT 4.62 Tn were imported through the port, according to the Chattogram Custom House.
- In the previous fiscal, the imported quantity was 92.1 Mn tonnes and their value was BDT 4.20 Tn. Meanwhile, Chattogram Custom House has collected a total revenue of BDT 616.32 Bn from these imported goods in the FY23, a 4.18% growth from the previous fiscal's BDT 591.60 Bn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/import-volume-dips-price-rises-ctg-port-fy23-669902>

Workers' outflow to Malaysia gets momentum

- The outflow of workers to Malaysia has picked up in recent months amid allegations of charging much higher migration costs than the officially-fixed rate along with deception by a section of recruitment agencies. Bangladesh sent 228,097 workers to the Southeast Asian country in the fiscal year (FY) 2022-23. Of the total, 178,086 workers went during the second half of the last fiscal.
- Sector insiders said Malaysia is a popular destination for Bangladeshi workers; but whenever this market is opened, the rate of fraud increases. Recruiters' greed for higher profits, and non-transparent migration processes in both countries are the reasons behind this. In the initial months, workers outflow took off slowly and averaged at around 10,000 per month during the August-December period of 2022, before started rising since January last, according to data of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/workers-outflow-to-malaysia-gets-momentum>

Leather value lost for lack of certification

- Only two companies in Bangladesh have certification of Leather Working Group (LWG), one of the lowest in the world, said a researcher yesterday. Another firm is undergoing audits for the certification, added the researcher, M Abu Eusuf, executive director of the Research and Policy Integration for Development.
- The LWG is a global body for compliance and environmental certification in the leather and leather goods sector. The certificate is mandatory for market access to Europe, the US and some developed Asian countries. In the absence of the certification, Bangladesh's leather exporters are having to ship their goods mainly to China at 30% to 40% lower prices, said Eusuf at a seminar in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka in the capital.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/leather-value-lost-lack-certification-3376966>

5 more orgs to provide online services to investors via Bida OSS

- The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Bida) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with five more service provider companies which will provide nine types of services to local and international investors through the Bida One Stop Service (OSS) portal. The companies are Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd, Sundarban Gas Company Ltd, Rajshahi Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), Brac Bank and Prime Bank.
- Including these companies, Bida has signed a MoU with 48 institutions. At present, Bida OSS delivers 67 services provided by 23 organisations. It is possible to provide more than 150 investment-related services from various service providers through the Bida OSS, said Bida Director Jibon Krishna Saha Roy. The agreement was signed at the Bida Conference Room in the capital's Agargaon on Tuesday. Under the agreement, industrial gas line connection services from Titas Gas and Sundarban Gas will be available through an online application.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/5-more-orgs-provide-online-services-investors-bida-oss-670254>

Ship Tilting in Bay: 16 days in, 20 containers feared gone overboard

- Anxiety and frustration continue to grow among importers whose goods-filled containers are yet to be salvaged following the tilting of a vessel in the Bay of Bengal near the Bhasan Char coast 16 days ago. Several of the importers claimed to have spotted, with the help of locals, at least five containers that washed ashore at Bhasan Char and Sandwip.
- However, at least two had been cut open and all the goods inside looted, they said. Pangaon Express was transporting 72 import-laden containers from the Chattogram port to Pangaon Inland Container Depot in Dhaka when it tilted to one side due to strong waves on July 6. This sent three containers overboard and the ship became grounded.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/ship-tilting-bay-16-days-20-containers-feared-gone-overboard-3376946>

Stocks:**UNITEDINS | United Insurance posts lower profit in Q2**

- United Insurance Company Ltd posted about 8 per cent lower profit at BDT 36 Mn in the second quarter of 2023. The profit stood at BDT 39.2 Mn in the identical April-June quarter in 2022. Thus, the earnings per share were BDT 0.81 in April-June this year against BDT 0.88 in the same period last year. The profit stood at BDT 45.8 Mn in January-June, down 13.44% from BDT 52.9 Mn in the first half a year ago. So, the EPS declined to BDT 1.03 from BDT 1.19 during the period.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/united-insurance-posts-lower-profit-q2-3376686>

WALTONHIL | Walton to start TV exports to South Korea

- Walton, a global electronics brand of Bangladesh, will start exporting televisions with the Walton brand logo in South Korea. Hans Korea, a renowned company of South Korea, will market Walton brand TV in the country's market. Walton and Hans Korea signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to this end, Walton said in a press release.
- Nazrul Islam Sarkar, deputy managing director of Walton Hi-Tech Industries PLC, and Han Kijung, chief executive officer of Hans Korea, inked the MoU. "Expanding the TV export market in South Korea is undoubtedly a huge milestone for Walton. This achievement will play an important role in achieving Walton's vision "Go Global 2030", said Mustafa Nahid Hossain, chief business operation of Walton TV.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/walton-start-tv-exports-south-korea-3376586>

IBNSINA | Ibn Sina to invest BDT 100 Mn in subsidiary firm

- The Ibn Sina Pharmaceutical is going to invest BDT 100 Mn in its subsidiary the Ibn Sina API Industry Ltd as part of its capital investment in order to purchase capital machineries, the company said today. The drug maker is going to purchase a total of 42.5 decimal land in Chattogram and Barishal to set up sales depots. The purchase price of the land will be BDT 55.8 Mn excluding registration fee and other additional expenses, according to the company.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/stock/news/ibn-sina-invest-BDT -10-crore-subsidary-firm-3376406>

CNATEX | C&A Textiles to merge with Alif Industries

- Scam-hits C&A Textiles will now merge with Alif Industries Limited – a concern of Alif Group – subject to approval from banks, other creditors and shareholders. After the merger, the entities, both listed on the capital market, will operate as Alif Industries Limited, according to a stock exchange filing on Sunday. Following the news, Alif Industries' shares soared over 8% and closed at BDT 90.30 each, where C&A shares rose 2.59% to BDT 11.90 each at the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/ca-textiles-merge-alif-industries-670290>

SIBL | Social Islami Bank profit inches up, cash flow declines

- Social Islami Bank and its subsidiary companies together have posted BDT 0.34 in earnings per share (EPS) for the April-June period, up from BDT 0.33 for the same period last year, the bank disclosed after its board meeting on Sunday. Over the first half of 2023, the consolidated EPS stood at BDT 0.47, which was BDT 0.43 in the same period of 2022.
- At the end of June, consolidated net asset value per share stood at BDT 20.68. Consolidated figures include that of subsidiary companies. However, net operating cash flow of the Shariah-based lender declined for the first six months of the year to a negative BDT 2.28, from a positive BDT 3.75 a year ago.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/social-islami-bank-profit-inches-cash-flow-declines-670302>

EXCHANGE | CS30 index revised, including 14 cos

- The port city bourse has revised its CS30 index including 14 companies based on their market performance. The newly included companies have replaced another 14 companies from the existing list. The revised index will come into effect from July 27, 2023.
- The new companies which have been included in CSE-30 Index are Apex Foods, Apex Footwear, Asia Insurance, Bangladesh National Insurance Company, British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company, Export Import Bank of Bangladesh, Global Islami Bank, GPH Ispat, Islami Bank Bangladesh, LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, National Housing Finance & Investment, Summit Alliance Port, Union Bank, and Unique Hotel & Resorts.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/cs30-index-revised-including-14-cos>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 76.72	USD 1.51	2.01%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 80.70	USD 2.92	3.75%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,961.19	USD 187.04	10.54%
DSEX	6,342.56	135.56	2.18%
S&P 500	4,536.34	696.84	18.15%
FTSE 100	7,663.73	211.99	2.84%
BSE SENSEX	66,684.26	5,843.52	9.60%
KSE-100	45,888.26	5,467.81	13.53%
CSEALL	11,106.54	2,604.05	30.63%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 108.54 BDT****1 GBP = 139.57 BDT****1 Euro = 120.73 BDT****1 INR = 1.32 BDT**

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