

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.

Asian Development Bank maintains robust growth outlook for Bangladesh

- Bangladesh is expected to grow robustly in 2019 and 2020 riding on domestic consumption and strong remittance earnings, said the Asian Development Bank yesterday as it kept the growth outlook for the country unchanged. According to the latest outlook, Bangladesh will post 8.1% GDP growth in 2019 and 8% in 2020, unchanged from its previous outlook published in September. On Tuesday, the government released the final GDP figure for the last fiscal year. It showed that the economy grew 8.15% in 2018-19, the fastest in the Asia-Pacific region. The projection for the current fiscal year is 8.2%.

- The ADB said Bangladesh's accommodative policy on credit to the private sector is expected to promote investment, and strong remittances, which surged by 20.5% in the first four months of the current fiscal year, will stimulate domestic demand.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/adb-maintains-robust-growth-outlook-bangladesh-1839157>

Single Digit Interest Rate: Make government deposits interest-free

- The government committee on implementing the single digit lending rate has now come up with the idea of making government's deposits of its project funding interest free. About Tk 2.3 trillion of the government's development budget is currently parked with banks, which is 20% of total deposits in the banking sector. Having to pay no interest against this sizeable amount will surely bring down the cost of funds for banks -- is what the seven-member committee headed by a deputy governor of the Bangladesh Bank presumed when it came up with the recommendation.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/single-digit-interest-rate-make-govt-deposits-interest-free-1839307>

Mandatory insurance for migrant workers launched

- Mandatory insurance for migrant workers was launched yesterday at the expatriates welfare ministry. Wage Earners Welfare Board (WEWB) Director General and Jiban Bima Corporation (JBC) Managing Director signed an agreement on behalf of their respective organisations in this regard.

- As per the initiative, the government will bring migrant workers under two schemes -- of Tk 200,000 and Tk 500,000 - with the aim to provide financial security to migrant workers and their families. Both schemes will be for two years and migrant workers, aged between 18 and 58 years, will be eligible. Secretary to the Expatriates Welfare Ministry said they will have to give a subsidy of about Tk 350 million annually for the insurance -- taking into consideration 7,00,000 migrant workers going for overseas employment on an average each year.

- At present, a deceased migrant worker's family gets Tk 300,000 from the government as compensation.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/mandatory-insurance-migrant-workers-launched-1839259>

Another MRT line in the offing: USD 33m loan deal signed with ADB

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide USD 333.26 million in loans for expansion of power transmission lines and designing the Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) line. For expanding power transmission lines in greater Dhaka and the western zone of Bangladesh, the government signed agreement for 271.84 million euros (USD 300 million equivalent) loans. The project builds on the ADB's previous work in Bangladesh's power sector, including the Southwest Transmission Grid Expansion project approved in 2018 to address continuing deficiencies in the transmission system by providing more efficient, reliable power to consumers in greater Dhaka and the western zones.

- Under another agreement, the ADB will provide USD 33.26 million in loans for a project to design the Dhaka MRT line 5 (Southern Route) that will help ease the traffic and pollution burden of Dhaka city. The actual Line 5 project is estimated to cost about USD 2.5 billion and will be considered for subsequent ADB financing.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/another-mrt-line-the-offing-1839034>

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/93373/govt-adb-ink-333m-loan-deal-for-power-transport-sectors>

PLFS receives only Tk 80 million from defaulters

- People's Leasing and Financial Services (PLFS) Limited received only around Tk 80 million from defaulters and borrowers after its liquidator was appointed in mid-July. The total outstanding loans of PLFS was Tk 11.31 billion as of June last year. Of the total, Tk 7.48 billion (66.14 % of the total loans) of the institution was non-performing loans. The

borrowers of PLFS repaid the money voluntarily to the liquidator, appointed by the court to oversee the process of liquidation. A total of 67.48% of its shares are in the hands of general shareholders, 23.11% for sponsors and directors, 8.77% shares for institutional investors and 1.19% shares of foreign investors.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/12/11/plfs-receives-only-tk8cr-from-defaulters>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$58.88	+0.12	+0.20%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$63.99	+0.27	+0.42%
Gold Spot*	\$1,475.48	+0.60	+0.04%
DSEX	4,512.39	+5.45	+0.12%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	27,911.30	+29.58	+0.11%
FTSE 100	7,216.25	+2.49	+0.03%
Nikkei 225	23,443.07	+51.21	+0.22%
BSE SENSEX	40,537.83	+125.26	+0.31%

Exchange Rates**USD 1 = BDT 84.85*****GBP 1 = BDT 111.60*****EUR 1 = BDT 93.92*****INR 1 = BDT 1.19***

**Currencies are taken from XE Currency Converter and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.*

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