

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:**Current account surplus with USD 23.08 Bn in FY24**

- Bangladesh's current account surplus with the European Union (EU) climbed to USD 23.08 Bn in fiscal year (FY) 2023-24, riding on the back of robust exports to the 27-member economic bloc. Net inflows from goods exports, mostly clothing items, to the EU states were recorded at USD 18.63 Bn during the period, according to the latest report of the Bangladesh Bank released on Thursday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/current-account-surplus-with-eu-2308b-in-fy24>

Bringing more macroeconomic discipline to Bangladesh should be govt's top priority: Rehman Sobhan

- Bringing discipline into the country's macroeconomic management should be the government's utmost priority, Chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue Professor Rehman Sobhan said today (18 January).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bringing-more-macroeconomic-discipline-bangladesh-should-be-govts-top-priority-rehman-sobhan>

NBR backtracks on VAT hikes for restaurant, internet, talk time, clothing, medicine

- Amid nationwide protests, the government plans to backtrack on its decision to increase value-added tax (VAT) and supplementary duty (SD) on eight products and services, such as mobile talk time, internet, clothing, restaurants, and medicine.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/vat-remain-5-restaurants-1044121>

Economists, businesses deplore inefficient economic management

- Economists, policymakers and business leaders deplored inefficient economic management and urged the interim government to give a cohesive roadmap to stabilize the economy, instead of pursuing policy improvisations.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/economists-businesses-deplore-inefficient-economic-management>

Lowers FY'25 GDP growth to 4.1%, far below earlier projection

- Amid heightened political uncertainty stemming from the July-August turmoil leading to regime change-- investment and industrial activity are anticipated to remain subdued in the near term, which might lower the country's economic growth to 4.1% in FY2025, according to the WB Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report released on Thursday night.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/lowers-fy25-gdp-growth-to-41pc-far-below-earlier-projection>

Bangladesh yet to benefit from BRICS bank

- Bangladesh has failed to reap any benefits of the BRICS-led New Development Bank (NDB) despite entering the new multilateral lender more than three years ago in 2021. The NDB has still to approve any loan for Bangladesh other than that for five founding members- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS), insiders said on Saturday.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/bangladesh-yet-to-benefit-from-brics-bank-1737220575>

Bangladesh sees window of opportunity in Trump's trade war

- US President-elect Donald Trump's trade policies towards China and Mexico could ultimately benefit Bangladesh, according to local apparel exporters. In recent months, Bangladesh's garment exports to the US market have been improving gradually as more American clothing retailers and brands arrive with increased work orders, mainly shifted from China, they said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-sees-window-opportunity-trumps-trade-war-3802471>

Sector & Industries:**RMG | RMG exports reach USD 38.48 Bn in 2024**

- Bangladesh's readymade garment (RMG) exports hit an impressive USD 38.48 Bn in 2024, showcasing the sector's ongoing success. The European Union remained the largest market, accounting for 50.34% of total RMG exports, valued at USD 19.37 Bn.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/rmg-exports-reach-3848-billion-in-2024>

RMG | 1,150 non-bonded RMGs fear closure as LC, raw material access shrinks

- Small garment factories with limited capital, unable to afford a bonded warehouse licence, are struggling to sustain their businesses due to difficulties in securing back-to-back letters of credit (LCs) and procuring raw materials and accessories.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/1150-non-bonded-rmgs-fear-closure-lc-raw-material-access-shrinks-1045496>

RMG | Chinese firms bullish on Bangladesh's manmade fibre

- Chinese textile companies are optimistic about increasing exports of manmade fibre (MMF) to Bangladesh as the country's garment makers have been diversifying their products in line with changing global demand over the past few years.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/chinese-firms-bullish-bangladeshs-manmade-fibre-3802446>

BANK | Top borrowers Beximco, S Alam now top defaulters, posing threat to dozens of banks

- The country's top two borrowers, Beximco and S Alam Group, have emerged as the top defaulters following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, leaving over a dozen lenders in trouble and exposing stability of the banking sector to significant risks.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/top-borrowers-beximco-s-alam-now-top-defaulters-posing-threat-dozens-banks-1046256>

Stocks:**MIRAKHTER | Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd to hold EGM for preference share issuance**

- Mir Akhter Hossain Limited, a construction company, is set to hold an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) to secure shareholder approval for two key agendas—the issuance of preference shares and an increase in its authorised capital.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/mir-akhter-hossain-ltd-hold-egm-preference-share-issuance-1046176>

FINEFOODS | Fine Foods sees nearly 400% profit growth in first half of FY25

- Fine Foods, a publicly listed company, has made a profit in the first six months of the current fiscal year (FY25), almost twice the profit it made in the entire FY24, driven by a 74% growth in revenue.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/fine-foods-sees-nearly-400-profit-growth-first-half-fy25-1044846>

NAVANAPHAR | Navana Pharma forays into herbal medicine sector with BDT 210 Mn investment

- Navana Pharmaceuticals, a publicly listed company, has decided to venture into the herbal medicine market with a fresh BDT 210 Mn investment. The firm plans to establish a dedicated 10,000-square-foot division for manufacturing herbal products, according to a disclosure on the stock exchange's website on Thursday.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/navana-pharma-forays-herbal-medicine-sector-tk21cr-investment-1044841>

CNATEX | C&A Textiles downgraded to Z category

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) has downgraded C&A Textiles to the Z or junk category for failing to hold its annual general meeting (AGM) within the stipulated timeframe.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/ca-textiles-downgraded-z-category-1044826>

EXCHANGE | Stock market expected to regain momentum by June thru reforms: DSE chairman

- "Investors will start believing that reforms are underway. By June, some of these reforms may send a positive message to the market. We hope to see an improved situation in the stock market by June," Mominul Islam said at the 'CMJF Talk' organised by the Capital Market Journalists Forum (CMJF).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/stock-market-expected-regain-momentum-june-thru-reforms-dse-chairman-1045836>

EXCHANGE | Promising stocks are cheaper than junk ones

- Large-cap companies with stronger fundamentals are now cheaper on the bourses than small-cap firms with poor business performance. Price-to-earning (P/E) ratios reveal such a picture of the current market. A P/E ratio indicates a stock price relative to the earnings per share (EPS) of the company.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/promising-stocks-are-cheaper-than-junk-ones-1737215533>

Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 77.88	USD 6.45	9.03%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 80.79	USD 6.40	8.60%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,703.25	USD 94.77	3.63%
DSEX	5,133.92	-82.52	-1.58%
S&P 500	5,996.66	89.72	1.52%
FTSE 100	8,505.22	384.21	4.73%
BSE SENSEX	76,619.33	-1,580.60	-2.02%
KSE-100	115,272.08	13.08	0.01%
CSEALL	12,003.29	0.00	0.00%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 121.68 BDT****1 GBP = 148.07 BDT****1 Euro = 124.95 BDT****1 INR = 1.41 BDT**

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