

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:**China agrees to extend loan repayment period for BD**

- Praising Bangladesh's good track record of loan repayment, Yi agreed in principle to extend the loan repayment period and assured to look into the request for interest rate reduction. He assured to continue the Duty-Free Quota-Free (DFQF) access of Bangladeshi products to the Chinese market for three years after the least developed country (LDC) graduation.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/china-agrees-to-extend-loan-repayment-period-for-bd-1737478694>

Net FDI hits six-year low

- The flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bangladesh fell to USD 104.33 Mn in the July-September quarter of fiscal year 2024-25, the lowest in at least six years, as foreign investors stayed away from Bangladesh amid deadly political unrest, labour agitation, and a persistent economic crisis.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/net-fdi-hits-six-year-low-3805236>

VAT hike to minimally impact goods prices

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) increased VAT and SD on nearly 100 goods and services on January 9, leading to apprehensions that it would stoke inflation, put further strain on consumers' wallets, and slow down businesses.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/vat-hike-minimally-impact-goods-prices-3805221>

Building commodity buffer stock, inviting FDI in healthcare dominate to-do-list

- Sources say the task force on economy and development, formed by the post-uprising government as part of wide-ranging reforms in Bangladesh, suggests beefing up reserves of essential goods like diesel, fertilizers, and edible oils to get over unusual price rises that stoke up inflation.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/building-commodity-buffer-stock-inviting-fdi-in-healthcare-dominate-to-do-list-1737479533>

Taxmen agree to support IMF's NBR reform recipe

- In a hurriedly called meeting, the BCS (Taxation) and BCS (Customs and VAT) associations agreed in principle to cooperate with the interim government by devising a strategy on how the reform can be done without affecting domestic revenue mobilization, officials said.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/taxmen-agree-to-support-imfs-nbr-reform-recipe-1737479861>

Unveiling MPS looks cloaked in uncertainty

- Bangladesh Bank (BB), the country's central bank, traditionally announces monetary policy statement in January, be it annual or half-yearly. If this MPS-unveiling program is deferred until next month -February--it will be the first time its history is broken.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/unveiling-mps-looks-cloaked-in-uncertainty-1737479083>

Sector & Industries:**BANK | BDT 1.77 Tn default loan cases settled with just 20% recovery**

- Bank officials say the key reasons for these loans being defaulted include indiscriminate loan disbursement in collusion with bank directors and related institutions, overvaluation of collateral, and the closure of borrowing institutions

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/banks-settle-tk177-lakh-crore-default-loan-cases-just-20-recovered-1048326>

BANK | SMEs lose credit appetite in economic turbulence

- During the April-June period of fiscal year 2023-24, small businesses received BDT 545.26 Bn in bank loans. This figure plummeted to BDT 429.5 Bn in the subsequent quarter, according to Bangladesh Bank (BB) data. Compared to the same period in FY23, loan disbursement in April-June of FY24 witnessed a 13.10% decline.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/smes-lose-credit-appetite-economic-turbulence-3805241>

AVIATION | Six airline operators owe CAAB BDT 77.22 Bn

- Six operational and defunct airlines owed the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) BDT 77.22 Bn in cumulative debts until last November, risking their licence renewal. Of the overdue amount, about BDT 57.93 Bn is surcharge, while the remainder original debt, including VAT and tax, according to the document.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/six-airline-operators-owe-caab-tk-7722b-1737478856>

ENGINEERING | Steelmakers seek duty-free import of raw materials

- BSRM has requested Commerce Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin to instruct the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to allow it to import such raw materials against bank guarantee, the letter reads. Such facility can also be given to other highly compliant and tax-paying companies like the BSRM. With such facilities, there will be a large increase in exports, Mr Akberali claimed in the letter.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/steelmakers-seek-duty-free-import-of-raw-materials-1737479813>

Stocks:**BXPHERMA | HC stays appointment of independent directors at Beximco Pharma**

- The High Court has stayed the appointment of independent directors to the board of Beximco Pharmaceuticals for three months, the drugmaker disclosed in a filing with the London Stock Exchange.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/hc-stays-appointment-independent-directors-beximco-pharma-1049181>

CVOPRL | CVO Petrochemical's profit jumps 47% on higher sales

- The Chattogram-based company's sales revenue jumped 148% year-on-year to BDT 398 Mn in October-December last year. Higher sales and reduced finance expenses contributed to the company's profit growth, said the company in its earnings notes.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/cvo-petrochemicals-profit-jumps-47pc-on-higher-sales-1737475578>

Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 75.73	USD 4.30	6.02%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 79.26	USD 4.87	6.55%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,748.83	USD 140.35	5.38%
DSEX	5,202.62	-13.83	-0.27%
S&P 500	6,049.24	142.30	2.41%
FTSE 100	8,548.29	427.28	5.26%
BSE SENSEX	75,838.36	-2,361.57	-3.02%
KSE-100	115,042.25	-216.75	-0.19%
CSEALL	12,003.29	0.00	0.00%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 121.47 BDT****1 GBP = 149.83 BDT****1 Euro = 126.52 BDT****1 INR = 1.40 BDT**

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

Analyst Certification: Each research analyst and research associate who authored this document and whose name appears herein certifies that the recommendations and opinions expressed in the research report accurately reflect their personal views about any and all of the securities or issuers discussed therein that are within the coverage universe.

Disclaimer: Estimates and projections herein are our own and are based on assumptions that we believe to be reasonable. Information presented herein, while obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, is not guaranteed either as to accuracy or completeness. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed herein constitutes a solicitation of the purchase or sale of any security. As it acts for public companies from time to time, BRAC-EPL may have a relationship with the above-mentioned company(s). This report is intended for distribution in only those jurisdictions in which BRAC-EPL is registered and any distribution outside those jurisdictions is strictly prohibited.

Compensation of Analysts: The compensation of research analysts is intended to reflect the value of the services they provide to the clients of BRAC-EPL. As with most other employees, the compensation of research analysts is impacted by the overall profitability of the firm, which may include revenues from corporate finance activities of the firm's Corporate Finance department. However, Research analysts' compensation is not directly related to specific corporate finance transaction.

General Risk Factors: BRAC-EPL will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for each company under coverage at the time of initiating research coverage and revisit this assessment when subsequent update reports are published, or material company events occur. Following are some general risks that can impact future operational and financial performance: (1) Industry fundamentals with respect to customer demand or product / service pricing could change expected revenues and earnings; (2) Issues relating to major competitors or market shares or new product expectations could change investor attitudes; (3) Unforeseen developments with respect to the management, financial condition or accounting policies alter the prospective valuation; or (4) Interest rates, currency or major segments of the economy could alter investor confidence and investment prospects.

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

Research

Salim Afzal Shawon, CFA	Head of Research	salim@bracepl.com	01708 805 221
Fahim Hassan	Research Analyst	fahim.hassan@bracepl.com	01709 636 546
Hossain Zaman Towhidi Khan	Research Analyst	hztowhidi.khan@bracepl.com	01708 805 224
Foyisal Ahmed	Research Associate	foysal.ahmed@bracepl.com	01708 805 201
S M Toufique Imran	Research Associate	smtoufique.imran@bracepl.com	01708 805 228
Rakibul Hasan	Research Associate	rakibul.hasan@bracepl.com	01708 805 229
Md Istiaz Uddin	Research Associate	mistiaz.uddin@bracepl.com	01708 805 202

International Trade and Sales

Ahsanur Rahman Bappi	CEO	bappi@bracepl.com	01730 357 991
----------------------	-----	--	---------------

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

www.bracepl.com

Symphony, Plot No.: S.E.(F) – 9(3rd Floor), Road No.: 142

Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka – 1212

Phone: + (88)-02-222282446-47

Fax: + (88)-02-222282452

E-Mail: research@bracepl.com