

Capital Market Overview

The market closed in red this week. The benchmark index DSEX (-1.62%) lost 82.76 points and closed the week at 5,013.02 points. The blue-chip index DS30 (-2.33%) lost 41.85 points and stood at 1,758.20 points. The shariah based index DSES (-1.38%) lost 16.37 points and stood at 1,167.07 points. DSEX, DS30 and DSES all posted negative YTD return of -6.92%, -6.52% and -5.33% respectively.

Total Turnover During The Week (DSE): BDT 19.7 billion (USD 237.4 million)
Average Daily Turnover Value (ADTV): BDT 3.9 billion (Δ % Week: -12.0%)

Daily Index Movement during the Week:

The market performed five sessions during this week. Market opened this week with a negative movement of 0.49% in the first session and continued to be negative in the second, third & fourth sessions by -0.73%, -0.53%, and -0.41% respectively. Market ended with a positive movement of 0.53% in the fifth session.

Sectoral Performance:

- The financial sectors showed negative performance during this week except General Insurance (+0.20%). Life Insurance experienced the highest loss of 4.58% followed by Mutual Funds (-2.68%), NBFIs (-2.23%), and Banks (-1.73%).
- The non-financial sectors posted negative performance during this week. Telecommunication experience the highest loss of 5.03% followed by Food & Allied (-2.51%), Power (-1.13%), Pharmaceuticals (-0.98%), and Engineering (-0.89%).

Macroeconomic arena:

- Bangladesh has topped the growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the last 10 years since 2009, according to the recently released Spectator Index. During the decade, Bangladesh's GDP grew by 188% according to the index released on August 29 last. According to the index, China grew 177%, India 117, Indonesia 90, Malaysia 78, Australia 41 and Brazil 17%.
- Inflation declined 13 basis points to 5.49% in August, helped by the downward movement of both food and non-food prices. Food inflation edged down 15 basis points from 5.62% in July to 5.49% last month while non-food inflation came down to 5.82%, down 12 basis points from 5.94% a month ago.
- The central bank yesterday extended the deadline for defaulters for sending in rescheduling proposals under its relaxed policy to October 20. Earlier in August, Bangladesh Bank said defaulters would get the scope to apply until September 7 in line with the High Court order. Under the policy, defaulters can make a 2 percent down payment to reschedule their loans for 10 years, including one year's grace period, at 9 percent interest rate.
- The net sales of national savings certificates fell by 57.10% or BDT 28.76 billion in July, the first month of the current fiscal year (2019-2020), compared with that in the same month in last fiscal year (2018-19) due to an increase in tax on income from the investment in the instruments. In July this year, the government sold NSCs worth Tk 6,091.33 crore against repayment of BDT 39.31 billion, taking the net sales of the government's borrowing tools to BDT 21.60 billion against BDT 50.35 billion in the same month last year, according to a report of Department of National Savings.
- Money sent home by expatriate Bangladeshis amounted to over USD 3.0 billion in the two months to August, boosted by increased flow on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The flow of remittances rose by nearly 13% to USD 3.08 billion during the July-August period of financial year 2020 from USD 2.73 billion in the same period a year earlier.

Stock Market arena:

- UltraTech Cement Limited, a major market player in India's cement market, is in the final stage of selling its stake in Emirates Cement Bangladesh that produces cement under the brand name of 'UltraTech Cement' to Heidelberg Cement. As per the BB sources, UltraTech has proposed selling shares at BDT 17.09 each, setting the total sales value of its stake in Emirates Cement Bangladesh at BDT 2.71 billion. The central bank has been scrutinizing the proposal and would finalize its decision soon, BB officials said.
- The initial public offering (IPO) of Ashuganj Power Station Company Ltd will begin on September 23. The IPO will stay open for both resident and non-resident Bangladeshis till October 6 this year. The bonds will be non-convertible, fully redeemable, and coupon bearing. Each of the 200,000 bonds with a seven-year term will cost BDT 5,000. The annual interests from the bonds will be minimum 8.5% and maximum 10.5%, payable every six months. The state-run company will use the proceeds for land development, purchase of primary fuel and transportation.

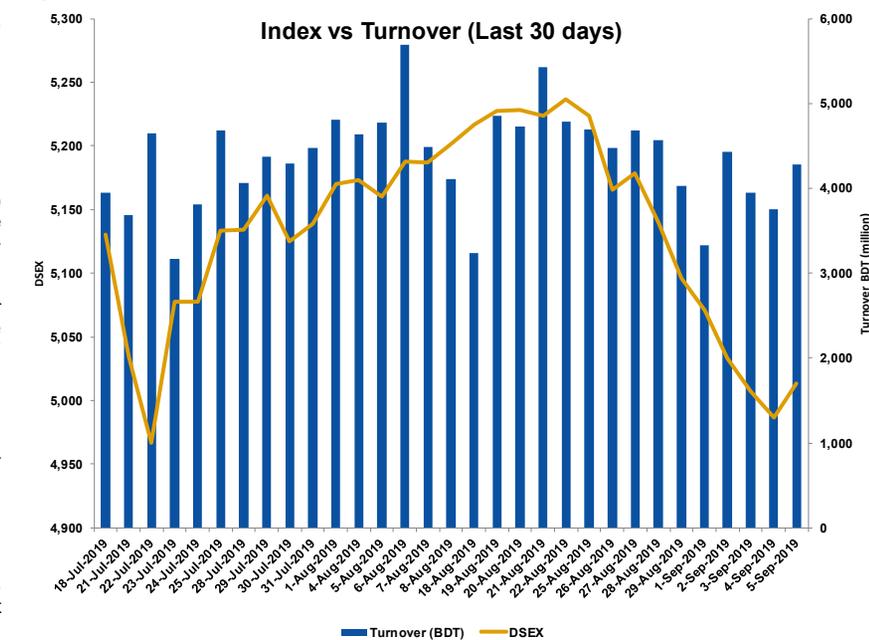
Table 1: Index

| Index | Closing | Opening | Δ (Pts) | 27-Dec-2018 | Δ % Week | Δ %YTD |
|-------|----------|----------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| DSEX | 5,013.02 | 5,095.78 | -82.76 | 5,385.64 | -1.62% | -6.92% |
| DS30 | 1,758.20 | 1,800.06 | -41.85 | 1,880.78 | -2.33% | -6.52% |
| DSES | 1,167.07 | 1,183.44 | -16.37 | 1,232.82 | -1.38% | -5.33% |

Table 2: Market Statistics

| | | This Week | Last Week | %Change |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------|
| Mcap | Mn BDT | 18,776,129.1 | 19,190,245.3 | -2.2% |
| | Mn USD | 225,864.7 | 230,846.2 | |
| Turnover | Mn BDT | 19,733.1 | 22,435.4 | -12.0% |
| | Mn USD | 237.4 | 269.9 | |
| Average Daily Turnover | Mn BDT | 3,946.6 | 4,487.1 | -12.0% |
| | Mn USD | 47.5 | 54.0 | |
| Volume | Mn Shares | 480.0 | 630.0 | -23.8% |

Figure 1: DSEX & Turnover in last four weeks



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Table 3: Top Ten Gainers

| Company Name | Close | Open | Δ% | Mcap (mn BDT) | Vol (mn BDT) | P/E | P/B |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|-------|---------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Kay and Que | 234.60 | 192.10 | 22.1% | 1,150.1 | 220.71 | 250.0x | 3.1x |
| Monno Jute Staffers | 1,778 | 1,512.90 | 17.5% | 3,679.6 | 630.29 | 316.5x | 150.1x |
| Stylecraft Limited | 870.80 | 751.20 | 15.9% | 4,396.7 | 586.22 | 100.9x | 14.0x |
| Emerald Oil Industries Ltd. | 13.30 | 11.70 | 13.7% | 794.2 | 9.65 | 116.8x | 0.8x |
| Sonargaon Textiles | 37.30 | 33.50 | 11.3% | 987.2 | 17.95 | 80.5x | 1.4x |
| Gemini Sea Food | 272.50 | 246.60 | 10.5% | 1,163.4 | 67.94 | NM | 25.5x |
| SEML IBBL Shariah Fund | 10.60 | 9.60 | 10.4% | 1,060.0 | 28.93 | NM | 1.0x |
| Deshbandhu Polymer Limited | 13.40 | 12.20 | 9.8% | 822.3 | 23.13 | 39.4x | 1.2x |
| Meghna Condensed Milk | 15.70 | 14.30 | 9.8% | 251.2 | .76 | NM | NM |
| Northern Jute | 1,268.40 | 1,156.70 | 9.7% | 2,716.9 | 37.24 | 3273.4x | 22.2x |

Table 4: Top Ten Losers

| Company Name | Close | Open | Δ% | Mcap (mn BDT) | Vol (mn BDT) | P/E | P/B |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|---------------|--------------|-----|------|
| Padma Islami Life Insurance Limited | 15.80 | 18.60 | -15.1% | 614.3 | 4.31 | NM | 1.6x |
| IFIL Islamic Mutual Fund-1 | 5.90 | 6.60 | -10.6% | 590.0 | 3.61 | NM | 0.5x |
| Tallu Spinning | 4.30 | 4.80 | -10.4% | 384.1 | .96 | NM | 0.4x |
| Meghna Life Insurance | 51.30 | 56.80 | -9.7% | 1,719.7 | 27.13 | NM | 5.1x |
| Prime Bank 1st ICB AMCL Mutual Fund | 5.60 | 6.20 | -9.7% | 560.0 | 3.87 | NM | 0.5x |
| Al-Haj Textile Mills Limited | 66.40 | 73.50 | -9.7% | 1,480.6 | 105.48 | NM | 5.9x |
| Rupalii Life Insurance Co. Ltd. | 46.90 | 51.70 | -9.3% | 1,353.0 | 66.81 | NM | 4.7x |
| ICB Employees Provident MF 1 Scheme 1 | 4.90 | 5.40 | -9.3% | 367.5 | 3.53 | NM | 0.4x |
| ICB AMCL Third NRB Mutual Fund | 5.00 | 5.50 | -9.1% | 500.0 | .64 | NM | 0.4x |
| Mithun Knitting | 12.10 | 13.30 | -9.0% | 393.1 | .85 | NM | 0.6x |

Table 5: Top Ten Most Traded Shares

| Company Name | Close | Open | Δ% | Mcap (mn BDT) | Vol (mn BDT) | P/E | P/B |
|--|----------|----------|-------|---------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| Monno Ceramic | 222.60 | 214.80 | 3.6% | 7,270.5 | 1,088.39 | 33.9x | 3.2x |
| United Power Generation & Distribution Company Ltd | 388.70 | 395.10 | -1.6% | 186,221.1 | 917.13 | 25.1x | 13.1x |
| Monno Jute Staffers | 1,777.60 | 1,512.90 | 17.5% | 3,679.6 | 630.29 | 316.5x | 150.1x |
| Stylecraft Limited | 870.80 | 751.20 | 15.9% | 4,396.7 | 586.22 | 100.9x | 14.0x |
| Fortune Shoes Limited | 39.80 | 38.40 | 3.6% | 4,972.5 | 504.22 | 20.4x | 2.9x |
| Silco Pharmaceuticals Limited | 35.20 | 35.10 | 0.3% | 3,321.8 | 442.16 | 31.5x | 0.0x |
| JMI Syringes & Medical Devices Ltd | 488.30 | 483.80 | 0.9% | 5,371.3 | 417.60 | 64.4x | 6.9x |
| Wata Chemicals Limited | 603.00 | 593.70 | 1.6% | 7,150.4 | 379.31 | 37.8x | 9.5x |
| Beacon Pharmaceuticals Limited | 26.20 | 25.40 | 3.1% | 6,052.2 | 367.74 | 34.5x | 2.1x |
| Doreen Power Generations and Systems Limited | 80.30 | 79.80 | 0.6% | 9,327.6 | 357.53 | 11.6x | 2.4x |

Table 8: Most Appreciated YTD in BRAC EPL Universe

| Top 10 Most Appreciated Stocks | Close | Δ% YTD | Mcap (mn BDT) | P/E |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--------|---------------|-------|
| Pragati Insurance | 39.10 | 49.95% | 2,564.6 | 12.3x |
| Marico Bangladesh Limited | 1,773.60 | 47.78% | 55,868.4 | 29.5x |
| Power Grid Co. of Bangladesh Ltd. | 59.20 | 23.33% | 27,286.0 | 8.4x |
| Glaxo Smithkline | 1,782.20 | 22.89% | 21,469.2 | NM |
| Singer Bangladesh | 206.40 | 21.30% | 20,578.7 | 22.8x |
| Berger Paints | 1,589.00 | 18.22% | 73,694.5 | 38.8x |
| Dutch-Bangla Bank | 67.40 | 16.69% | 33,700.0 | 8.3x |
| Pioneer Insurance | 33.80 | 16.15% | 2,365.3 | 8.3x |
| Linde Bangladesh Limited | 1,343.00 | 12.07% | 20,438.2 | 20.1x |
| Eastern Housing | 51.60 | 10.73% | 4,816.6 | 14.5x |

Table 6: Sector Indices

| Sector Name | Week Close | Week Open | Year Open | %Δ Week | %Δ YTD |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Banks | 1351.20 | 1375.00 | 1428.63 | -1.73% | -5.42% |
| NBFIs | 1704.93 | 1743.73 | 2087.55 | -2.23% | -18.33% |
| Mutual Funds | 618.54 | 635.60 | 644.52 | -2.68% | -4.03% |
| General Insurance | 1813.53 | 1809.91 | 1488.77 | 0.20% | 21.81% |
| Life Insurance | 2097.44 | 2198.08 | 2251.96 | -4.58% | -6.86% |
| Telecommunication | 4154.27 | 4374.30 | 5088.05 | -5.03% | -18.35% |
| Pharmaceuticals | 2827.29 | 2855.41 | 2698.49 | -0.98% | 4.77% |
| Fuel & Power | 1918.04 | 1939.95 | 1745.15 | -1.13% | 9.91% |
| Cement | 1356.11 | 1390.54 | 1676.63 | -2.48% | -19.12% |
| Services & Real Estate | 976.93 | 997.64 | 1017.99 | -2.08% | -4.03% |
| Engineering | 2940.39 | 2966.89 | 2933.11 | -0.89% | 0.25% |
| Food & Allied | 14734.51 | 15114.48 | 15034.05 | -2.51% | -1.99% |
| IT | 1860.56 | 1871.77 | 1545.46 | -0.60% | 20.39% |
| Textiles | 1256.69 | 1275.89 | 1461.18 | -1.51% | -13.99% |
| Paper & Printing | 6744.15 | 6817.72 | 9105.21 | -1.08% | -25.93% |
| Tannery | 2370.47 | 2373.26 | 2560.38 | -0.12% | -7.42% |
| Jute | 19464.65 | 17855.80 | 21417.92 | 9.01% | -9.12% |
| Ceramics | 522.87 | 526.07 | 579.64 | -0.61% | -9.79% |
| Miscellaneous | 2093.12 | 2088.61 | 1943.42 | 0.22% | 7.70% |

Table 7: Sector Trading Matrix

| Sector Name | Daily average this Week | Daily average last week | % Change | % of Total Turnover | P/E | P/B |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|------|
| Banks | 210.5 | 211.2 | -0.36% | 5.44% | 8.1x | 0.7x |
| NBFIs | 107.9 | 80.8 | 33.46% | 2.79% | 64.6x | 1.7x |
| Mutual Funds | 99.7 | 111.7 | -10.70% | 2.58% | NM | 0.5x |
| General Insurance | 147.3 | 246.9 | -40.31% | 3.81% | 13.7x | 1.2x |
| Life Insurance | 64.3 | 91.5 | -29.70% | 1.66% | NM | 8.7x |
| Telecommunication | 79.8 | 80.7 | -1.03% | 2.06% | 10.9x | 8.6x |
| Pharmaceuticals | 748.9 | 905.2 | -17.27% | 19.37% | 19.7x | 2.6x |
| Fuel & Power | 430.2 | 437.3 | -1.61% | 11.13% | 12.7x | 2.2x |
| Cement | 15.0 | 31.1 | -51.94% | 0.39% | 27.0x | 2.5x |
| Services & Real Estate | 46.4 | 84.1 | -44.79% | 1.20% | NM | 0.8x |
| Engineering | 660.0 | 763.9 | -13.61% | 17.07% | 14.9x | 1.8x |
| Food & Allied | 121.2 | 157.7 | -23.13% | 3.13% | 25.6x | 8.6x |
| IT | 138.3 | 144.5 | -4.33% | 3.58% | 23.3x | 2.9x |
| Textiles | 356.7 | 434.7 | -17.94% | 9.22% | 16.5x | 1.0x |
| Paper & Printing | 14.4 | 21.9 | -34.12% | 0.37% | 21.2x | 1.7x |
| Tannery | 153.4 | 110.7 | 38.56% | 3.97% | 19.8x | 2.6x |
| Jute | 36.1 | 17.0 | 112.55% | 0.93% | NM | 8.9x |
| Ceramics | 257.3 | 167.2 | 53.90% | 6.65% | 20.2x | 2.0x |
| Miscellaneous | 179.6 | 255.5 | -29.73% | 4.64% | 27.6x | 1.2x |

Table 9: Least Appreciated YTD in BRAC EPL Universe

| Top 10 Least Appreciated Stocks | Close | Δ% YTD | Mcap (mn BDT) | P/E |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|---------|
| International Leasing | 6.00 | -54.01% | 1,330.9 | 3.2x |
| Heidelberg Cement | 204.40 | -38.93% | 11,549.3 | 16.5x |
| IFAD Autos Limited | 67.30 | -37.92% | 16,689.8 | 11.9x |
| United Airways (BD) Ltd. | 1.90 | -34.48% | 1,573.4 | NM |
| IDLC Finance Ltd. | 48.00 | -31.13% | 18,098.4 | 7.9x |
| AB Bank Limited | 8.40 | -30.00% | 6,368.3 | 1875.8x |
| Aftab Automobiles Limited | 32.30 | -29.63% | 3,092.2 | 16.2x |
| Lankabangla Finance | 16.70 | -27.07% | 8,570.1 | 8.9x |
| RAK Ceramics Limited | 31.20 | -20.00% | 12,138.7 | 14.1x |
| Grameenphone Ltd. | 295.50 | -19.55% | 399,013.7 | 10.6x |

Important News: Business & Economy

Bangladesh tops GDP growth in last 10 years

• Bangladesh has topped the growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the last 10 years since 2009, according to the recently released Spectator Index. During the decade, Bangladesh's GDP grew by 188% according to the index released on August 29 last, said Cabinet Secretary. We've secured the number one position in the world in achieving GDP growth in the last 10 years since 2009 on the basis of the current price method, he said. Quoting the index, he said, China grew 177%, India 117, Indonesia 90, Malaysia 78, Australia 41 and Brazil 17%.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bangladesh-tops-gdp-growth-in-last-10-years-1567445424>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/bangladesh-recorded-the-highest-gdp-growth-1794736>

Inflation edges down in August

• Inflation declined 13 basis points to 5.49% in August, helped by the downward movement of both food and non-food prices. Food inflation edged down 15 basis points from 5.62% in July to 5.49% last month while non-food inflation came down to 5.82%, down 12 basis points from 5.94% a month ago.

• In rural areas inflation dropped to 5.34% from 5.48% in July. Food and non-food inflation declined to 5.38% and 5.25% from 5.60% and 5.27% respectively in July. Inflation also fell in urban areas, to 5.75% from 5.88%. Food and non-food inflation were down to 5.02% and 6.60% in August from 5.03% and 6.84% respectively a month ago.

• The government has targeted a 5.5% inflation rate in the current fiscal year. It was able to contain it at 5.48% last fiscal year, comfortably below the target of 5.6%.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/inflation-edges-down-august-1795228>
<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/aug-inflation-declines-marginally-1567532384>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/04/inflation-falls-in-august-bbs>

Deadline extended for rescheduling loans

• The central bank yesterday extended the deadline for defaulters for sending in rescheduling proposals under its relaxed policy to October 20. Earlier in August, Bangladesh Bank said defaulters would get the scope to apply until September 7 in line with the High Court order. But it extended the deadline again as per another court order on August 29. Under the policy, defaulters can make a 2 percent down payment to reschedule their loans for 10 years, including one year's grace period, at 9 percent interest rate.

• The borrowers, who will get the rescheduling facility under the policy, will not be allowed to get fresh loans from banks, according to a central bank notice sent out to all lenders yesterday. The relaxed policy was made available in May to allow defaulters to clear their loans. The High Court issued a status quo, putting the effectiveness of the notice on hold until June 23, barring rescheduling of default loans under the policy. However, the Supreme Court on July 8 issued a stay on the High Court order for two months. The BB will allow defaulters to reschedule their classified loans until the fresh date, a central bank official said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/deadline-extended-rescheduling-loans-1795225>
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/83467/banks-to-accept-pleas-till-oct-20>

National Savings Certificates (NSC) sales dip by 57% in July due to higher tax

• The net sales of national savings certificates fell by 57.10% or BDT 28.76 billion in July, the first month of the current fiscal year (2019-2020), compared with that in the same month in last fiscal year (2018-19) due to an increase in tax on income from the investment in the instruments. In July this year, the government sold NSCs worth Tk 6,091.33 crore against repayment of BDT 39.31 billion, taking the net sales of the government's borrowing tools to BDT 21.60 billion against BDT 50.35 billion in the same month last year, according to a report of Department of National Savings.

• Due to the fall in NSC sales and to meet the expenditure, the government borrowed BDT 262.48 billion from the banking system in just 51 days of the current fiscal year. The government's net borrowing from the banking system in the first 51 days of the current fiscal year (2019-2020) almost touched its net borrowing from the source in the entire last fiscal year (2018-2019). Banks officials said that the increase in tax on interest income from investment on savings instruments might be the reason for the fall in NSC sales in July. In the Finance Bill-2019, the government increased the tax at source on savings tools by two fold to 10 per cent, irrespective of investment ceiling, to make it consistent with the bank interest rate.

• The central bank has already cautioned the high net worth individual along with entities in purchasing NSCs beyond the allowable limit, resulting in a sharp fall in NSCs sales. In FY19, the government's net sales of savings certificates reached BDT 499.39 billion against the net sales of BDT 465.30 billion in FY18. The government is giving interest at the rates between 11.04% and 11.76% against the NSCs. In the budget for FY20, the revenue collection target was set at BDT 3.78 trillion, leaving deficit at BDT 1.45 billion. For deficit financing, the government has planned to borrow BDT 638.48 billion from overseas sources and the rest BDT 773.63 billion from domestic sources mainly from banks and saving certificates.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/small-savers-to-cheer-as-source-tax-slashed-1567359601>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83285/5pc-tax-on-nscs-up-to-BDT-5-lakh-from-aug-28>

Remittances top USD 3.0 billion in August

• Money sent home by expatriate Bangladeshis amounted to over USD3.0 billion in the two months to August, boosted by increased flow on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The flow of remittances rose by nearly 13% to USD 3.08 billion during the July-August period of financial year 2020 from USD 2.73 billion in the same period a year earlier, according to the central bank's latest statistics, released on Monday.

• The Eid festival along with lower interest rate sparked by the fear of possible global meltdown has helped increase the inflow of remittances, a senior official of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) said. The central banker also expected the upward trend in inward remittance to continue in the coming months as the government has announced a 2.0% incentive on the overseas workers' money. The central bank had earlier taken a series of measures to

encourage the expatriate Bangladeshis to send their hard-earned money through the formal banking channel, instead of the illegal "hundi" system to help boost the country's foreign exchange reserves.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/remittances-top-30b-in-august-1567446052>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/remittance-climbs-cash-incentive-1794730>
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/83371/remittance-rises-by-5pc-in-august-on-cash-incentive>

Annual Development Programme (ADP) spending hits five-year high in July

- Development spending witnessed a five-year high in July, the first month in the current fiscal year, thanks to the power division's outstanding performance in implementing the annual development programme (ADP). Moreover, the amount was four times the sum spent in the corresponding month last fiscal year. A total of BDT 39.51 billion was spent in July, which accounted for 1.84% of the current fiscal year's allocation. In comparison, BDT 10.27 billion was expended in the same month a year ago, which was 0.57% of the annual allocation. In July in the past five years, the implementation of the ADP had been below 1%.

- All the ministries and division performed very poorly in July, except for the power division, which solely accounted for BDT 20.66 billion, 7.23% of the spending, IMED data showed. The government has set aside BDT 2.15 trillion for development projects, 81% of which is for 15 ministries and divisions. Disbursement of foreign aid increased in July as development partners released USD 391.10 million, more than double of USD 187.88 million recorded a year ago.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/adp-spending-hits-five-year-high-july-1793623>

Private sector credit growth hits fresh 6 year low in July

- The descending trend in private sector credit growth has remained unchanged with the growth rate hitting fresh six-year low in July this year amid heavy borrowing from the banking sector by the government, reflecting stagnant private investment state. As per the latest Bangladesh Bank data, the private sector credit growth slumped to 11.26% year-on-year in July this year, much lower than the BB's cautious projection for the fiscal year 2019-2020. Taking into consideration about the 6 year low credit growth in June this year, 11.29%, the central bank reduced the private sector growth projection to 14.8% for the FY20 after failure to achieving 16.5% growth target in the FY19. In June this year, the private sector credit growth was 11.29%, lowest since June, 2013 when it was 11.04%.

- An official of the central bank has said that the Bangladesh Bank's stricter monitoring over the banks for ensuring quality of credit to containing defaulted loans could be the reason behind the slowdown. Otherwise, banks could have disbursed higher amount of credit to the private sector, the official said. Besides the tight monitoring, growing volume of defaulted loans and slower rate of recovery was also holding banks from ensuring adequate credit to the private sector, they said. Apart from these, high sales of national savings certificates also slowed down the deposit growth in the banking sector, another reason to lessening banks' capacity to lend.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83284/private-sector-credit-growth-hits-fresh-6-year-low-in-july>

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) fears 6.0% inflation in September

- A spike in inflationary pressure is projected for September on the back of a rising trend in the prices of key commodities in the international market. Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) predicted the overall point-to-point inflation close to 6.0% at the end of this month. However, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) earlier estimated the overall inflation at 5.52% for June 2019.

- MCCI, the country's premier trade body, also said the foreign exchange reserve is likely to fall at the end of the Jul-Sept quarter by more than USD 200 million. It sought to attribute this fall to payments to the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) against imports. MCCI also forecasts an increase in the volume of export, import and remittance. It said the monthly shipment in September will expand to USD 3.3 billion, up by USD 125 million from last August. The trade organization said the import will hike by USD 70 million to USD 5.4 billion at the end of September. Foreign remittance may swell to approximately USD 1.7 billion at the end of this month, up by USD 90 million from the August volume.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/mcci-fears-60pc-inflation-in-sept-1567621628>

Overall economic achievements remain below true potentials: Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI)

- The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) has listed inadequate infrastructure, lack of investors' confidence, and shortage of power and energy as major impediments to the country's desired economic growth. Besides, weak implementation and ambiguity of regulatory and policy frameworks are also responsible for the situation, said the MCCI in its Review of Economic Situation in Bangladesh for April-June period of 2019 (Q4 of fiscal year or FY 2018-19). The country's oldest trade body also said Bangladesh's overall economic achievements remain below the level of inherent potentials despite varied imprints of positive performances in certain areas. Creditable performance of the economy in certain areas notwithstanding, overall achievements remain below their true potentials, opined the MCCI.

- The power supply situation improved in Q4 of FY 19, but the demand for power increased as well, it mentioned. The overall electricity production remained low because of gas shortage, and also some power stations were shut down for maintenance. Transmission capacity appears to be a limiting factor in the supply of power to consumers.

- The MCCI quarterly review, however, termed the country's overall economic situation as positive, as indicated by steady improvement in the major economic indicators. According to it, the quarter under review saw a steady progress in the agriculture sector, and a moderately good growth in the industry sector, despite having crisis in the power sector, and decline in the inflation rate.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/overall-economic-achievements-remain-below-true-potentials-1567619509>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-business/news/economy-faces-risks-despite-high-growth-1795711>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83574/economic-growth-faces-some-risks-mcci>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/04/mcci-review-economic-situation-positive-despite-downside-risks>

NPL buildup, high cost of fund remain major potential risks: Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM)

- The country's banking sector is now moderately competitive and stable. But, there are some potential risks for the sector, including further increase in the volume of non-performing loans (NPLs), insolvency, growing urban and rural discrepancy, and high cost of fund, a study by BIBM opined. The study found a significant relationship between the banks' total asset and volume of NPLs. It implies that if the banks can reduce NPLs, they can increase their asset portfolio in a prudent manner, which eventually will reduce credit risk. The estimated coefficient for total asset implies that increase in bank assets will reduce Z-score.
- The notable upward concentration in fixed deposit should remain as a point of worry in the market, as it causes high cost on deposit and cost of fund, the study opined. It also observed that dependency on high cost deposit may cause high possibility of liquidity crisis, as there will be no space to offer higher profit to depositors. The study found that the volume of rural deposit has increased from 15.9% in 1980 to 20.6% in 2018. But the volume of rural advance has reduced from 11.8% in 1980 to 10.4% in 2018.
- Over the last four decades, the share of industrial loan (in the total volume of disbursed loan) has experienced regular ups and downs. But agricultural credit has declined to 4.6% in 2018 from 17.5% in 1980.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/npl-buildup-high-cost-of-fund-remain-major-potential-risks-1567532287>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/04/pulling-out-tk2-12-100cr-idle-money-from-banks>

BTRC starts work on 5G guideline

- Bangladesh is homing in on a 2022 roll-out of the fifth generation (5G) cellular network technology, with the telecom regulator now working on a guideline for the next generation of mobile internet connectivity that comes with super-fast speeds. With 5G, mobile users can expect average download speeds of at least 1 Gigabits per second, in contrast to 7.5 Megabits per second under 4G.
- 5G networks are already starting to appear and are expected to launch across the world by 2020. The Bangladesh government has initially targeted to launch 5G service by the end of 2022 or early 2023. But leading mobile phone operators said the market ecosystem is not ready yet to reap the full benefits of 4G, let alone the next generation 5G. Their total investment on 3G was upwards of BDT 360.00 billion but they have registered only BDT 70.00 core in revenue against it.
- For rolling out 4G services, operators have invested about BDT 110.00 billion and have also paid BDT 50.00 billion to the regulator. But the impact on revenue has been negligible. From the operators' side there is no business case for 5G, the managing director of Robi, said in February 2019.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/5g-mobile-internet-service-guideline-btrc-starts-work-1795237>
<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/btrc-to-prepare-guideline-for-5g-network-by-january-1567532828>
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/83469/government-forms-body-to-frame-5g-guidelines>

Move underway to utilize government agencies' idle money

- The government has initiated a move to bring the surplus money of different autonomous, semi-autonomous and statutory agencies, including non-financial corporations, to the national exchequer as 68 self-governed agencies have BDT 2121.00 billion idle money in different banks. The Cabinet Secretary said that the policy of the government is to bring the surplus money to the national exchequer with the proposed law for financing different development projects and supporting public welfare. Of the idle money, the surplus one will be deposited to the national exchequer after keeping aside the operational cost, additional 25% of operational cost as emergency fund, money for general provident fund (GPF) and pension, he said.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/move-underway-to-utilise-govt-agencies-idle-money-1567445383>

5% tax on National Savings Certificates (NSC) up to BDT 0.5 million from August 28

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has made 5.0% reduced rate of tax at source on the yields of savings certificates in case of investments up to BDT 0.5 million. The decision was to take effect from August 28, 2019 and onwards. But if the investment goes beyond BDT 0.5 million, the investors will have to pay 10% tax at source on total amount of yields. The lower tax rate has been offered irrespective of the purchasing period of savings tools by the investors. However, the interest on pensioners and wage earners' bond is exempted from the payment of taxes if the amount is within BDT 0.5 million.
- Currently, interest rate against bank deposits ranges from 6.5 to 11% while investors of the savings certificates get return on their investment up to 11.04 to 11.76%. Bank depositors, who have Taxpayer Identification Number, have to pay 10% tax at source on their interest amount while the tax rate is 15% if depositors have no TIN. The Directorate of National Savings (DNS) has made TIN mandatory for purchasing savings certificates. The high yield rate of savings tools encourages investors to buy savings tools instead of depositing money in the banks.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/small-savers-to-cheer-as-source-tax-slashed-1567359601>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83285/5pc-tax-on-nscs-up-to-bdt-5-lakh-from-aug-28>

Government to cut down on bank borrowing for September

- The government is set to reduce borrowing from the country's banking system for September, compared to the current month, to meet the budget deficit partly. The ministry of finance has set the bank borrowing target at over BDT 23 billion for September, according to the auction calendar issued by the Bangladesh Bank (BB) on Thursday. According to the calendar, the government may take up to BDT 174 billion as gross borrowing from the banking system in the next month by issuing treasury bills (T-bills) and bonds.
- The government's net bank borrowing is set to reach BDT 23.40 billion by the end of September, after deducting BDT 150.50 billion as maturity amount of the government securities from the gross borrowing amount, the central bank officials added. The government's net bank borrowing was BDT 48.50 billion in August of this calendar year, according to the officials.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/govt-to-cut-down-on-bank-borrowing-for-september-1567101019?date=30-08-2019>

Women employment falling in urban areas

- The number of women working in urban Bangladesh has been declining since 2010 but it is the opposite in case of rural women. In 2010, urban female participation rate was 34.5% , which came down to 31% in 2017. In contrast, in rural Bangladesh the ratio rose to 38.6% from 36.4% , according to the report 'Employment, Labour Force Participation and Education: Towards Gender Equality in Bangladesh'. The report attributed the declining participation of urban women on the lack of good salaried jobs, self-employment opportunity, and discouragement by high unemployment rate among young educated women.
- The rural women participation rate may have risen due to expansion of livestock industry and other activities based on microfinance, which depends mostly on female labour, executive chairperson of The Centre for Development and Employment Research (CDER) said. Generating non-farm self-employment requires skill and financial investment. But women barely have access to finance in urban area. Overall women's participation in the labour force has been hovering around the 36% -mark in the last seven years though the participation rate increased to 36.3% from 23.9% during 2000-2017.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/women-employment-falling-urban-areas-1793668>

China blacklists five local private banks

- A good number of Bangladeshi banks are facing difficulties in settling their letters of credit (LCs) after being blacklisted by China, officials said. The Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the embassy of China in Dhaka on its website has recently published notices regarding the blacklisting of five Bangladeshi banks and cautioned its financial institutions over conducting transactions. Not only the new-generation banks, but also the first and second generation lenders are facing similar problems, according to the officials. Experts and bankers have identified weak financial state, rising non-performing loans, and sudden changes in the ownership of several banks as reasons behind the lenders' travails. Foreign banks are refusing to accept LCs opened by their Bangladeshi counterparts, thus hurting trade and investment, they said.
- The chairman of the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh (ABB) said that China is large trading partner for both the country and its banking sector. Sometimes some banks delay making trade payment, thus face such actions, he said. He said there will be adverse impacts of such blacklisting by countries like China on the banking sector. The banks should immediately contact the Chinese authority to resolve the dispute, he suggested.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/china-blacklists-five-local-private-banks-1567186355?date=31-08-2019>

RMG, textile machinery imports fall by 11.04%

- Bangladesh's garment and textile machinery imports registered an 11.04% fall to USD 1.43 billion in the last fiscal year for lack of new investment in the primary textile and

clothing industry. However, the overall imports of capital machinery in FY19 fell by 9.43% to USD 4.67 billion, which was USD 5.16 billion in the previous fiscal. According to Bangladesh Bank (BB) data, in the fiscal year 2018-19, Bangladesh imported textile and garment machinery worth USD 1.42 billion, down by 11.04%, which was USD 1.60 billion in the previous year. Imports of textile machinery saw an 18.40% decline to USD 663 million, while garment machinery imports plunged by 3.52% to USD 767.15 million.

- Industry people and the economists think that absence of new investment and downtrend in private credit growth caused by crisis in the banking sector dragged down the imports of capital machinery. On top of that, the national election at the end of 2018 was another reason for the down trend in imports as investors turned cautious at that time. According to BGMEA, the number of new factories registered with BGMEA in FY2017-18 was 82 which came down to 60 in 2018-19 fiscal. On the other hand, economists mention the crisis in banking sector as another reason, which has created cash crunch hindering new investments.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/01/rmg-textile-machinery-imports-fall-by-11-04>

Important News: Capital Market

Tax receipts from DSE dip 57% in August

- The government's revenue earnings from the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) slumped 57% month-on-month in August due to lower trading sessions on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha holiday. Market analysts said low share sales by the sponsor-directors coupled with lower trading sessions due to Eid-ul-Azha vacation, affected the government earnings from the prime bourse. The government bagged revenue worth BDT 83 million in August, the second month of the current fiscal year, against BDT 195 million in July, registering a decline of 57% month-on-month, the DSE data showed.
- Of the total earnings in August, BDT 74 million came from the TREC (trading right entitlement certificate) holders' commission, popularly known as brokerage commission. And the government earned only BDT 9 million from share sales by sponsor-directors and placement holders in August against BDT 105 million in July, which impacted overall earnings.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/tax-receipts-from-dse-dip-57-percent-in-august-1567444405>

Confidence Cement acquires 51% stake of Zodiac Power

- Confidence Cement has purchased 51% stake of Chattogram-based Zodiac Power Chittagong Ltd and made it a subsidiary of the company. The board of directors of Confidence Cement has approved the purchase of 5.1 million ordinary shares of BDT 10 each of Zodiac Power Chittagong with effect from August 06, 2019 which is 51% stake in the equity of the Zodiac Power, according to an official disclosure on Tuesday. The Zodiac Power Chittagong Ltd is an Independent Power Producer company having 54.363 MW

HPO based power plant located at Kolagao at Patiya in Chattogram, said the disclosure.

- The Confidence Cement also informed that upon successful testing and commissioning the Zodiac Power Chittagong has started commercial operation of its HFO based, net 54.363 MW Power Plant consisting of the Unit of MAN Engines supplied along with related auxiliaries by Germany with effect from August 30, 2019 to sell the whole production of electricity to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB).

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/confidence-cement-acquires-51pc-stake-of-zodiac-power-1567529130>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/confidence-cement-buys-51pc-stakes-zodiac-power-1795222>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/04/confidence-cement-buys-51-stake-in-zodiac-power>

IPO subscription of Ashuganj Power to begin September 23

- The initial public offering (IPO) of Ashuganj Power Station Company Ltd will begin on September 23. The IPO will stay open for both resident and non-resident Bangladeshis till October 6 this year. The bonds will be non-convertible, fully redeemable, and coupon bearing. Each of the 200,000 bonds with a seven-year term will cost BDT 5,000. The annual interests from the bonds will be minimum 8.5% and maximum 10.5%, payable every six months. The state-run company will use the proceeds for land development, purchase of primary fuel and transportation. Ashuganj Power, the largest power plant of Bangladesh, now generates 1,690 megawatt.

- This power station plays a significant role in the national economic development by generating more than 12% of total demand for electricity in the country. Ashuganj Power Station is located near to the Titas Gas field and at the bank of river Meghna. As a part of the Power Sector Development and Reform Program of the government, Ashuganj Power Station was incorporated under the Companies Act 1994 on 28 June 2000.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/08/30/ipo-subscription-of-ashuganj-power-to-begin-september-23>

ADN Telecom to issue shares under book building

- The securities regulator has allowed ADN Telecom to issue shares to eligible investors (EIs) and general public under the book building method. As per the BSEC approval, the company will issue over 11.87 million shares to EIs at a price of BDT 30 each, the cut off price. Over 7.91 million shares will be issued to general investors at a price of BDT 27 each. The company will utilize the IPO (initial public offering) fund worth BDT 570 million to develop infrastructure, establish data center, repay bank loans and bear the IPO expenses.

- The securities regulator has also approved the proposal of issuing registration to Build Bangladesh Social Entrepreneurs Fund, an impact fund. The size of the fund will be BDT 830 million and the tenure will be 10 years.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/adn-telecom-to-issue-shares-under-book-building-1567529338>

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/83472/bsec-okays-adn-telecoms-tk-57-cr-ipo>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/04/bsec-approves-adn-telecom-ipo-tk83-cr-impact-fund>

UltraTech to sell Bangladesh's unit to Heidelberg Cement

- UltraTech Cement Limited, a major market player in India's cement market, is in the final stage of selling its stake in Emirates Cement Bangladesh that produces cement under the brand name of 'UltraTech Cement'. UltraTech Cement Middle East Investments Limited, a subsidiary of UltraTech Cement Limited, owns the cement maker in Bangladesh. The move of the entity has come within nine years of acquiring Emirates Cement Bangladesh amid extensive business competition along with rising operation cost in the country.

- UltraTech has sought approval from the Bangladesh's central bank as the transaction would be completed in Bangladesh and the entity would repatriate sell proceeds from Bangladesh. Heidelberg Cement would clear the entire sell proceeds in Bangladesh to UltraTech, sources said. As per the BB sources, UltraTech has proposed selling shares at BDT 17.09 each, setting the total sales value of its stake in Emirates Cement Bangladesh at BDT 2.71 billion. The central bank has been scrutinizing the proposal and would finalize its decision soon, BB officials said.

- Asked about the probable cause of the UltraTech's move, Crown Cement Group chief adviser to the board said that the country's cement manufacturers had excess production capacity against the market demand and it had become a major problem for the industry. The total market demand for cement was 31 million tonnes against the production capacity of 58 million tonnes in last year, leaving manufacturers in severe competition and forcing sales of cement at a very low margin, he said, also a former chief financial officer of multinational company Lafarge Surma Cement. At present, there are 75 cement producers in the country and around 35 of them are active in business. He also said that the latest budgetary measures that slapped 5% source tax on turnover had become another burden for the sector along with the apprehension of increasing freight costs.

- According to the market insiders, the country's cement market would expand at the rate of around 10% in 2019 riding on the heavy government expenditure for infrastructure development projects like Padma Multipurpose Bridge.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83573/ultratech-to-sell-bangladeshs-unit-to-heidelbergcement>

Japanese company to acquire 49% of Reliance's Bangladesh power project

- Reliance Power signed a partnership agreement with JERA, one of the largest power utilities of Japan, for jointly setting up 750 MW gas based combined cycle power project (Phase-1) at Meghnaghat in Bangladesh, report agencies. Reliance Power will hold 51% stake while JERA will hold 49% stake in the joint venture company. The project will be set up within 36 months of signing the agreements. The transaction will result in debt reduction for Reliance Power of Rs. 8.35 billion (USD 116 million) payable to US-Exim.

- The gas-based combined cycle power project will be set up in Narayanganj's Meghnaghat, 40km southeast of Dhaka. The Bangladesh Power Development Board will buy electricity from the project for 22 years. Reliance plans to invest about USD 1 billion to set up the plant by 2022, Reuters reported. The combined-cycle power plant will be fueled by gas and liquefied natural gas.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/japanese-co-to-acquire-49pc-of-reliances-bd-power-project-1567532762>

Reliance inks final deals with Bangladesh entities

- The Reliance Bangladesh LNG and Power Ltd, owned by the Reliance Power Ltd of India, signed final deals with three Bangladeshi entities concerned on Sunday to construct a 718-megawatt (MW) combined cycle power plant. Under the agreement, the power plant project will be implemented within 36 months of inking the deal (August 31, 2022). The Re-Gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG)-based plant will be located at Meghnaghat in Narayanganj.
- The BPDB will purchase electricity from the Reliance's power plant for 22 years at a levelized tariff rate of 7.312 US cents (BDT 5.85, per kilowatt-hour) with 82% plant factor and 12% discount factor as per the PPA, according to a fact-sheet made available to the newsmen and guests who attended the event. However, the fact-sheet did not mention the rate, at which the Titas would supply gas to the proposed power plant.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/reliance-inks-final-deals-with-bangladesh-entities-1567359839>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/deals-signed-reliance-718mw-plant-1794214>

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83289/reliance-awarded-power-plant-contract-without-bidding>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/09/01/reliance-india-inks-deals-to-set-up-718-mw-power-plant>

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) halts auto-renewal of packages for GP, Robi

- The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has imposed fresh sanctions on two mobile phone operators — Grameenphone and Robi — by halting auto-renewal of their current voice and data packages. The BTRC move came within a month of suspending the issuance of non-objection certificates to the mobile phone operators on July 22 this year, aiming to realise the audit claims worth BDT 134.46 billion from the operators. The suspension of NOC issuance has already barred the mobile phone operators from getting approval for any new voice or data package and importing equipment and software for which the operators previously received regulatory approval or NOCs.
- Along with cancellation of previously issued NOCs, the BTRC has made it mandatory to take fresh approval for releasing equipment from the ports. In the letters, the commission also informed the mobile operators that the regulatory sanctions would be withdrawn upon payment of audit claims. The telecom operators have been informed about the fresh move a few days ago. As a result, GP and Robi would have to take fresh approval for the existing packages after the expiry of the initial approval's validity period.
- At present, GP has the BTRC approval for running around 40 voice and data packages excluding promotional offers while the other operator, Robi, has approval for operating over 100 packages and offers for the customers. To mount regulatory pressure on the mobile phone operators for the recovery of the audit claims, the commission is going to take tougher measures.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/83029/btrc-halts-auto-renewal-of-packages-for-gp-robi>

Robi registers 1.6% revenue growth in Q2

- Bangladesh's second largest mobile phone operator, Robi, registered 1.6% revenue growth in quarter two (Q2) compared to the previous quarter reaching BDT 18.59 billion

which was 12.4% in the same quarter of last year. Besides, Robi's voice revenue grew up by 2.8% than Q1 which was 9.7% in Q2 of the previous year. And for data revenue, the growth is 2.5% than Q1, but lower compared to same period of last year as it was 28.9%. Robi's subscriber base grew by 1.3% in the quarter to reach 47.9 million, representing 29.6% of the subscriber market share.

- Robi's Managing Director and CEO said that as feared, the minimum tax of 2% on their total revenue, imposition of direct tax on statutory dis allowances (Excess Perquisite and others), and the existing regulatory barriers have had a crippling effect on Robi's financial performance in the second quarter of this year. Going forward, they are very worried that the doubling of SIM tax and the increased supplementary duty will further add to their financial woes as a struggling smaller operator, he added.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/08/30/robi-registers-1-6pc-revenue-growth-in-q2>

Institutions backing off from stocks too

- Institutional investors, who were supposed to be cool heads in the sea of jittery retail investors, are selling off more shares than they are buying and in so doing causing a slump. In the last 15 days, institutions -- which include merchant banks, financial institutions and state-owned Investment Corporation of Bangladesh -- have sold stocks amounting to BDT 10 billion and bought stocks worth BDT 8 billion, according to the Dhaka Stock Exchange. During the period, DSEX, the benchmark index of the DSE, slid 237 points to close at 4,986.37 points yesterday. It lost BDT 159.71 billion in market capitalization. Some of the institutions were forced to sell shares to adjust their margin loans, said a senior merchant banker.
- Meanwhile, analysts said measures taken by the regulator in May this year to boost the stock market did not work as they ignored the key problem: the liquidity crisis. The regulator also brought 21 changes in the primary market and some changes in the secondary market. The government also provided some incentives through the budget, including doubling the tax-free limit of dividend income to BDT 50,00 for general investors. What is more, the Bangladesh Bank came forward to enhance the investment scope of financial institutions by easing the market exposure conditions. After taking the steps, the index soared to 5,475 points on June 11, up from 5,175 on April 24. However, the trend continued for a few days and then plunged again.
- A top official of a leading asset management company said the main problem of the market is not addressed yet, which led to a communication gap among the regulators as witnessed in case of Grameenphone recently. Liquidity crisis among the financial institutions is also a big problem for the market and it is not solved yet, he said. The official pointed out another problem: the non-stop gambling in the market.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/institutions-backing-stocks-too-1795783>

Open-end Mutual Funds interest fund managers more

- Most of the fund managers now prefer floatation of open-end mutual funds (MFs) to closed-end ones, as they consider options of the open-end ones more viable and investor-friendly than the latter ones. As a result, the number of open-end MFs has gradually increased over the last five years, while the number of closed-end ones has declined during the period.

- An official of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) said a number of factors, including small size, prompted the fund managers to float more open-end MFs than closed-end ones. The minimum size of a closed-end MF is BDT 500 million, whereas the minimum size of an open-end fund is BDT 100 million. According to the BSEC information, two open-end MFs were floated in 2014, three in 2015, 13 in 2016, seven in 2017, and 14 in 2018. Presently, the number of this type of funds stands at 53. On the other hand, only seven closed-end MFs were floated in last five years, and the total number of such funds is presently 37.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/open-end-mfs-interest-fund-managers-more-1567532337>

Banks hardly lend via agent banking

- Banks are showing reluctance in lending through the agent banking window based in rural areas despite mobilizing large sums through the platform. As of June, BDT 52.84 billion was collected through the window, up from BDT 20.13 billion a year earlier, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank. But only BDT 2.37 billion was lent through the window, up 72% year-on-year. The year-on-year lending growth was apparently good last quarter, but it hardly had any impact on rural entrepreneurs because the amount is little, said a Bangladesh Bank official.

- The trend of deposit mobilization and lending indicates banks are more interested in collecting funds from rural areas than extending lending facilities to them. This has created an imbalanced situation between the urban and rural areas. Banks are mopping up money from rural areas and giving out loans in urban areas, the central banker said. Nineteen banks have so far commenced agent banking services, but only seven give out loans.

- Of the total disbursed loans, Bank Asia accounts for 89% of the sum and has plans to bump up its lending even more. The managing director of Bank Asia said his bank was now focused on accelerating loan disbursement through the agent banking window. Through the window, Bank Asia, one of the pioneers in agent banking, disburses loans ranging from BDT 20,000 to BDT 2 million. In some cases, it disbursed even BDT 5 million to a single client, he said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/banking/news/banks-hardly-lend-agent-banking-1794220>

Net foreign fund in stocks remains negative for sixth straight month

- Net foreign investment in Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) remained negative for the sixth straight month in August as the overseas investors continued to pull out their fund amid lack of confidence. Market analysts said the foreign investors are selling off their shares due to the lack of confidence, depreciation of local currency against the US dollar and concern over the country's financial sector. The telecom regulator's strict stance towards Grameenphone (GP) coupled with the government move to liquidate People's Leasing and Financial Services also dampened the foreign investors' confidence, said a leading broker.

- In August, the foreign investors bought shares worth nearly BDT 1.77 billion while they sold BDT 2.79 billion worth of shares, taking the net position of negative BDT 1.02 billion, according to the DSE data.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/net-foreign-fund-in-stocks-remains-negative-for-sixth-straight-month-1567355125>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/83286/foreign-investment-at-dse-negative-for-six-months>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/stock/2019/09/01/foreign-investment-at-capital-market-falling-for-six-months>

Graft allegation against Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) chairman baseless: BSEC

- The securities regulator has expressed its hope that the settlement of allegation regarding graft allegation against its chairman will boost the confidence of capital market related persons. In a press release, the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) said the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has ensured different media that there was no base of allegation brought against the BSEC chairman.

- The media reports were published on August 21 and 22 based on the ACC's document regarding appointment of an inquiry official to investigate the alleged involvement of the BSEC chairman in approval of the IPO (initial public offering) proposals of low profile companies.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/graft-allegation-against-bsec-chairman-baselessbsec-1567099531?date=30-08-2019>