

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.

Moody's doubts efficacy of Bangladesh Bank's revised write-off policy

- Global rating agency Moody's has said that the revised loan write-off policy of Bangladesh Bank would not be able to reduce non-performing loans significantly due to the weaknesses in corporate governance and lengthy legal processes.
- Bangladesh Bank on February 6 relaxed the loan write-off policy allowing banks to write off a loan worth below BDT 0.2 million without filing lawsuit. In the previous policy, the limit was BDT 50,000. The revised policy also allows banks to write off bad loans after three years of the loans becoming classified without any possibility of recovery in near future.
- 'We do not expect any significant increase in amounts written off following the announced changes. The system-level NPL ratio will remain elevated because the formation of NPLs are likely to persist as a result of the weaknesses in corporate governance and difficult and lengthy legal processes, which are the main drivers behind the weak asset quality of Bangladeshi banks,' Moody's said.
- 'The banks are also likely to keep bad loans on the balance sheet given that the extended period of loan recovery reflects weaknesses of the legal system rather than the inability of borrowers to repay,' Moody's said

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/65240/moodys-doubts-efficacy-of-bbs-revised-write-off-policy>

Standard Chartered Bank projects 7.2% growth for Bangladesh

- Bangladesh economy is likely to grow at a rate of 7.2% during the ongoing and the next fiscal years (FY), according to projections of the Standard Chartered (StanChart).
- The StanChart's growth projection for Bangladesh is notably lower than the government's growth target for this fiscal. According to the government's projection, the country's economy will grow at a rate of 7.8% during FY 2018-19.
- StanChart officials pointed at the present volatile global trade scenario for the reason of projecting lower growth.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/stanchart-projects-72pc-growth-for-bangladesh-1550513475>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/banking/news/more-troubles-ahead-taka-1704109>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/65239/dollar-exceeds-BDT-84-despite-injection-of-15b-in-8-months>

Finance Minister defends approval of new banks

- Finance Minister said that he was not worried about the number of banks provided they follow rules and regulations.
- According to his statement The number of banks is not a big matter -- what matters is whether they run following rules and regulations and can provide proper services to customers.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/kamal-defends-approval-of-new-banks-1550512819>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/banks/2019/02/18/mustafa-kamal-not-worried-about-increasing-number-of-banks>

GP handed out SMP restrictions

- Grameenphone was slapped with four restrictions by the telecom regulator as part of the penalties for becoming a Significant Market Power (SMP).
- The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) asked the operator to immediately implement the restrictions, which include a ban on signing any exclusive deals with goods and service providers. Currently, the vendors are allowed to extend offers to only Grameenphone customers, shutting out other operators from negotiating such deals.
- The acceptable call drop for Grameenphone has been set at no more than 2% . According to a market drive report run by the regulator in November 6 to 8, Grameenphone's call drop rate was found to be 3.38% , which is higher than its competitors.
- The BTRC has asked Grameenphone not to conduct any nationwide ad campaign on the back of its dominance.

- In the fourth point, the telecom watchdog has made it easier for a user to leave Grameenphone under the mobile number portability facility. Currently, if a subscriber wants to switch to a network they will have to stay with the new carrier at least for 90 days. But such subscribers can quit the Grameenphone network after 30 days.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/telecom/news/gp-handed-out-smp-restrictions-1704100>

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/65238/btrc-slaps-conditions-on-gp-as-smp>

Call drop rate highest in GP: Bangladesh Telecom Regulatory Commission (BTRC) survey

- Top mobile telephony firm Grameenphone has the highest call drop rate and call set up time among the country's telecom operators.
- The call drop rate and call set up time of GP were 3.38% and 10.14 seconds respectively, revealed the survey conducted by the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission. The survey was carried out from November 06 through December 08, 2018.
- On the other hand, call drop rates of Banglalink, Robi and Teletalk were 0.58% , 1.35% , 1.58% respectively, the survey found. The standard ceiling of call drop rate is up to 2% .

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/02/18/gp-fails-to-comply-btrc-s-call-drop-benchmark>

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/call-drop-rate-highest-in-gp-btrc-survey-1550513715>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$53.63	+0.53	+1.00%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$62.97	+0.55	+0.88%
Gold Spot*	\$1,311.16	+0.36	+0.03%
DSEX	5731.95	-1.96	-0.03%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	25,425.76	+372.65	+1.49%
FTSE 100	7,133.14	+4.03	+0.06%
Nikkei 225	21,141.49	+277.28	+1.33%

Exchange Rates

USD 1 = BDT 83.88*

GBP 1 = BDT 108.16*

EUR 1 = BDT 95.05*

INR 1 = BDT 1.17*

*Currencies and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.

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