

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.

November sees further dip in interest rate spread

- Interest rate spread in the country's banking sector decreased further in November, although the commercial banks increased their interest rates more on deposit than lending.
- The weighted average rate on deposits rose to 5.30% in November from 5.25% a month before, while interest on lending stood at 9.50% from 9.47%.
- The weighted average rate on deposits was 5.27% and 5.36% in September and August respectively.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/nov-sees-further-dip-in-interest-rate-spread-1546363060>

Private sector credit growth hits 3-year low in November

- Private sector credit growth dropped to a three-year low in November, 2018 due to businesses' reluctance to take loans from banks ahead of national polls and banks' cautious approach to loan distribution.
- In November, 2018, private sector credit growth slowed down to 14.01%, the lowest after the 13.72% growth in November, 2015. The growth in November last year was 2.79% points less than the central bank's target of 16.8% for the first half of the current fiscal year of 2018-2019.
- Bank officials said the businesses might have opted to go slow in expanding their business by taking credit from the banks. The businesses might have opted to observe the pre- and post-polls situation before making their further investment decisions, they said.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/60548/pvt-sector-credit-growth-hits-3-yr-low-in-nov>

Banks post hefty operating profits despite challenges

- Private banks reported hefty operating profit in the just concluded year, helped by the much higher interest rate on lending than that on deposits.
- The banks gave emphasis on mobilising funds by opening non-interest bearing capital and savings accounts, which cut down costs and pushed up profits, said top bankers.
- Amongst observed 28 banks' operating profits: 25 posted growth in the range of 1.5% to 40 percent.
- Premier Bank logged in about BDT 6.18 billion as operating profits for 2018, up 40% year-on-year.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/banks-post-hefty-operating-profits-despite-challenges-1681651>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/banks/2019/01/01/operating-profits-of-most-banks-rise>

Government mulls power export in winter

- The government is considering exporting surplus electricity to Nepal during winter in Bangladesh when the demand for power remains low, the state minister for power and energy said.
- During winter, the demand for electricity in Bangladesh decreases, so the country wants to find ways to export surplus electricity available at the time.
- His comments came just two weeks after India issued a new cross-border power trading regulation, which will go a long way in helping Bangladesh import electricity from Nepal and Bhutan using Indian transmission lines.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/govt-mulls-power-export-winter-1681642>

National Board of Revenue (NBR) realizes BDT 750 million from Bangalink, Robi as outstanding VAT

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) collected BDT 750 million from the two mobile operator companies – Bangalink Ltd and Robi Axiata Limited – as their outstanding value added tax (VAT).

- Out of the total amount, Banglalink paid BDT 470 million while Robi paid BDT 280 million for increase in their respective wealth in land and establishment.
- Large Taxpayer Unit (LTU) Commissioner said the NBR had filed lawsuits against the mobile operators for collecting unpaid revenue.
- Recently, the cases have been settled under the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process and Banglalink paid BDT 470 million against three suits while Robi paid BDT 280 million against four suits, he added.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/01/01/nbr-realizes-BDT75cr-from-banglalink-robi-as-outstanding-va>

Net foreign investment at Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) negative last year

- Foreign investment in Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) fell drastically in the just-concluded year, as compared to 2017.
- In 2018, net foreign investment dipped to negative BDT 5.93 billion, which was BDT 17.05 billion positive during 2017, according to data from the premier bourse.
- Foreigners bought shares worth BDT 44.96 billion, against their share sales of BDT 50.90 billion last year. But in 2017, overseas investors had bought shares worth BDT 65.76 billion, against their share sales of BDT 48.71 billion.
- Experts said foreign investment in the country's premier bourse remained positive for only three months (January, March and September) of the outgoing year as overseas investors faced a number of issues, including political uncertainties in election year, depreciation of the Taka against the US dollar, and woes in the country's banking sector.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/stock/2019/01/01/net-foreign-investment-at-dse-negative-last-year>

Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation (DBH) to issue BDT 3.0 billion zero coupon bonds

- The board of directors of Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation (DBH) has decided to issue non-convertible zero coupon bonds of BDT 3.0 billion (in face value).
- The bond will be multiple tranches and fund will be raised through private placement, according to a disclosure.
- Tenure of the bond will be from six months and up to five years from the issue date subject to the approval of the regulatory authorities like Bangladesh Bank (BB) and Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC), said the disclosure.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/dbh-to-issue-BDT-30b-zero-coupon-bonds-1546358307>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$45.40	-0.01	-0.02%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$53.62	-0.18	-0.33%
Gold Spot*	\$1,281.32	-1.28	-0.10%
DSEX	5465.25	+79.61	+1.48%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	23,327.46	+265.06	+1.15%
FTSE 100	6,728.13	-5.84	-0.09%
Nikkei 225	20,014.77	-62.85	-0.31%

Exchange Rates

USD 1 = BDT 83.88*
 GBP 1 = BDT 106.82*
 EUR 1 = BDT 95.99*
 INR 1 = BDT 1.21*

*Currencies and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.

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