

*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.*

### **Bangladesh Bank sells over USD 1.0 billion to banks in six months**

- The central bank has injected more than USD 1.20 billion so far this fiscal year into the market to help keep the country's foreign exchange (forex) regime stable.
- As part of the measure, the Bangladesh Bank (BB) sold the US currency directly to the commercial banks as liquidity support for meeting their import payment obligations.
- A total of USD 1.12 billion sold to the commercial banks during the first six months to December as part of its ongoing support, the BB data showed. Besides, it was selling USD 97 million to the banks from January 01 to January 10 last to meet the growing demand for the greenback in the market, according to central bankers. The central bank sold USD 2.31 billion during the FY 18 on the same ground.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bb-sells-over-10b-to-banks-in-six-months-1547488159>  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bb-sells-122b-6-months-prop-taka-1687729>

### **Bandwidth usage goes up 94%**

- Bandwidth consumption in Bangladesh soared 94% year-on-year to 970 gigabits per second (Gbps) in 2018 thanks to the expansion of fixed broadband and rollout of 4G telecom services. The figure stood at only 300 Gbps at the end of 2016.
- Bandwidth is a measure of how much data a network can transfer. Internet providers denote bandwidth speeds in millions of bits per second, or megabits (Mbps), and billions of bits per second, or gigabits (Gbps). The higher the bandwidth, the faster the speed.
- But about 75% of the bandwidth is used for browsing Facebook and YouTube -- in most cases for unproductive activities, the chief technology officer of Fiber@Home Global said.
- Rising bandwidth consumption indicates digital development. But the policymakers should concentrate more on how digitisation can be used effectively to develop and make life easier for the citizens, he added.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bandwidth-usage-goes-94pc-1687738>

### **SIM tax for Mobile Number Portability (MNP) service goes**

- The government has waived the tax, amounting to BDT 100, on SIM replacement for the newly-introduced Mobile Number Portability (MNP) service. A gazette notification to this effect was issued on Monday, following a statutory regulatory order from the National Board of Revenue (NBR).
- As a result, the cost of switching cell-phone operator is set to reduce significantly. Since the launch of MNP service in last October, customers had to pay a total of BDT 157.50 for the service -- BDT 100 as SIM tax, BDT 50 as service charge and 15% VAT.
- This cost is now likely to come down to BDT 58 following the tax waiver.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/sim-tax-for-mnp-service-goes-1547488488>  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/mnp-tax-free-1687747>  
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/61812/nbr-waives-sim-replacement-tax-for-mnp-service>

### **GP: Seven tech trends set to impact digitization in 2019**

- Mobile operator Grameenphone yesterday revealed in a report listing the seven most anticipated tech trends for 2019 at panel discussion held at their headquarters, GPHouse in Dhaka, according to a press release.
- Scientists and technology analysts of Telenor Research, Telenor Group's research arm, each year reveals this report highlighting top seven trends which they believe will define the year to come.
- The breakthrough topics this year contain the likes of Artificial Intelligence, mass expansion of 5G, emergence of mass industrial IoT, voice activated chat-bots for homes, and tech awareness factors such as screen time control and mobile-driven green technology.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/01/14/gp-seven-tech-trends-set-to-impact-digitization-in-2019>

### **Walton IPO road show today**

- Walton Hi-Tech Industries Limited (WHIL) will hold IPO (initial public offering) road show for eligible institutional investors today (Tuesday) as part of going public under book building method.
- At the road show, the company will present detailed information about the company as per public issue rules.
- The road show will be held at 6:30 pm at Walton Corporate Office at Bashudhara Residential Area's Plot No. 1088, Block-I, Sabrina Sobhan 5th Avenue under Vatara in the capital.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/walton-ipo-road-show-today-1547482913>

### **Nahee Aluminum adds capacity**

- Newly listed Nahee Aluminum is set to increase its annual production of aluminium false ceilings from January 15 by 8.3 million square feet. The new capacity is expected to increase its revenue by 30 to 40%.
- The company, which has a market value of about BDT 500 million, has installed new machinery purchased with the proceeds from its initial public offering in 2017 when it raised BDT 150 million from stock investors.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/nahee-aluminum-adds-capacity-1687735>

### **Le Méridien issues BDT 12.00 billion bond to pay off loans**

- Best Holdings, the parent company of Le Méridien Dhaka, issued a bond to raise BDT 12.00 billion with a view to paying off its bank loans, which it has been struggling to service despite raking in profits.
- The company had taken loans amounting to BDT 11.60 billion for the upscale hotel's construction. As of August 31, 2018, Best Holdings owes BDT 8.38 billion to a total of 13 banks and non-bank financial institutions.
- Curiously, four of the banks -- United Commercial, Southeast, Trust and NCC -- and one of the non-bank financial institutions (IDLC Finance) that are investing in the bond, which will yield interest of 10% over an eight-year period, are owed money by Best Holdings.
- Best Holdings owes BDT 788.2 million to UCBL, BDT 1.45 billion to Southeast, BDT 154.40 million to Trust, BDT 857.00 million to NCC and BDT 407.30 million to IDLC Finance.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/le-meridien-issues-BDT-1200cr-bond-pay-loans-1687750>

**World Stock and Commodities\***

<b>Index Name</b>	<b>Close Value</b>	<b>Value Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$51.11	+0.60	+1.19%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$59.68	+0.69	+1.17%
Gold Spot*	\$1,291.40	+0.10	+0.01%
DSEX	5836.23	-23.98	-0.41%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	23,909.84	-86.11	-0.36%
FTSE 100	6,855.02	-63.16	-0.91%
Nikkei 225	20,567.52	+207.82	+1.02%

**Exchange Rates**

USD 1 = BDT 83.76\*  
GBP 1 = BDT 108.02\*  
EUR 1 = BDT 96.19\*  
INR 1 = BDT 1.18\*

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