

*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.*

### **Secondary trading slips by 62% in FY '18**

- Secondary trading of treasury bills and treasury bonds has dropped sharply during the last fiscal year, reflecting the lower demand for the government securities. Latest statistics with the central bank showed that the total value of secondary trading of T-bills and T-bonds stood at BDT 153.30 billion during FY18, down from BDT 400.51 billion a year earlier. Bangladesh Bank statistics also showed that the total value of secondary trading of bills and bonds was BDT 675.31 billion in FY16.
- This means the secondary trading of the government securities has been declining for the last two years mainly due to the negative issuance of the government securities. Primary issuance of T-bills and T-bonds stood at BDT 706.12 billion in FY17, which was BDT 861.18 billion in FY16. Central bank statistics showed that primary issuance of T-bills and T-bonds stood at BDT 227.0 billion in the first four months (July-October) of FY18.
- The central bank said that OTC trading dropped to BDT 325.28 billion in FY17 from BDT 675.13 billion in FY16. On the other hand, there was almost no TWS trading in FY16, which stood at BDT 75.29 billion in FY17. Currently, 21 banks are performing as primary dealers and can participate directly in the primary auctions.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/secondary-trading-slips-by-62pc-in-fy-18-1531628982>

### **Jan-Jun mobile subscriber growth slows**

- The growth of active mobile phone subscribers slowed in the first half (January-June) of this year compared with that in the same period of last year. As per the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission data, the number of active mobile phone subscribers grew by 5.83 million to 150.9 million at the end of June, 2018 from 145.1 million at the end of December, 2017. On the other hand, the number of active mobile phone users increased by 9.59 million to 136.0 million at the end of June last year from 126.4 million at the end of December, 2016.
- BTRC officials said that the mobile phone operators might have slowed down their efforts to attain new subscribers after the launch of 4G service on February 19, 2018. The BTRC has also disallowed registration of more than a SIM within three hours against a national identity card that also played a role in slowing the growth of mobile phone subscribers in the first half of this year. Of the mobile phone operators, Grameenphone attained highest — 3.84 million — new subscribers with its subscriber base increasing to 69.1 million at the end of June this year from 65.3 million at the end of December, 2017. GP had added 3.63 million users in the first half of 2017.
- The number of active subscribers of Robi grew by 1.82 million to 44.7 million at the end of June, 2018 from 42.9 million six month ago. The combined growth of subscribers of Robi and Airtel that was merged with Robi in 2016 was 5.74 million in January-June of last year. The number of Banglalink's active subscribers grew by 0.90 million to 33.8 million at the end of June this year from 32.4 million at the end of December last year. The subscriber base of the operator had increased by 0.60 million in January-June of 2017. The number of internet subscribers grew by 0.73 million in the January-June period of 2018 to 87.8 million at the end June this year from 80.5 million at the end of December, 2017.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/46123/jan-jun-mobile-subscriber-growth-slows>

### **PKB gets Bangladesh Bank (BB) scheduled bank nod**

- The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has approved conversion of the state-run Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB), a specialised financial institution, into a scheduled bank to expand its business further. According to the decision, the central bank's department concerned will issue a notification, mentioning PKB as a scheduled bank, after completing all the formalities.
- Besides, PKB had received BDT 200 million from MoF to replenish its paid-up capital to BDT 4.0 billion. PKB general manager said that PKB will also expand its business to finance projects in different productive sectors, including agriculture and small and medium enterprises (SME).
- PKB started its operation in April 2011 with a capital of BDT 1.0 billion to provide collateral-free loans to overseas jobseekers as well as to give loans for rehabilitation of expatriate workers on their return home to engage them in various income-generating activities. Currently, PKB is running its business with 63 branches across the country.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/pkb-gets-bb-scheduled-bank-nod-1531677520>

### **Too many offers baffle mobile users**

- The telecom regulator has stepped in to protect customers by way of stopping mobile phone operators from confusing subscribers with hundreds of voice and data offers. In some cases, customers cannot opt out from a package they would like to discontinue. Customers are also charged through automatic renewals without taking their consent. This prompted the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to begin evaluating the issue and take stern action.
- Top three operators have a combined 400 offers and packages deemed too many for customers to choose the best one. Market leader Grameenphone is offering 102 data and voice packages to its 68.6 million active users, according to the BTRC. The merged entity of Robi and Airtel offers 258 packages to 45.0 million subscribers. However, Robi said the number of the package numbers of the merged entity stands at 139 at the moment. The second largest operator said there are some offers, which are not marketed by Robi and subscribers do not buy them. But these products might be in the regulator's findings, it said.
- Banglalink has 76 data and voice offers and state-owned Teletalk is offering 42 packages. However, operators said that the number of offers shouldn't be limited as it might deprive customers of choosing the best one. If the gap between on-net (same network) and off-net (different network) charges is removed, the packages will be simplified and their number will go down, they added. As of May, there are 150.7 million active mobile connections in Bangladesh. Of them, 81.1 million have internet connections, according to the BTRC.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/telecom/too-many-offers-baffle-mobile-users-1606105>

### **Mobile Number Portability (MNP) likely to cost mobile companies BDT 150-170 for each customer**

- Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has endorsed an Infozillion BD-Teletech Consortium proposal to charge mobile phone operators along with taking fees from customers for mobile network portability service. The MNP service will allow subscribers to change their mobile network (operator) by keeping their existing numbers. Under the BTRC proposal, a mobile phone operator will have to pay BDT 150-170 as charge to Infozillion for receiving each MNP customer from other operators.
- The charge, however, would be finalised after getting approval from the telecom ministry. On the other hand, the charge to be paid by each customer for changing operator under the MNP service will remain unchanged at BDT 30. He said that under the licencing conditions the mobile operators were supposed to provide the MNP service to their customers but they refrained from implementing the service and so separate licence was awarded to an MNP operator (Infozillion BD-Teletech Consortium). The MNP operator needed to charge mobile operators BDT 150-170 against each MNP client to make its business 'viable'.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/46122/mnp-likely-to-cost-mobile-cos-BDT-150-170-for-each-customer>

### **Government extends IPO quota facility for one more year**

- The government has extended the IPO quota facility for one more year to June 30 next year for the small investors, who were affected by the capital market debacles in 2010-11. A joint secretary of the Financial Institutions Division said that the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) had proposed for the extension of the facility until June 30, 2019.
- It has so far been extended for six times since the inception and the latest one expired on June 30, 2018. The small investors are enjoying 20T quota in the initial public offerings (IPOs) since introduction of the facility in March, 2012. Generally, the IPO shares are traded comparatively at higher prices on the secondary market than their issue prices due to unusual attraction of a section of investors to that scrip in first few trading sessions.
- The quota facility allows the affected investors to make some profit. The government formed the BDT 9.0-billion fund in July 2013 to prop up the capital market, and mitigate the sufferings of investors, affected during the 2010-11 stock market debacle. Later, ICB was appointed as the fund manager. The central bank disbursed BDT 9.0 billion by three installments against the fund.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/govt-extends-ipo-quota-facility-for-one-more-yr-1531673125>

### **EBL to invest BDT 2.93 billion to open branches in India**

- The board of director of Eastern Bank Limited has decided to open its wing in India, which would require around BDT 2.93 billion in investment for the bank, according to an EBL statement published on the Dhaka Stock Exchange web site on Sunday. EBL said that its board decided and accorded approval of USD 25 million required as regulatory capital and allocated additional USD 10 million on need basis for establishing full-fledged branches in India.

- Besides the approval, EBL also authorised its management to apply to Bangladesh Bank for obtaining necessary permission in this regard and also to liaise with PWC Private Limited (India) for obtaining necessary permission from the Reserve Bank of India. The investment would be made after getting approval from all the parties concerned in both the countries. EBL's branches in India would help bilateral trade between the two countries and help EBL enhance its profitability. Earlier, in June, 2017, EBL had informed the DSE that its board decided to appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers, Kolkata for ground support of getting the required approval for licence from the Reserve Bank of India to open and set up EBL branches at Kolkata, West Bengal and at Guwahati, Assam in India.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/46125/eb1-to-invest-BDT-293cr-to-open-branches-in-india>

### GP subscribers face service disruption

- Mobile phone operator Grameenphone's customers have been facing disruptions in accessing a few services since Saturday night. A huge number of voice and data users of the market leader could not activate services using three of its most used mobile applications -- My GP App, Flexi Plan and Web Channel. Customers also complained through Facebook and other social media platforms that those who used USSD (unstructured supplementary service data) could not activate or deactivate different packages from around 11pm.
- As of May, Grameenphone had about 68.7 million active customers, half of whom use internet services. Almost all of those availing internet are now using the three applications to choose services and learning about updates. Deputy chief executive officer of Grameenphone, acknowledged the problem through a video message yesterday morning. He apologised to customers for the inconvenience. He, however, added that the customers of other data and voice services were not facing any problems.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/gp-subscribers-face-service-disruption-1606084>

### World Stock and Commodities\*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$70.65	-0.36	-0.51%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$74.92	-0.41	-0.54%
Gold Spot*	\$1,243.47	-0.85	-0.07%
DSEX	5336.75	-22.16	-0.41%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	25,019.41	+94.52	+0.38%
FTSE 100	7,661.87	+10.54	+0.14%
Nikkei 225	22,597.35	+409.39	+1.85%

### Exchange Rates

USD 1 = BDT 83.76\*  
 GBP 1 = BDT 110.89\*  
 EUR 1 = BDT 97.87\*  
 INR 1 = BDT 1.22\*

\*Currencies and Commodities are taken from Bloomberg.

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