

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.

China offers zero-tariff access for 98% Bangladeshi products

- China, the largest economy in Asia, has decided to grant duty-free access to 98% of Bangladeshi products through the inclusion of 383 new products, especially leather and leather goods, in the zero-treatment list. In this way, the number of products enjoying the duty holiday will stand at 8,930.
- In 2020, China offered 97% of Bangladeshi products duty-free access to its market and 8,547 Bangladeshi products came under such treatment. But some leather goods, a major exportable to China, were left out of the facility. This time these left-out items have made it to the list, according to sources at the commerce ministry.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/dropped/trade/china-offers-zero-tariff-access-98-bangladeshi-products-357205>

87% in transport, hotel, retail sectors lost jobs in lockdown: Study

- Some of 87% people engaged in the transport, hotel-restaurant, and retail sectors in the capital suffered job losses during the Covid-led lockdown last year, a new study has found. Besides, workers saw their income erode up to 81% as compared with pre-Covid times. Later, with the withdrawal of the lockdown, income recovered to 92%. The study was conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/87-transport-hotel-retail-sectors-lost-jobs-lockdown-study-357184>

Digital payment takes a giant leap

- Users of mobile financial services, digital payment services and debit and credit card-holders of banks all can make payments digitally using phones. The move is expected to reduce the use of cash to a large extent and pave the way for a cashless society in Bangladesh, which is reliant on cash. The PRA-holders of bKash received payments worth BDT 15.37 crore in November. They used BDT 12.36 lakh to purchase goods under the same payment method.
- There are 10.97 crore MFS users as of November, according to the central bank data. About BDT 67,966 crore were channeled through the accounts in the month. Merchant payments stood at BDT 3,050 crore. Transactions through micro-merchant accounts are expected to explode further when the "Bangla QR" code is used widely. Micro-merchant account-holders of banks and MFS providers are now using their respective QR code, which is not interoperable.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/digital-payment-takes-giant-leap-2938976>

Bangladesh Bank asks bankers to augment remittance inflow amid dollar crunch

- The central bank asks top bankers to communicate the expatriate Bangladeshis about enhanced cash incentives on remittance receipts through massive awareness campaigns both at home and abroad. Currently, there is a gap of over BDT 5.0 between the exchange rate of cash dollar on the open market, known as kerb market, and telegraphic transfer (TT) clean rate for remitters. The banks offered an average rate of BDT 85.05 to the remitters for TT on Wednesday, according to the daily report of Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association (BAFEDA). On the other hand, the US currency was traded at around BDT 91 on the informal kerb market on the day as demand for the greenback has gone up recently.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh-bank-asks-bankers-to-augment-remittance-inflow-amid-dollar-crunch-1642041266>

BB asks banks to report on contribution to CMSF

- The Bangladesh Bank on Thursday asked all scheduled banks to report on how much money or undisbursed dividend

the entities have transferred to the capital market stabilisation fund. The central bank issued a letter in this regard to the listed banks on the day. The letter asked the banks to submit report on their contribution by January 18, 2022, said BB sources.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/159899/bb-asks-banks-to-report-on-contribution-to-cmsf>

Power production of Bangladesh shrinks to one-third of capacity

- Electricity generation across Bangladesh now hovers over 'one third' of the capacity with many gas-fired power plants laid idle because of sagging winter demand. Unlike in past winters, the state-run Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) kept 23 plants with an overall 5,224MW generation capacity were kept laid-off as on January 11.
- A senior BPDB official said the dwindling natural gas supplies from local fields and inadequate LNG (liquefied natural gas) imports limited the availability of the fuel for power generation. Petrobangla supplied an estimated 746 million cubic feet per day (mmcf) of natural gas to power plants against the demand for 2,252 mmcf, he added.
- Eight high-sulfur fuel oil (HSFO)- and diesel-fired power plants having a total 650MW generation capacity are now shut, while 48 HSFO-fired plants are now generating electricity. Three diesel-fired units with a combined generation capacity of around 266MW are now out of operation while five others are on line.
- Generation from coal-fired plants now accounts for around 580 megawatts of electricity against the overall 1,688MW capacity. All the seven solar-based power plants are now on line, producing around 166MW electricity in total.
- Electricity import from neighbouring India now stands at half the capacity at 575MW. Bangladesh and India jointly developed infrastructure to import 1,160MW from India.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/power-production-of-bangladesh-shrinks-to-one-third-of-capacity-1642127861>

This year's cotton import to cross 9m bales, a record: BTMA president

- Bangladesh will for the first time import 9 million bales of cotton this year thanks to the sudden rise in demand for yarn and fabrics, said the president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA). In 2021, Bangladesh imported 8.5 million bales of cotton at a cost of over USD 3 billion.
- The upward trend of garment export will continue up to June this year as we booked huge volume of work orders, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said last week. Mills have already made payment of the letters of credit for importing the cotton, said BTMA president.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/years-cotton-import-cross-9m-bales-record-btma-president-2938511>

Aman Cotton directors fined BDT 12cr for fraudulent activities

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission fined four directors of Aman Cotton Fibrous Limited BDT 3 crore each for fraudulent activities, including transaction of a huge amount of funds with related parties without proper documentation. The BSEC also imposed BDT 10 lakh penalty on Aman Cotton's auditor ATA Khan & Co for providing false and misleading information to the commission and investors. BSEC asked the company to cancel the lien of BDT 73 crore fixed deposits within seven days, as it violated the rules of the BSEC.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/159869/aman-cotton-directors-fined-tk-12cr-for-fraudulent-activities>

Mamun Agro's subscription through QIO begins January 23

- The subscription for shares of Mamun Agro Products through qualified investor offer (QIO) will begin January 23, aiming to raise BDT 100 million. The agro products manufacturer's subscription through electronic subscription

system (ESS) under the fixed-price method will be continued till 5:30pm on January 27, according to Dhaka Stock Exchange. The stock market regulator -- Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC)--on October 28 approved the company's proposal for raising capital through QIO.

- According to the company's nine-month financial statement until 31 March, 2021, its earnings per share was BDT 0.98, while the net asset value without revaluation reserve was BDT 15.25. Incorporated in 2003, the principal activities of the company are manufacturing and supplying agro products, including insecticide, pesticide and certified seeds.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/mamun-agros-subscription-through-qio-begins-january-23-1642044785>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 81.69	USD 6.48	8.62%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 84.20	USD 6.42	8.25%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,824.79	(USD 4.41)	-0.24%
DSEX	7,017.23	260.57	3.86%
S&P 500	4,659.02	-107.16	-2.25%
FTSE 100	7,563.85	179.31	2.43%
BSE SENSEX	61,235.30	2,981.48	5.12%
KSE-100	45,763.20	1,167.13	2.62%
CSEALL	13,338.49	1,112.48	9.10%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 85.86 BDT****1 GBP = 117.80 BDT****1 Euro = 98.44 BDT****1 INR = 1.16 BDT**

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