

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 (BD) expats suffer for inadequate remittance points abroad

- Bangladeshi overseas workers have been suffering a serious setback when remitting their hard-earned money due to inadequate number of agent points in their destination countries.
- The migrants have difficulty in sending their hard-earned remittance back home because of inadequate remittance agents or collection points of the Bangladeshi commercial banks in those countries.
- It takes at least three days to receive cash by the beneficiaries of the expatriates due to weekly holidays on Fridays and Saturdays here.
- An estimated 10 million Bangladeshi workers are employed abroad and they remit USD15 billion, on an average, a year to help boost the foreign currency reserve.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/bd-expats-suffer-for-inadequate-remittance-points-abroad-1548006981>

Household debt makes up half of non-banks' total portfolio

- Non-banking players' household debt, including mortgage loans, accounts for half of the total loan portfolio, which somehow makes the sector vulnerable to shocks.
- The non-bank depository corporations (NBDCs), known as non-banking financial institutions, Ansar-VDP Unnayan Bank, and Karma Sangsthan Bank, provided the loans between 2014 and 2017, according to the Bangladesh Bank (BB)'s latest study report.
- The study revealed the banking sector has been the major source of household debt, accounting for around 70% of such loans. The remaining 30% has been provided by the NBDCs.
- After some initial rise, household debt as a percentage of (nominal) GDP has remained almost stable since 2015 and stood at 7.6% in 2017. The ratio was lower than that of India (11%) and Sri Lanka (7.9%) and much lower than the countries.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/household-debt-makes-up-half-of-non-banks-total-portfolio-1548006599>

Bangladesh Bank (BB) to lodge case in US this month: Kamal (Finance Minister)

- The central bank will file a lawsuit with a New York (NY) court within this month to recover the money, stolen a couple years bank from the country's reserve held with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (NY Fed).
- Currently, USD 66.0 million or more than 60% of the USD101 million money, stolen in one of the largest cyber heists of the world, still remains out of recovery.
- The two lawyers will take the decision as to who will be the defendant and who will be the plaintiff in the case.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bb-to-lodge-case-in-us-this-month-kamal-1548006805>
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/01/20/finance-minister-bangladesh-bank-to-file-case-with-ny-court-by-this-month>

Government cuts tax, duty on ATM, CCTV parts

- The government has offered tax and duty benefits on import of various parts for producing and assembling ATM machine and CCTV camera in the Hi-tech Park at Kaliakoir in Gazipur.
- Customs Duties (CD) on import of parts have been reduced to 1.0% and 10% from the existing variable rates of up to 25%.
- Import of ATM machine and CCTV camera parts has been exempted from payment of Value Added Tax (VAT), Regulatory Duty (RD) and Supplementary Duty (SD).
- ATM machine, laptop and mobile phone will be produced in the Hi-Tech Park.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/govt-cuts-tax-duty-on-atm-cctv-parts-1548006652>
<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/duty-cuts-atm-cctv-camera-assembly-1690414>
<http://www.newagebd.net/article/62430/duty-benefits-for-atm-cctv-camera-making>

Banks blame influential quarter for rising bad loans

- Habitual and influential defaulters are the main barriers to bringing down delinquent loans in the state-owned commercial banks, according to the assessment of the lenders.
- In the first 11 months of 2018, classified loans in the six state-run banks -- Sonali, Janata, Agrani, Rupali, Bangladesh Development and BASIC -- escalated by BDT 112.97 billion to BDT 486.23 billion.
- Sonali Bank said that 52.33% of its outstanding default loans of BDT 128.11 billion were stuck with the top 100 defaulters. The majority of the defaulters are habitual and they have been continuing to show unwillingness to return the depositors' money.
- Some defaulters fled the country, forcing the lender to face difficulties in recovering classified loans.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/banking/news/banks-blame-influential-quarter-rising-bad-loans-1690438>

Farm loan disbursement drops by 4.87% in July-December

- Farmers' loan receipt from banks dropped by 4.87% or BDT 5.24 billion in the first half of the fiscal year of 2018-2019 compared with that in the same period of the previous fiscal year.
- State-run, private and foreign banks disbursed BDT 102.31 billion in farm loans in July-December of FY19 against BDT 107.55 billion they had disbursed in the same period of FY18.
- In the first half of FY18, the banks had managed to disburse 52.72% of the target for the entire fiscal year but their loan disbursement in the first half of FY19 dropped to 46.93% of the annual target.
- Banks were going through a cash crisis as they had to comply with the advance deposit ratio set by the central bank last year with the March, 2019 deadline, which made the banks cautious in disbursing farm loans.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/62428/farm-loan-disbursement-drops-by-487%-in-jul-dec>

Adani Wilmar to invest USD 400 million in Mirsarai Economic Zone

- Adani Wilmar Limited, a joint venture of India and Singapore-based two companies, is set to invest USD 400 million in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial City in Chattogram region to establish agro-based factories.
- Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial City will manufacture import-substitute food items in 11 industrial units on 100 acres of land and create 3,550 employments.
- They are now investing for 100 acres of land, though they wanted only 50 acres at the initial stage.
- The multinational business conglomerate will establish factory, administration building, warehouse, logistic yard Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP), road, drainage system, other utilities and necessary infrastructures here.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/adani-wilmar-to-invest-400m-in-mirsarai-economic-zone-1548001386>

China to provide USD 72.5 million grant for welfare projects

- China will provide a grant of RMB 500 million or approximately USD 72.57 million to Bangladesh under an agreement on economic and technical cooperation.
- The grant shall be utilised for welfare projects such as disaster management and bridge construction.
- China would continue its support in developing Bangladesh's economy. They would jointly push forward construction of three more "friendship bridges" in Bangladesh, bringing the total to 11.
- Ongoing ones include construction of China-Bangladesh Friendship Exhibition Center at Purbachal, a burn unit at Chattogram Medical College, rescue equipment for fire service and flood management.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/china-provide-725m-grant-welfare-projects-1690402>

Coal import from India comes to a sudden halt

- Coal import from India's Meghalaya state to Bangladesh has stopped following an order of the Supreme Court in the neighbouring country. The coal import was supposed to continue till January 31 but came to a halt suddenly on January 15.
- The SC of India on Tuesday banned the transportation of coal in the state until the next hearing on February 19.
- Following a case filed by the Indian National Green Tribunal stating that the coal mines in Meghalaya are not maintaining rules, the SC, in 2014, ordered to stop mining in the state. Since then, coal import from Meghalaya has become irregular.
- Many coal-laden trucks bound for Bangladesh have been stranded on the Indian side. The value of the stranded coal was about BDT 1 billion.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/coal-import-india-comes-sudden-halt-1690396>

Lub-ref brings in fuel efficient, green techs

- Lub-ref (Bangladesh) Ltd., manufacturer of BNO lubricants, has introduced two new technologies related to engine and transfer oil aiming to increase fuel efficiency, enhance engine lifetime and improve performance.
- The two technologies, called 'Naphthenic-based Transformer Oil' and 'Nano Technology in lubricants' have been developed in cooperation with two European companies.
- The rapid industrial development in coming days, the country will need more advanced and power efficient engine oil.
- Lub-ref MD said BNO as a Bangladeshi brand is providing world class lubricants to the county's industrial, power and automobile sector.

<http://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/lub-ref-brings-in-fuel-efficient-green-techs-1548001411>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/lub-rref-brings-nanotech-lube-1690387>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/01/20/lub-rref-bangladesh-launches-eco-friendly-lubricants>

World Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change	% Change
Crude Oil (WTI)*	\$54.02	+0.22	+0.41%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	\$62.97	+0.27	+0.43%
Gold Spot*	\$1,281.88	-0.23	-0.02%
DSEX	5,887.28	+61.70	+1.06%
Dow Jones Industrial Average	24,706.35	+336.25	+1.38%
FTSE 100	6,968.33	+133.41	+1.95%
Nikkei 225	20,758.74	+92.67	+0.45%

Exchange Rates

USD 1 = BDT 83.63*

GBP 1 = BDT 107.56*

EUR 1 = BDT 95.14*

INR 1 = BDT 1.17*

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