

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.

Macro:**Inflation eases to single digits in January**

- The country's Consumer Price Index fell to 9.94% in January from 10.89% in December, according to data released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) yesterday. Food inflation notably declined, dropping to 10.72% in January from 12.92% in December.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/inflation-eases-single-digits-january-3816081>

National Special Economic Zone to get a BDT 5.18 Bn water treatment plant

- The government has approved the construction of a water treatment plant with a capacity of 50 Mn liters per day in the National Special Economic Zone (NSEZ) at Chattogram's Mirsharai. A joint venture of ZHEC-BOW-SMEDRIC has been awarded the BDT 5.18 Bn contract for the project, which is scheduled for completion by June 2026.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/national-special-economic-zone-get-tk-518-crore-water-treatment-plant-3816051>

External deficit falls 89% in H1 of FY25 despite instability

- According to the data, the overall deficit in the balance of payments – also known as the external balance – stood at USD 384 Mn in July-December of FY25, a sharp decline from USD 3.45 Bn in the corresponding period of FY24 – reflecting an improvement of approximately USD 3.07 Bn.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/external-deficit-falls-89-h1-fy25-despite-instability-1061236>

Finance adviser takes until June to moderate inflation to 6-7%

- Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed has sought three more months to rein in high inflationary pressure that has brought significant suffering for the people. "It may take two to three more months for inflation to go down since the government is taking required measures," he told journalists after a meeting of the Advisers' Council Committee on Government Purchase at the Bangladesh secretariat on Tuesday. By June next, the point-to-point inflation rate will come down between 6.0% and 7.0%, he added

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/finance-adviser-takes-until-june-to-moderate-inflation-to-6-7pc-1738693137>

BD-Pak jt working group soon to promote trade

- after their separation through Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, the two countries are set to form a high-powered Joint Working Group (JWG) for expanding bilateral trade and cooperation. Sources say the Pakistan government has already sent a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) to the Bangladesh government for first such engagement.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/bd-pak-jt-working-group-soon-to-promote-trade-1738693481>

Metro rail revenue hits BDT 2.44 Bn in FY24

- The metro rail service generated around BDT 2.44 Bn in revenue during the 2023-24 fiscal year through ticket sales, the managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) said on Tuesday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/metro-rail-revenue-hits-tk-244-billion-in-fy24>

Bangladesh keen to enhance trade, economic relations with Algeria

- The Foreign Secretary, now in Algeria, presented the existing and potential areas of trade that could happen between the two countries. Among the areas, trade in apparels, pharmaceuticals, industrial raw materials sourcing like LNG, metals, and electronic and light engineering products came under discussion.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bangladesh-keen-to-enhance-trade-economic-relations-with-algeria>

Justification to be sought for very high consultancy costs

- The Local Government Division (LGD) has proposed spending over BDT 1.07 Bn on consultancy services for a project that involves repairing flood-damaged infrastructures and building shelters in six districts to mitigate future disaster impacts. The proposed consultancy costs account for over 5% of the total project budget, estimated at BDT 21.40 Bn.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/justification-to-be-sought-for-very-high-consultancy-costs>

Bangladesh's heavy Saudi dependence in manpower export continues as other markets shrink

- Bangladesh's reliance on Saudi Arabia for manpower export remains a pressing concern, with 72.5% of the country's overseas workers heading to the Gulf nation in January. This heavy dependence highlights the shrinking opportunities in other labour markets as overall overseas employment saw a 7.33% month-on-month decline.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bangladeshs-heavy-saudi-dependence-manpower-export-continues-other-markets-shrink-1061291>

Sector & Industries:**BANK | 300 lockers of BB officials to be opened**

- A Dhaka court yesterday granted permission to the Anti-Corruption Commission to open lockers of over 300 incumbent and former officials of Bangladesh Bank. "The lockers will be opened in the presence of a judicial magistrate. If undisclosed assets are in those lockers, legal action will be taken against them," ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir told The Daily Star.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/corruption/news/300-lockers-bb-officials-be-opened-3816426>

BANK | BB files BDT 6.45 Bn embezzlement case against Nagad

- Bangladesh Bank (BB) has filed a case against mobile financial service (MFS) provider Nagad, alleging fraud, embezzlement, and financial irregularities amounting to BDT 6.45 crore. The lawsuit names 24 individuals, including 16 Nagad Ltd officials and eight Directorate of Posts officials. Bangladesh Bank (BB) has filed a case against mobile financial service (MFS) provider Nagad, alleging fraud, embezzlement, and financial irregularities.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bb-files-tk-645cr-embezzlement-case-against-nagad-3816431>

CONSTRUCTION | Steel, cement makers witness drop in Q2 profits

- Major listed construction-related firms witnessed a massive year-on-year drop in profits during the October-December period of the current fiscal year of 2024-25. This was mainly due to rising raw material costs and a drop in government spending on infrastructure projects amid macroeconomic challenges. Among the eight major listed steel rod, cement, and ceramic producers, only Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited saw a rise in profits.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/steel-cement-makers-witness-drop-q2-profits-3816421>

Stocks:**GP | GP's sales declined, profits rose in 2024**

- The country's top telecommunications company registered a revenue of BDT 158.44 Bn last year, compared to BDT 158.71 Bn in the previous year. The GP's net profit grew by 9.7% year-on-year to BDT 36.30 Bn from the previous year's BDT 33.07 Bn.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/gps-sales-declined-profits-rose-2024-3816416>

BEXIMCO | Beximco lays off another 8,000 workers

- Embattled Beximco Limited has announced another round of layoffs, citing a lack of work orders, a decision that affects nearly 8,000 workers across five manufacturing units in its industrial park in Gazipur. The layoffs at Beximco Yarn-2, Textiles, Denim, Knitting and RR Washing will become effective today, according to layoff notices issued by the Beximco authorities yesterday.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/beximco-lays-another-8000-workers-3816111>

INTRACO | Intraco's gas allocation cut to one-fifth over deal breach

- The government has cut natural gas allocation for Intraco Refueling Station to one-fifth as the company failed to supply the committed volume of compressed natural gas (CNG) from Bhola. As a result, the company will be able to compress up to 5.0 Mn cubic feet per day (mmcf) of gas under its existing deal with the state-run Sundarban Gas Company Ltd (SGCL).

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/intracos-gas-allocation-cut-to-one-fifth-over-deal-breach>

NTC | Regulators, National Tea board served legal notice by shareholders

- A group of shareholders of the publicly listed National Tea Company (NTC) has sent a legal notice to Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) Chairman Khandaker Rashed Maksud, alleging that an NTC board member is in violation of shareholding regulations while continuing to serve as a director.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/regulators-national-tea-board-served-legal-notice-shareholders-1061211>

EXCHANGE | Three more firms downgraded to Z category over dividend failures, total reaches 94

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) has downgraded three more companies to the Z category for failing to distribute approved dividends within the stipulated time frame. The companies are Bangladesh Building Systems, Rahima Food Corporation, and Beacon Pharmaceuticals. In separate disclosures on its website yesterday, the DSE stated that the downgrade was effective from 4 February (yesterday).

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/three-more-firms-downgraded-z-category-over-dividend-failures-total-reaches-94>

Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 72.57	USD 1.14	1.60%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 75.97	USD 1.58	2.12%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,849.36	USD 240.88	9.23%
DSEX	5,147.34	-69.10	-1.32%
S&P 500	6,037.88	130.94	2.22%
FTSE 100	8,570.77	449.76	5.54%
BSE SENSEX	78,583.81	383.88	0.49%
KSE-100	111,935.38	-3,323.62	-2.88%
CSEALL	12,003.29	0.00	0.00%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 121.88 BDT****1 GBP = 152.12 BDT****1 Euro = 126.56 BDT****1 INR = 1.40 BDT**

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

Analyst Certification: Each research analyst and research associate who authored this document and whose name appears herein certifies that the recommendations and opinions expressed in the research report accurately reflect their personal views about any and all of the securities or issuers discussed therein that are within the coverage universe.

Disclaimer: Estimates and projections herein are our own and are based on assumptions that we believe to be reasonable. Information presented herein, while obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, is not guaranteed either as to accuracy or completeness. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed herein constitutes a solicitation of the purchase or sale of any security. As it acts for public companies from time to time, BRAC-EPL may have a relationship with the above-mentioned company(s). This report is intended for distribution in only those jurisdictions in which BRAC-EPL is registered and any distribution outside those jurisdictions is strictly prohibited.

Compensation of Analysts: The compensation of research analysts is intended to reflect the value of the services they provide to the clients of BRAC-EPL. As with most other employees, the compensation of research analysts is impacted by the overall profitability of the firm, which may include revenues from corporate finance activities of the firm's Corporate Finance department. However, Research analysts' compensation is not directly related to specific corporate finance transaction.

General Risk Factors: BRAC-EPL will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for each company under coverage at the time of initiating research coverage and revisit this assessment when subsequent update reports are published, or material company events occur. Following are some general risks that can impact future operational and financial performance: (1) Industry fundamentals with respect to customer demand or product / service pricing could change expected revenues and earnings; (2) Issues relating to major competitors or market shares or new product expectations could change investor attitudes; (3) Unforeseen developments with respect to the management, financial condition or accounting policies alter the prospective valuation; or (4) Interest rates, currency or major segments of the economy could alter investor confidence and investment prospects.

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

Research

Salim Afzal Shawon, CFA	Head of Research	salim@bracepl.com	01708 805 221
Fahim Hassan	Research Analyst	fahim.hassan@bracepl.com	01709 636 546
Hossain Zaman Towhidi Khan	Research Analyst	hztowhidi.khan@bracepl.com	01708 805 224
Foyisal Ahmed	Research Associate	foysal.ahmed@bracepl.com	01708 805 201
S M Toufique Imran	Research Associate	smtoufique.imran@bracepl.com	01708 805 228
Rakibul Hasan	Research Associate	rakibul.hasan@bracepl.com	01708 805 229
Md Istiaz Uddin	Research Associate	mistiaz.uddin@bracepl.com	01708 805 202

International Trade and Sales

Ahsanur Rahman Bappi	CEO	bappi@bracepl.com	01730 357 991
----------------------	-----	--	---------------

BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Limited

www.bracepl.com

Symphony, Plot No.: S.E.(F) – 9(3rd Floor), Road No.: 142

Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka – 1212

Phone: + (88)-02-222282446-47

Fax: + (88)-02-222282452

E-Mail: research@bracepl.com