

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:**Bangladesh poised for record remittance inflow this year: Governor**

- Bangladesh is on track to set a record for inward remittances through legal channels this year, as expatriates regain trust in the banking system, said Dr Ahsan H Mansur. The governor made the remarks while addressing concerns over recent media reports alleging loan irregularities involving an independent director of Islami Bank Bangladesh PLC.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh-poised-for-record-remittance-inflow-this-year-governor>

USD 30 Mn to be invested in Patenga Container Terminal for four new cranes

- Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT) Bangladesh, the operator of Patenga Container Terminal (PCT) at Chattogram port, is set to invest around USD 30 Mn for purchasing four state-of-the-art ship-to-shore (STS) cranes in order to boost the terminal's operational capacity.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/30-million-be-invested-patenga-container-terminal-four-new-cranes-3822626>

Tight monetary policy to raise production costs: BUILD

- The continuation of a tight monetary policy by keeping the policy rate unchanged at 10% could lead to higher production costs, public-private dialogue platform Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) said yesterday. The repeated hikes in the policy rate have pushed up interest rates, making loans costlier for businesses.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/tight-monetary-policy-raise-production-costs-build-3823111>

Fitch sceptical of govt projections

- Global rating-agency Fitch paints a downbeat outlook for Bangladesh economy on several grounds that include political unrest surrounding polls. Fitch Solutions in its latest appraisal report forecasts headline inflation to average 8.5% and intends to revise down its earlier projected 5.5% GDP growth in the country for the current fiscal year.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/fitch-sceptical-of-govt-projections>

Consumers grappling with VAT overdose amid high inflation

- Consumers are struggling with rising taxes amid higher inflation, criticising overuse of the indirect taxation, particularly VAT, which is disproportionately affecting lower- and middle-income groups. Besides, weak revenue collection raised concerns as the policymakers relied more on a quick fix instead of long-term structural reforms.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/consumers-grappling-with-vat-overdose-amid-high-inflation>

VAT hike reflects govt's failure in negotiation with IMF

- The recent hike in value-added tax (VAT) and supplementary duty on nearly 100 goods and services reflects the government's failure to negotiate effectively with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), economists said at a roundtable yesterday. They claimed the government raised VAT in line with IMF conditions to generate an additional BDT 120 Bn in revenue.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/vat-hike-reflects-govts-failure-negotiation-imf-3823116>

Planning commission under pressure to green-light MRT-5 south project

- The planning commission is under pressure to approve the MRT-5 southern line project, although it was sent back more than a month ago for bloated costs and having less priority than another MRT line, officials said on Wednesday.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/planning-commission-under-pressure-to-green-light-mrt-5-south-project>

Sector & Industries:**PHARMACEUTICALS | Pharma industry has a bright future**

- "Bangladesh's pharmaceutical sector has shown really impressive development. The country manufactures medicines of global standard and has developed a highly skilled workforce," said Lashimikanth Enaganti, assistant general manager of Smilax Laboratories Limited, India.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/pharma-industry-has-bright-future-3823131>

MISCELLANEOUS | Plastic industry can help diversify exports: commerce adviser

- Plastic products have a lot of potential in diversifying Bangladesh's export basket, said Sk Bashir Uddin, adviser to the commerce and jute and textile ministries, yesterday. State policies on the production, use, and disposal of plastics must be formulated based on ground realities alongside global practices, he said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/plastic-industry-can-help-diversify-exports-commerce-adviser-3823106>

TOBACCO | NBR launches campaign against illegal tobacco products

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has directed its circles to conduct a campaign against illegal cigarettes, bidi and tobacco products at the grassroots level. About 25% of the VAT collected comes from cigarettes, bidi and tobacco products, according to an NBR press release.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/nbr-launches-campaign-against-illegal-tobacco-products>

BANK | Nagad irregularities: ACC finds proof of BDT 23 Bn corruption

- Nagad's administrator was attacked by miscreants yesterday, after an Anti-Corruption Commission team raided the headquarters and left with preliminary evidence of corruption and money laundering amounting to BDT 23 Bn.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/corruption/news/nagad-irregularities-acc-finds-proof-tk-2300cr-corruption-3822771>

BANK | Govt cuts target of borrowing from banks

- The government has slashed its bank borrowing target by 28%, or BDT 385 Bn, for this fiscal year, due to lower expenditures and slower implementation of the Annual Development Programme (ADP). Under the revised target, the government will borrow BDT 990 Bn instead of BDT 1375 Bn by the end of June 2025 from the country's banking system, officials said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/govt-cuts-target-of-borrowing-from-banks>

BANK | Money flowing back into banks, BDT 10.85 Bn in Dec alone

- After increasing for ten consecutive months, money outside banks – often referred to as "mattress money" – has started flowing back into the banking system over the past four months, albeit at a slow pace, with BDT 10.85 Bn deposited in December alone.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/banking/money-flowing-back-banks-tk1085cr-dec-alone-1067736>

BANK | Citibank to pioneer innovative solutions in Bangladesh: Mayank Gupta

- Citibank, N.A. in Bangladesh is committed to play a pioneering role in introducing world-class innovative products and services for facilitating business activities in Bangladesh, a senior official of the global bank has said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/citibank-to-pioneer-innovative-solutions-in-bangladesh-mayank-gupta>

Stocks:**WALTONHIL | Walton's free float surges to 30%: What does it mean to investors?**

- Free float of Walton Hi-Tech Industries was 1.49% even six months back. Then by January this year, the number of publicly tradable shares jumped to more than 30%. The free float increased so quickly, as six sponsor-directors gifted shares to their family members to comply with the regulatory requirement of at least 10% shares.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/waltons-free-float-surges-to-30pc-what-does-it-mean-to-investors>

RELIANCINS | Reliance Insurance earns record profit on high premium income

- Reliance Insurance secured a record profit in 2024, supported by higher premium income and investment return, in a challenging business climate. The insurer's profit jumped 39% year-on-year to BDT 959 Mn in 2024, the highest since its listing in the stock market in 1995.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/reliance-insurance-earns-record-profit-on-high-premium-income-1739296028>

BEXIMCO | Govt to clear Beximco worker dues before Ramadan

- The government will clear salary arrears and service benefits of over 27,000 laid-off workers of Beximco Group within this month, ahead of Ramadan, said Labour and Employment Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain yesterday.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/govt-clear-beximco-worker-dues-ramadan-3822641>

GREENDELTA | Green Delta Insurance profit drops 12% in 2024

- Green Delta Insurance saw its profits decline in 2024 due to falling income from its insurance premiums. The company reported a profit of BDT 540 Mn for the year ending on December 31, 2024, marking a 12% decline from the previous year.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/green-delta-insurance-profit-drops-12-2024-3822496>

EXCHANGE | 5 more firms downgraded to Z category

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) today decided to downgrade five more firms to the Z category, making the decision effective the same day after they failed to disburse approved dividends to their shareholders. The companies are Samata Leather Complex, Golden Son, SS Steel, Aamra Technologies, and Aamra Networks.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/5-more-firms-downgraded-z-category-1067711>

EXCHANGE | Trustees, custodians to be signatories of MF transactions: Taskforce

- Trustees and custodians are often blamed for not securing interest of unit holders of mutual funds whenever embezzlement of any fund by a rogue asset management company (AMC) makes headlines. Considering the limitations, the taskforce of the country's capital market suggested making trustee and custodian signatories of the transactions conducted by AMCs

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/trustees-custodians-to-be-signatories-of-mf-transactions-taskforce>

Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 70.81	(USD 0.62)	-0.87%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 74.60	USD 0.21	0.28%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,907.02	USD 298.54	11.44%
DSEX	5,189.62	-26.82	-0.51%
S&P 500	6,051.97	145.03	2.46%
FTSE 100	8,807.44	686.43	8.45%
BSE SENSEX	76,171.08	-2,028.85	-2.59%
KSE-100	112,924.94	-2,334.06	-2.03%
CSEALL	12,003.29	0.00	0.00%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 121.99 BDT****1 GBP = 151.92 BDT****1 Euro = 126.85 BDT****1 INR = 1.40 BDT**

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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
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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