

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:**EU wants comprehensive partnership with Bangladesh**

- European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen has said that the European Union wants to continue its ongoing collaboration with Bangladesh and explore new avenues to build partnerships, including through a possible Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (CPCA).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/top-news/news/eu-wants-comprehensive-partnership-bangladesh-3810001>

Increasing efficiency of NBR essential for trade growth: finance adviser

- Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed today said that increasing the efficiency of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) is essential for the growth of trade and commerce in the country. Salehuddin Ahmed made these comments at a seminar on "Reforms in customs, income tax, and VAT to address the challenges after LDC graduation," held at the National Economic Council in Dhaka. The event was organized by the Economic Relations Division (ERD).

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/increasing-efficiency-nbr-essential-trade-growth-finance-adviser-3809786>

China-funded Mongla seaport dev project gets going

- Close on the heels of Dhaka-Beijing talks for an update on relations, the interim government may approve the much-awaited China-funded Mongla-seaport-development project tomorrow (Wednesday), officials said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/china-funded-mongla-seaport-dev-project-gets-going>

To tackle food inflation, we need long-term policies

- According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), general inflation in December 2024 stood at 10.9%, a 0.5% point decrease from 11.4% in the previous month. Food inflation in December 2024 was 12.9%, declining slightly by 0.9% points from the previous month's rate. Tackling inflation, specifically food inflation, remains a major challenge for the interim government.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/news/tackle-food-inflation-we-need-long-term-policies-3809076>

Interim govt won't undertake any 'monumental project': Finance adviser

- The interim government will refrain from undertaking any "monumental projects" but will prioritize ongoing infrastructure development, including port expansion, and aim to create more employment opportunities, said Financial Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/interim-govt-wont-undertake-any-monumental-project-finance-adviser-1053186>

Foreign loan commitments drop by 67.11% in first half of FY25

- Despite receiving USD 1.1 Bn in budget support in December, Bangladesh's loan commitments from development partners dropped 67.11% in the first half of this fiscal year, due to disruptions stemming from the July uprising, political and economic stalemate, and project re-evaluations.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/foreign-loan-commitments-drop-6711-first-half-fy25-1052796>

Foreign direct investment in EPZs drops 22.33%, exports rise 22.41% in Jul-Dec

- According to the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza), foreign investment in EPZs declined to USD 126.33 Mn from USD 162.66 Mn in the second half of 2023. "Recent reports indicate a 71% drop in overall investment nationwide, as highlighted by newspapers and business complaints, which has also impacted Bepza," he added in response to a journalist's question.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bepza-contributes-29-bangladeshs-total-fdi-fy2023-24-1053651>

China second biggest investor in Bepza zones after Bangladesh

- Chinese investment in all eight export processing zones (EPZs) of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) and its economic zone in Chattogram is only exceeded by domestic investment, show documents of the government agency.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/china-second-biggest-investor-bepza-zones-after-bangladesh-3810101>

Top ten tax-contributing items fail revenue targets

- Import-revenue collection from top ten tax-contributing items declined 10% in the first half of the FY 2025 compared with that of the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, casting pressure on the public exchequer, officials said.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/top-ten-tax-contributing-items-fail-revenue-targets>

Sector & Industries:**BANK | FBCCI wants six-month extension of loan repayment period for defaulters**

- The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) has urged Bangladesh Bank to extend the loan repayment period for defaulters from three months to nine months. FBCCI representatives proposed several measures to stabilise the economy, including controlling inflation, maintaining stable interest rates, and ensuring a steady supply of foreign currency.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/fbcci-wants-six-month-extension-loan-repayment-period-defaulters-1053006>

BANK | Bangladesh Bank to announce monetary policy on Feb 10

- Bangladesh Bank (BB) is set to announce a new monetary policy on February 10 for the remaining period of the current fiscal year 2024-25. The date of the central bank board meeting is fixed on February 9, and the next day (Feb 10) will be announced the monetary policy, said a senior official of the monetary policy department.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh-bank-to-announce-monetary-policy-on-feb-10>

BANK | Govt's borrowing from banks rises to BDT 160 Bn so far this fiscal year

- The government's net bank borrowing has risen sharply due to lacklustre tax collection, slow private sector credit growth and the overall economic slowdown since the political changeover in August last year.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/govts-borrowing-banks-rises-tk-16000cr-so-far-fiscal-year-3810111>

FUEL & POWER | Don't hike gas price further: factory owners

- Textile millers and garment factory owners today urged the government not to further hike gas prices, as any additional increase would raise production costs and harm their competitiveness in global markets. The government's proposed 150% hike in gas prices, from BDT 30 per cubic metre to BDT 75, will deter investment inflow to the primary textile and garment sectors, ultimately affecting employment generation.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/dont-hike-gas-price-further-factory-owners-3809926>

Stocks:**APEXFOOT | Apex Footwear reports 32% Q2 profit growth**

- Apex Footwear announced that its profit grew in the second quarter of the fiscal year 2024-25, driven by reduced operating expenses. The shoe manufacturer posted a profit of BDT 31.9 Mn in the October-December quarter, marking a 32% year-on-year growth.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/apex-footwear-reports-32-q2-profit-growth-3809586>

WALTONHIL | Walton revenue rises 8% to BDT 25.46 Bn in Jul-Dec

- Walton Hi-Tech Industries reported an 8% increase in revenue to reach BDT 25.46 Bn in the July-December period of this fiscal year. The company revealed its unaudited financial statement for the first half of FY25 at a meeting held on Monday (27 January), according to officials familiar with the matter. During the period, its net profit dropped by 11% to BDT 3040 Mn, compared to the same period last year.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/walton-revenue-rises-8-tk2546cr-jul-dec-1054071>

RAKCERAMIC | RAK Ceramics incurs loss in 2024

- RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) experienced a 15% decline in its revenue during the last year, as it failed to fully utilise its production capacity due to disrupted gas supply as well as political regime change, according to the company's financial statements. The UAE-based ceramics manufacturer said lower gas supply significantly impacted its production, leading to a loss of BDT 27.3 Mn during 2024.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/rak-ceramics-incurs-loss-2024-1054326>

SPCL | Shahjibazar Power posts profit decline in Jul-Dec

- Shahjibazar Power Company Limited (SPCL) has reported a 56% year-on-year consolidated profit decline in the first six months of the current fiscal year compared to the same period of the previous year. During this period, the company recorded a consolidated profit of BDT 284.8 Mn, significantly lower than the BDT 658.4 Mn reported in the same period last year.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/shahjibazar-power-posts-profit-decline-jul-dec-1054286>

SINGERBD | Singer Bangladesh reports BDT 490 Mn loss

- Singer Bangladesh, a multinational home appliances manufacturer, recorded a loss of BDT 49 Mn in 2024. Owing to the losses, the company reduced its dividend to 10% cash, down from 35% in the previous year. The company disclosed its annual financial results and declared the dividend during a board meeting held today, according to sources.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/singer-bangladesh-reports-tk49cr-loss-1054321>

Stock and Commodities*

Index Name	Close Value	Value Change YTD	% Change YTD
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 73.30	USD 1.87	2.62%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 77.22	USD 2.83	3.80%
Gold Spot*	USD 2,743.08	USD 134.60	5.16%
DSEX	5,130.06	-86.38	-1.66%
S&P 500	6,012.28	105.34	1.78%
FTSE 100	8,503.71	382.70	4.71%
BSE SENSEX	75,366.17	-2,833.76	-3.62%
KSE-100	113,520.32	-1,738.68	-1.51%
CSEALL	12,003.29	0.00	0.00%

Exchange Rates**1 US Dollar = 122.16 BDT****1 GBP = 152.02 BDT****1 Euro = 127.43 BDT****1 INR = 1.41 BDT**

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