

*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.*

### **More leeway for private ICDs**

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has formulated the country's first-ever comprehensive policy for private inland container depots (ICDs) in order to facilitate their operations and expand Bangladesh's foreign trade. Owners of the private ICDs hailed the move, calling the policy comprehensive as it will help the sector get rid of the inconsistencies created by existing guidelines.
- The Private Inland Container Depot (ICD) and Container Freight Station (CFS) Policy-2021, which was published by the NBR last week, has set clear guidelines on establishing private ICDs. The policy has eliminated inconsistencies in the existing rules, made setting up scanners optional for ICDs, and given them power to fix tariffs on their own – changes that will attract investment to the sector.
- More than 90% of the total export-oriented goods are stuffed onto containers at the ICDs before they are shipped through Chattogram port. Around 25% of import load containers are sent from the port to the ICDs from where goods are delivered to importers after carrying out customs procedures. Currently, 38 types of imported goods are delivered by the ICDs.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/industries/tax-customes/news/more-leeway-private-icds-2940046>

### **Country's first green economic zone awaits local, foreign investment**

- With an easy location, enough manpower and world class facilities, Sirajganj Economic Zone, the largest and 100% green private economic zone in the country, is waiting for investments from local and foreign companies. Around 60% of the land development work of the 1,041-acre economic zone located beside the River Jamuna has already been completed. So far, 14 local companies have been allotted 110 acres of land.
- However, the Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (Beza), which is constructing the economic zone, is preferring investors from Saudi Arabia, Japan, China, the United States, South Korea, Australia, India, Norway and other countries.
- The economic zone authorities say that green environmental standards would be maintained at all levels of the construction work including infrastructure, production, transportation, education, treatment and accommodation of the people concerned etc. The economic zone is giving special importance to the agro-based companies to include the agricultural products of the northern part of the country in the processing industry.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/countrys-first-green-economic-zone-awaits-local-foreign-investment-357616>

### **Bangladesh's apparel exports rise 28%**

- Bangladesh exported readymade garments (RMG) worth USD 19.9 billion in the first half of the current fiscal, a 28 % growth year-on-year. As per the latest figures released by the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), the US was the largest export market for Bangladesh between July and December 2021.
- The volume of exports to the US grew 46% growth during this period compared to the same in the last financial year. The figures exhibited a robust external demand for this country's RMG items abroad, reports UNB. Exports to the European Union (EU) and Canada also witnessed a growth of 23.83% and 23.78%, respectively, according to the EPB figures.

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bangladeshs-apparel-exports-rise-28pc-1642240318>

### **VAT benefit for mobile makers in economic zones, hi-tech parks**

- Mobile phone manufacturing or assembly plants in hi-tech parks and economic zones will get VAT benefits, according to a recent notification from the National Board of Revenue (NBR). The companies have to obtain registration as manufacturers from the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHTPA) and Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority in order to avail the value-added tax benefits.
- The NBR offered VAT exemption to facilitate domestic manufacturing of mobile handsets in 2019. At the time, it said manufacturers would require to be registered with the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission to get the privilege. To get full VAT exemption, manufacturers have to attain the capacity of manufacturing printed circuit boards, chargers, batteries, housings and casings of mobile sets.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/industries/tax-customes/news/vat-benefit-mobile-makers-economic-zones-hi-tech-parks-2939971>

### **BTRC issues guidelines on granting VSAT licences**

- Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has issued guidelines on granting licences to operate VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) for providing internet connectivity by using satellite, a very expensive technology used for the internet connectivity. As per the guidelines, the commission would issue only two types of licences - VSAT HUB operator licence and VSAT user licence - fixing separate fees and charges for the operators.
- The existing VSAT User or VSAT Provider or VSAT Provider with Hub operators will apply to the Commission for conversion for their respective existing VSAT licenses within one year from the date of issuance of the guidelines. The existing VSAT providers, VSAT providers with HUB and new applicants, excluding Cellular Mobile Phone Operators and BWA operators licensed from the Commission, are eligible to apply to the Commission to obtain VSAT HUB operator licence and VSAT user licence.
- For VSAT HUB operators, the licence fees would be BDT 650,000 for 10 years along with BDT 150,000 as annual licence fee. The licence renewal fees for five years at a time after the initial tenure of 10 years would be BDT 400,000. The VSAT operators would have to share 2% of their gross revenue with the government, according to the guidelines. Licence acquisition, annual licence and renewal fees for the VSAT user licences would be BDT 200,000 each without the mandatory provision of revenue sharing.

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/btrc-issues-guidelines-on-granting-vsats-licences-1642267815>

### **As pandemic bites, old flat sales surge**

- Government property registration offices logged BDT8,000 crore sales deals for old apartments and flats – a record in recent years – thanks to Covid-hit owners moving out and new people with deep pockets filling in. This is a hallmark case offering an insight to the surge of old apartment sales in major Bangladesh cities in 2021. Many sold their apartments thanks to the pandemic-led income crunch, while non-resident Bangladeshis snapped up the comparatively cheap homes.
- There are few more factors fueling this fire sale such as the dwindling number of flats ready to move in, rising prices of construction raw materials and a real estate market set to charge buyers double in upcoming months, making those looking for real estate investment to scramble for older flats instead of brand new ones.
- Naimul Hassan, director of the Real Estate & Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB), told TBS that the

expatriates have bought most of the old flats in the last two years. Economist Ahsan H Mansur said Bangladesh received larger-than-expected remittances in 2020 and 2021. The country got more than USD22 billion remittances last year, which was more than 4.50% compared to the previous year.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/industry/pandemic-bites-old-flat-sales-surge-357952>

### **10 Minute School raises USD2m seed funding**

- Online educational platform 10 Minute School has raised USD2 million in seed funding from Surge, Sequoia Capital India's rapid scale-up programme, to increase investment in product and technology. The EdTech company is the first in Bangladesh to secure funding from Surge. Sequoia Capital India is a venture capital firm which backs early-stage startups focusing on technology, healthcare and other sectors.
- The past year marked a significant year of growth for 10 Minute School, with more than 9 million new learners joining the platform, 8 million learning hours delivered and over 17,000 new videos added to its learning ecosystem. The app (10ms.app) has recently surpassed 3 million users, making it the largest learning app in the country.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/organisation-news/news/10-minute-school-raises-2m-seed-funding-2940041>

### **DSE eyes listing on LSE**

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange has initiated a move to be listed on the London Stock Exchange, one of the oldest stock exchanges in the world, with the aim of improving the image of the Dhaka bourse on the global platform and elevating it to the international standards. The DSE may offload 5-10% of its shares on the LSE, DSE officials said.
- The bourse would offload the shares from the 40% of the shares credited to the DSE members' accounts after the demutualisation. As per rules, the 40% shares remain blocked, and the listing of another 35% of the DSE shares kept reserved for the local listing would enable 250 DSE members to sell any share for the blocked amount, they said. The officials said that it would not be wise to offload more than that on the LSE as the offloading of more share could risk the ownership of the country's stock exchange as the bourse had already sold 25% of its shares to the foreign investors.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/160054/dse-eyes-listing-on-lse>

### **Ceramics sector sees highest price appreciation**

- The ceramics sector saw the highest price appreciation during the last week's trading at Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE). Following the price appreciation, the sector witnessed 15.10% capital gain in five sessions of the last week. On the other hand, the Paper & Printing sector saw the second highest price appreciation and the sector saw 7.0% gain in the last week.
- According to market insiders, lower number of listed companies under Ceramics and Paper & Printing sectors attracted the investors to buy the shares of these two sectors. There are only 5 companies under Ceramics and 6 companies under Paper & Printing sectors. Of the companies of both the sectors, RAK Ceramics (Bangladesh) and Bashundhara Paper Mills were in the chart of weekly top 10 gainers of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

<https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock-corporate/ceramics-sector-sees-highest-price-appreciation-1642259739>

**World Stock and Commodities\***

<b>Index Name</b>	<b>Close Value</b>	<b>Value Change YTD</b>	<b>% Change YTD</b>
Crude Oil (WTI)*	USD 83.82	USD 8.61	11.45%
Crude Oil (Brent)*	USD 86.06	USD 8.28	10.65%
Gold Spot*	USD 1,817.94	(USD 11.26)	-0.62%
DSEX	7,017.23	260.57	3.86%
S&P 500	4,662.85	-103.33	-2.17%
FTSE 100	7,542.95	158.41	2.15%
BSE SENSEX	61,223.03	2,969.21	5.10%
KSE-100	45,763.45	1,167.38	2.62%
CSEALL	13,338.49	1,112.48	9.10%

**Exchange Rates****1 US Dollar = 85.92 BDT****1 GBP = 117.50 BDT****1 Euro = 98.08 BDT****1 INR = 1.16 BDT**

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