



DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 07, 2008

## Stocks

|      |         |          |
|------|---------|----------|
| DGEN | ▼ 2.43% | 2,928.37 |
| CSCX | ▼ 2.31% | 5,825.48 |

## Asian Markets

|           |         |           |
|-----------|---------|-----------|
| MUMBAI    | ▼ 5.58% | 11,827.68 |
| TOKYO     | ▼ 4.25% | 10,473.09 |
| SINGAPORE | ▼ 5.61% | 2,168.32  |
| SHANGHAI  | ▼ 5.23% | 2,173.74  |

## Currencies

|     | Buy Tk | Sell Tk |
|-----|--------|---------|
| USD | 67.90  | 68.90   |
| EUR | 91.00  | 95.39   |
| GBP | 117.68 | 122.85  |
| JPY | 0.65   | 0.68    |

SOURCE: STANDARD CHARTERED

## Commodities

|      |   |          |             |
|------|---|----------|-------------|
| Gold | ▲ | \$834.95 | (per ounce) |
|------|---|----------|-------------|

|     |   |         |              |
|-----|---|---------|--------------|
| Oil | ▼ | \$89.92 | (per barrel) |
|-----|---|---------|--------------|

SOURCE: AFP  
(Midday London Trade)

## More News

### Trendy trade in schoolbags



Zuhairia Anan, a six-year-old student, no longer wishes to go to school with her six-month-old schoolbag, as she barely can take her eyes off a new Harry Potter bag that she sees with her classmate. She was desperately pleading with her parents to buy her the one decked out with Harry Potter picture and the zipper head carries a mask of the popular teen icon.

### \$6.8b remittance until Sept

Foreign Affairs Adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury said yesterday that expatriate workers had sent US\$6.8 billion in remittance until September against last year's total amount of US\$6.6 billion.

## International

### Nomura to buy Lehman's Indian IT hub

Japan's top broker Nomura Holdings said Monday it would buy Lehman Brothers' IT support hub in India, taking on another 3,000 workers as it picks up the pieces from the Wall Street giant's collapse. Nomura will take on the failed US bank's India-based back office and information technology support businesses.

## Contact Us

If you have views on Star Business or news about business in Bangladesh, please email us at [business@thedailystar.net](mailto:business@thedailystar.net)

# Products dodge BSTI watch

**KAWSAR KHAN**  
Hundreds of products are being sold across the country without bearing the official mark of Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI) although there is a strict guideline to have a BSTI seal on the products' packages.



Till date, the struggling testing organisation has made a list of 151 products that must follow its guidelines during manufacturing and contain BSTI mark when those are on market. The BSTI seal means that the product follows the standard and testing regulations.

The products that must have BSTI mark range from agriculture and food products to chemicals, jute and textile products, electronics, and mechanical products. But investigation found hundreds of products of different categories that were being sold openly in the market without the BSTI seal.

The items of some companies that do not bear BSTI seal include cakes, biscuits, lozenges, flour, noodles, ballpoint pens, pencils, ceramic tableware, lipsticks, tooth powder, regulators, three- and two-pin plugs, primary dry cell battery, power cables, clay bricks, crash helmets and ceramic tiles.

A salesman in the city's Dhanmondi area while selling bread among other things at a grocery shop said he had no idea what the seal means.

"I don't know what it means. I sell those confectionaries at the shop that the bread company supplies," he said.

According to the BSTI rules, the products' packages should mention relevant product information including manufacturer's and importer's name and address, product ingredients, expiry date and maxi-

mum retail price. But many were found not complying with the BSTI rules.

At some groceries and roadside shops, different types of cakes and biscuits are sold uncovered, and so no company address or product information is found.

Many electric products such as energy saving bulb, electronic iron, two- and three-pin plug and power cable do not bear BSTI mark and most of those are imported.

"Our suppliers import China-made electronic irons that don't bear BSTI marks. We never heard this item should carry BSTI seal," said a salesman of an electronics shop at New Market in the capital.

The crash helmet sellers at Bangla Motor in the capital also echoed the same, saying no shop of motorcycle parts sells helmet with BSTI mark.

Different brands of imported crash helmets such as Hua Dua, STM and AR-700 are put on display there without any BSTI seal.

When asked why bricks do not contain BSTI mark, Maizuddin Ahmed, general secretary of Bangladesh Brick Manufacturers' Association, said, "Last year BSTI asked us to use its seal, but it's not possible to carry the mark on bricks. Rather we can use it on our memo."

BSTI authorities acknowledged the seal issue.

"It's not always possible for us to monitor the situation due to manpower dearth," said Lutfar Rahman Khan, director (Certification of Marks) of BSTI.

"We have around 22 inspectors to look into the matter including around 15 in Dhaka division. The number is not enough," he said.

He, however, said the government would soon recruit additional manpower to intensify monitoring.

Kazi Faruque, secretary general of Consumers' Association of Bangladesh, said, "It's right that BSTI has manpower shortage. But we want to see that it's using the full strength of its existing workforce."

Many low quality electronic goods are being sold in markets, which can cause dangerous accident anytime, he added.

[kawsar@thedailystar.net](mailto:kawsar@thedailystar.net)

- Products should show all relevant information printed on their packages
- The BSTI seal means that the product follows the standard and testing regulations
- Many salesmen do not know what the BSTI seal means
- Hundreds of products are selling without BSTI seal
- A good few imported products do not bear BSTI seal
- BSTI authorities acknowledged the seal issue

## CA urges businessmen to invest more

### Automation of Ctg Customs launched



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed inaugurates the automation of Chittagong Customs House at a function at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

STAR BUSINESS REPORT  
enable importers to clear imported goods from port at a minimum time and reduce lead time in export.

The CA said the government is always ready for the involvement and participation of the private sector to a large extent in the government initiatives with regard to policy guidelines and reform activities.

The automation of the Customs House Chittagong is a public-private joint initiative taken under direct cooperation of the Bangladesh Army.

Some government and private organisations, including 24 Infantry Division of the Army, National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry implemented the CCH automation project in only eight months since February 11, 2008 without government finance.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam and Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman spoke among others at the function.

## GP may slash IPO size

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Grameenphone, the country's largest mobile phone operator, is likely to cut its planned \$300 million IPO to \$125 million, according to media reports.

"Grameenphone has cut the size of its planned share sale by more than half, to \$125 million, amid the sharp downturn in global markets," said Reuters, quoting a source yesterday.

Asked to comment on the report, a Grameenphone spokesman said the issue was yet to be decided.

Grameenphone, 62 percent owned by Norway's Telenor, had hoped to raise \$300 million -- half through a private placement and half through a subsequent domestic initial public offering.

In July, Grameenphone has finalised its plan to raise \$300 million (Tk2,058 crore).

Grameenphone holds the top position in the six-operator market with 20.84 million customers, followed by Banglalink's 10.11 million and AKTEL's 8.1 million as of August.

Meanwhile, the visiting Telenor delegation made a courtesy call on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office yesterday.

Led by Harald Norvik, chairman of Telenor, the delegates including Jon Fredrik Baksaas, chief executive officer, met the chief adviser.

"It was just a courtesy call," said a company official, seeking anonymity, after the meeting. The official did not reveal further details.

Telenor is among the leading and fastest growing providers of mobile communications services worldwide with more than 150 million subscribers.

## Berlin pulls out stops to reassure savers, investors



Elderly investors rest while watching the movements of the Hang Seng Index at a securities firm in Hong Kong yesterday. Hong Kong share prices closed down 5.0 percent.

## Asian stocks tumble

AFP, Berlin

The German government raced yesterday to reassure investors and individual savers that it will protect the Europe's biggest economy from falling victim to the global financial crisis.

The stock exchange may not have got the message however as shares tumbled seven percent Monday in line with heavy losses elsewhere in Europe and Asia as Wall Street plunged too. Berlin hoped a new 50-billion-euro (68-billion-dollar) rescue plan for the distressed mortgage lender Hypo Real Estate (HRE) and a blanket guarantee on private bank accounts would prevent panic

from seizing a nation of savers. Meanwhile, Asian shares tumbled yesterday, with Japan at a four-year low, as dealers feared for the health of the global economy despite a Wall Street bailout and as the credit crisis bites deeper in Europe.

Lawmakers in Washington on Friday passed a 700 billion dollar package for the US financial system after days of wrangling, but investors fear the plan will not be enough to prevent a world economic meltdown.

Japan's Nikkei shed 4.25 percent to reach its lowest level since February 2004, while Taipei also hit a four-year low after sliding 4.12 percent. Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore all lost more than five percent, while Seoul slid 4.3 percent and Sydney was off 3.3 percent.

## DSE slumps as turnover hits new high

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Share sales for profit pulled down Dhaka stocks yesterday with turnover hitting a record high to more than Tk511 crore.

Operators said share prices have been on the rise just before the Eid holidays and continued to rise after the holidays. The market experienced a massive decline in share prices yesterday as the investors moved to sell off their shares for profit and rearrange their portfolios, they said.

"It appears that the investors took their profits from the previous day's gains," said Sarif Ataur Rahman, managing director of SAR Securities.

Benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSE General Index, dipped 72.99 points, or 2.43 percent, to 2928.37 points. The DSE All Share Price Index dropped 60.47 points, or 2.43 percent, to 2426.39 points.

DSE turnover crossed the Tk 500 crore level for the second time and stood at the second highest at Tk 511.54 crore. The highest turnover was Tk 550 crore, recorded on June 8 of this year when the shares were overpriced.

Now the market is in a stable position, and the analysts believe investing -- especially in companies in the financial sector -- is less risky because these companies share prices are not overpriced.

The market gained slightly in the first 30 minutes of trading and lost a little more than what it had gained in the next 30 minutes. The fall continued at a slightly higher rate for the next 120 minutes, DESE general Index losing around 55 points in the process.

## Knitexpo-2008 from Oct 20



REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

BKMEA, an association of local knitwear manufacturers and exporters, will hold a three daylong Knitexpo-2008 for the fourth time from October 20 to exhibit locally manufactured knitwear items.

The knitwear makers will put on display at least eight new designs, four kinds of new fabrics, and more than 100 new styles in the exhibition, said Fazul Hoque, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

The trade body is giving priority to the manufacturers of new designs, products, styles and fabrics in its allocation of the stalls, Hoque said.

"In last year's exhibition, the local Grameen Knitwear exhibited some new clothes and designs, which were appreciated - both by local and foreign buyers. This year I hope some new designs and fabrics would be displayed, once again, in the fair," he said.

The local and foreign knitwear manufacturers and exporters will display their products in 70 stalls of the fair, due at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, Hoque said.

foreign ones, he added.

Besides the old buyers from local and foreign markets, a big buyers' group from Croatia, a new market for locally made garment items, will attend the fair, the BKMEA chief said.

BKMEA will hold a cultural programme for the garment factory workers, for the first time, at Narayanganj Stadium on October 24.

The organisers expect more than 11 lakh workers to participate in the event.

Talking to The Daily Star, a senior official of the BKMEA said more than 5000 local and foreign buyers visited the last year's knitexpo.

Meanwhile, the knitwear sector recorded a sharp exports growth fetching US\$640.50 million in July, the first month of the current 2008-09 fiscal year, an 84.72 percent rise over the same period of the last year, according to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) data.

Knitwear exports reached \$5.532 billion in the immediate past fiscal year (2007-08), registering a 21.24 percent growth and exceeded the target of \$5.465 billion, the EPB data showed.

## Oil prices hit eight-month lows under \$90

AFP, London

Crude oil prices slumped to eight month low points below 90 dollars a barrel on Monday as worsening financial turmoil triggered fears about slowing demand for energy, traders said.

Prices have slumped almost 40 percent in three months since they struck record highs of above 147 dollars in July.

Brent North Sea crude for delivery in November tumbled 3.54 dollars to 86.71 dollars a barrel in electronic deals.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for November, shed 3.96 dollars to 89.92 dollars a barrel.

"The drops are down to concerns about growth in the world economy," said Damien Cox, senior energy analyst at John Hall Associates.

"There is a lot of concern what the impact of a slowdown will have on demand in the US, Europe and elsewhere."

Since striking their record highs, oil prices have fallen sharply on concerns that demand is slowing during the global financial crisis.

"A feature of ongoing tensions in the financial sector and increased concerns over the real economy impact is yet further sharp falls in the oil price," said Nick Matthews, an analyst at Barclays Capital in London.

On Sunday, French bank BNP Paribas announced it was taking control of ailing finance group Fortis' operations in Belgium and Luxembourg, in a deal that would make Belgium the largest shareholder in the French bank.