

| STOCKS | | COMMODITIES | | ASIAN MARKETS | | | | CURRENCIES | | | | |
|----------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| DGEN | CSCX | Gold | Oil | MUMBAI | TOKYO | SINGAPORE | SHANGHAI | USD | EUR | GBP | JPY | |
| 4.08% | 3.89% | \$1,660.55 (per ounce) | \$84.78 (per barrel) | 0.13% | 1.95% | 0.93% | 0.16% | 75.38 | 101.30 | 116.37 | 0.98 | |
| 5,293.31 | 9,555.21 | | | 16,536.47 | 8,773.68 | 2,693.05 | 2,348.52 | BUY TK | 76.38 | 105.04 | 120.15 | 1.07 |

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star BUSINESS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 12, 2011, e-mail: business@thedailystar.net

PM unveils locally assembled laptop

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday unveiled a locally assembled low-cost laptop -- Doel -- in a major step towards spreading the uses of ICT across the country as part of her election promise to make the country a "Digital Bangladesh".

The much-talked Doel laptop will be available in four different models at Tk 10,000, Tk 13,500, Tk 22,000 and Tk 26,000.

The laptops will hit the market next week.



PMO
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina launches Doel laptops at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. State-run Telephone Shilpa Sangstha assembled the laptops priced at Tk 10,000 to Tk 26,000.

State-run Telephone Shilpa Sangstha (TSS) assembled the portable computer in collaboration with Dhaka-based 2M Corporation and Malaysian TFT Technology.

TSS, a state enterprise under the telecom ministry, plans to manufacture 10,000 laptops every month.

The prime minister also highlighted various steps her government has taken for the advancement of the country through launching web portals, setting up e-centres at district levels and withdrawing tax on computers.

At the launching ceremony at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city, Hasina said her government is successfully progressing to implementing its "Digital Bangladesh" vision through the expansion of the information and communication technologies.

She asked the education ministry to take effective steps to introduce netbook computers (small laptops) on a massive scale at all schools to free the students from carrying so many textbooks.

The prime minister asked the ministry concerned to install the related e-books in the laptops for the students. At the same time, she called upon the authorities of Dhaka University to take immediate

steps to set up an e-library at the country's top educational institute.

In her speech, Hasina said the new generation will have to be facilitated with the blessings of science and technology.

"Our students at schools should have access to the latest technologies. I want all the students not to go to schools with bags of books on their shoulders, but only with a notebook," she said.

Hasina said the government has formulated the ICT Policy 2009 and ICT Act 2009 in the last three years to give the ICT sector a boost. Computer E-labs have already been set up at one college and one school in every district, she added.

The government in collaboration with the Chinese government has

taken a project to provide 3G (third generation) mobile services in the country, the prime minister said.

Once the 3G service is available, more than 17 lakh subscribers of state-run mobile operator Teletalk would get high-speed communication services, while 48 lakh users would get 2.5G services, Hasina said.

Rajiuddin Ahmed Raju, telecom minister, Hasanul Haque Inu, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the telecom ministry, and Sunil Kanti Bose, telecom secretary, also spoke on the occasion.

Established in 1967, the TSS currently manufactures telephone sets only. It, however, has started manufacturing laptops and also plans to make mobile phone handsets.

Forex reserve claws back above \$10b

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Foreign exchange reserve again returned to the \$10 billion mark yesterday, after a gap of more than two weeks, a senior central bank official said.

The reserve moved to a safer zone on news that the euro bounced back on a stronger action by European leaders, who vowed to solve the eurozone crisis to avert wider financial contagion.

The reserve stood at \$10.02 billion yesterday.

"Gains by gold and an inflow of fund from UN Bangladeshis peacekeepers have helped the reserve cross \$10 billion," a senior Bangladesh Bank official said yesterday.

Forex reserve went down to \$9.8 billion in recent days after hovering around \$10-11 billion for more than a year.

Some analysts earlier said a reserve of \$9.8 billion was not enough to meet the country's import bills for three months, an international standard to maintain foreign currency reserve.

Price fall triggers protest

Dhaka stocks lose 225 points

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Dhaka stocks fell sharply yesterday, triggering a street protest of a group of retail investors in front of the premier bourse that stopped vehicle movement for hours in the business hub.

The plunge was due to a sales pressure amid a lack of confidence among investors.

DGEN, the key index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, came down to 5,293 points after declining 225 points or 4 percent, the highest fall since June 12 when the benchmark index dropped 5.23 percent.

The aggrieved investors, under the banner of Bangladesh Capital Market Investors Unity Council, announced a set of protest programmes including human chain, rally, sit-in programme and hunger strike during their street protest.

Kazi Abdur Razzak, general secretary of the council, said they would observe token strike and go for sit-in programmes for three days in front of the DSE.

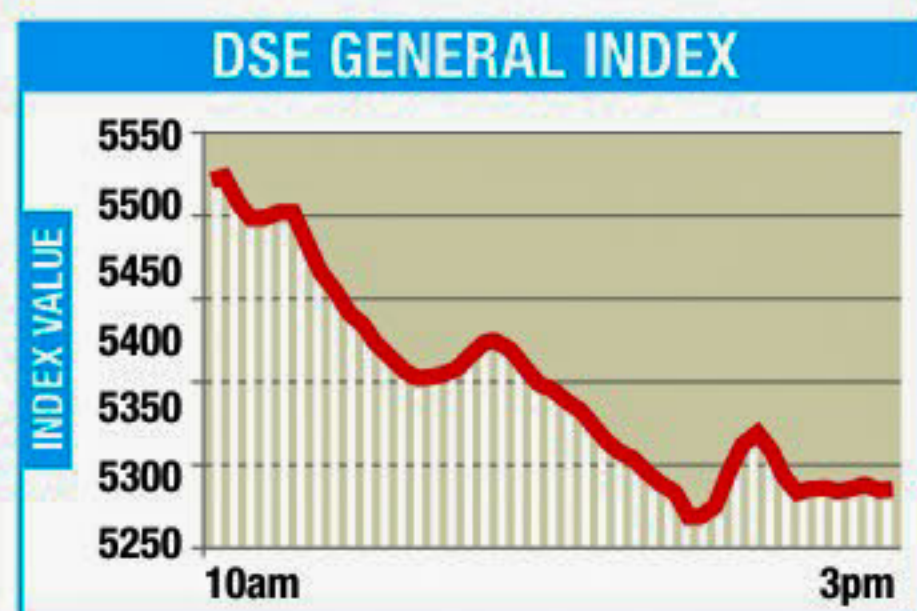
"We will go for hunger strike unto death from Sunday and it will continue until the market is stabilised," he added.

Another platform, Bangladesh Share Investors' Forum, expressed solidarity with the protest programmes.

The investors blocked the streets at around 1:00pm when the index went down by around 250 points.

"The investors were frustrated seeing no effective outcome from the regulator's meeting with stakeholders to solve the liquidity crisis," LankaBangla Securities, a leading stockbroker, said in its regular market analysis.

Although units sales of Bangladesh Fund, a special rescue fund designed to



support the liquidity-starved market, started on Monday, the fund is yet to get desired response to provide much-needed liquidity to the market, the analysis said.

"Institutional investors watched the freefall of the DGEN as most of them were bearing the brunt of portfolio bought at higher prices. Retail investors who have become highly vulnerable to trigger-sales buried their head in the sand seeing the continuous bleeding of the market," the stockbroker added.

Prof Abu Ahmed, who teaches economics at Dhaka University, said the stocks plunged as no new buyers enter the market.

"It is a dramatic fall of the market and only God can stabilise it," said a leading stockbroker, asking not to be named.

Activities on the DSE, however, increased significantly, pushing up turnover, volume and trade by 31.32 percent, 37.48 percent and 22.31 percent respectively.

A total of one lakh trades were executed yesterday, generating a turnover of Tk 335 crore. On the DSE, only eight shares gained, while 249 shares declined and two remained unchanged.

The Chittagong Stock Exchange also declined with the Selective Categories Index, CSCX, closing at 9,555 points after declining 387 points or 3.89 percent.

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