

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	JPY
▲ 0.85%	▲ 0.72%	\$1,283.05 (per ounce)	\$104.27 (per barrel)	▼ 0.68%	▲ 0.23%	▼ 0.27%	▼ 0.34%	BUY TK 77.10	103.47	128.35	0.75
4,415.75	8,478.03			24,591.51	14,636.52	3,274.06	2,034.57	SELL TK 78.10	107.45	132.37	0.78

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MAY 28, 2014, e-mail: business@thedailystar.net

BIDS suggests relocation of factories from shared buildings

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Garment factories located in the shared buildings, which are by and large unsafe for the purpose, should relocate to single factory buildings within 3-5 years, a recent study said.

Some 65 percent of the country's 3,426 active garment factories are located in shared buildings, where maintaining the various compliance standards becomes tricky due to the presence of other factories, offices and businesses within the premises, according to the study.

Following the recent spate of accidents in the sector, the ministry of labour and employment commissioned the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current state of the garment sector with respect to industrial relations, workplace safety and compliance.

The study, which has already been handed in to the labour ministry, found that a significant proportion of garment factories abide by workplace safety standards but there are still some critical safety concerns that need attention.

The level of compliance has been found to vary significantly according to factory size and location: the compliance level was less in factories located in Dhaka district and in smaller factories, especially in those with fewer than 500 workers.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina looks on, as Maj Gen Habibur Rahman Khan, executive chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority, and K Kawano, Japan External Trade Organisation's representative to Bangladesh, sign a memorandum of understanding in Tokyo yesterday.

EPZs to reserve plots for Japanese investors

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh offered 40 industrial plots in export processing zones exclusively to Japanese entrepreneurs as they have been showing interest for a long time now.

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) and Japan External Trade Organisation (Jetro) signed an agreement to this effect in Tokyo yesterday in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Under the deal, Bepza will reserve industrial plots at the Ishwardi, Mongla and Uttara EPZs for the Japanese investors.

Bepza will also allocate factory

buildings to the Japanese investors in the Adamjee and Comilla EPZs where there are no vacant plots at the moment, according to a Bepza statement.

"Japanese investors have been demanding an exclusive EPZ for them as they consider Bangladesh a lucrative destination for investment for its ready labour force," Kei Kawano, Jetro representative in Bangladesh, said from Tokyo by phone.

"There is a shortage of labour everywhere. Bangladesh has an adequate number of workers. This is the main reason behind growing Japanese investment here," he said.

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RANA PLAZA VICTIMS Netherlands to lobby for funds

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Netherlands government will soon start lobbying international clothing retailers and brands to raise funds for Rana Plaza victims, as disbursement of compensation is being delayed for a dearth of funds, a Dutch minister said yesterday.

"I will meet officials of retailers, Accord, the EU and other stakeholders in the coming weeks for realising funds for the victims," said Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen at a press conference at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in Dhaka.

So far, only nine retailers and brands paid \$17 million against a target of \$40 million for Rana Plaza Trust Fund and many are yet to fulfil their commitment.

A total of 29 retailers and brands used to source garment items from five factories housed in the Rana Plaza building.

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Watch TV without cable link as Beximco launches new unit

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

People will soon be able to watch their favourite television programmes without any separate cable connection and cable infrastructure. A new joint venture will make this happen by the yearend by introducing DTH (direct to home) services for the first time in the country.

Beximco Communications, the joint venture between industrial conglomerate Beximco Group and Russian investment and industry holding giant GS Group, aims to net three lakh subscribers during 2015.

The company, which received a DTH

licence from the government last year, plans to rope in additional four lakh subscribers annually, Beximco said in a statement.

Details about the DTH service packages, including price and channels for subscribers, will be announced later.

DTH has many advantages: one can do away with the cable operator who provides channels of choice, but no assurance of quality. The quality of signals in this case is expected to be superior since the signal is not split through a cable. By choosing just the signals that one needs, there is a possibility of reducing subscribers' monthly cable bills.

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Western Marine shows path to worker safety

The shipbuilder reduces worker injuries by 99pc

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Western Marine Shipyard (WMS) has successfully implemented globally accepted occupational health and safety practices, which have cut the number of workers' injuries by up to 99 percent.

The country's leading shipbuilder began implementing the five-year health

and safety management system in 2009 with the help of GIZ, the German agency for international cooperation.

In 2009, the number of workers' injuries at the shipyard in Chittagong stood at about 1,000 a month; it came down to 10 in August 2013, said Saiful Islam, chairman of WMS.

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