EBL

M Khorshed Anowar, head of retail banking at Eastern Bank Ltd (EBL), and Mohammad Abdul Matin Emon, CEO of Doctorola Ltd, exchange signed documents of a deal at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. EBL Mastercard/Visa cardholders will get 10 percent discount for healthcare services at doctorola.com, an online platform for doctor's appointment.

EU migrants are good for German economy: study

REUTERS, *Berlin*

Germany should step up efforts to attract more citizens from other EU states, five million of whom have boosted the country's economy by an average of 0.2 percent per year since 2011, the DIW economic institute said on Wednesday.

Most arrivals have been young, well qualified and active in the labour market, where they have filled many vacant positions and boosted consumer demand, it said in a study.

Migration of citizens from other EU states peaked in 2015, when the boost to German GDP was 0.3 percent. "Without it, GDP would have expanded by just 1.2 percent," said Marius Clemens, one of the authors of the study.

The DIW said that, given its ageing population and shortages of skilled labourers, Germany should make efforts to attract more EU migrants, particularly since they might be drawn instead to other European economies that were now expanding too.

Germany needed more pragmatic processes to recognise career qualifications of migrants from EU countries and elsewhere, and create a more welcoming environment.

More EU nationals moved to Germany between 2011 and 2016 than migrants and refugees from outside the bloc, whose arrival in record numbers has opened a bitter political divide.

Far-right groups in Germany argue that migrants are tapping into its generous social benefits without contributing to its economy.

In August, Labour Office data showed increasing numbers of non-EU migrants were also finding jobs in Germany, where unemployment has fallen to a series of record lows.

China factory activity slows amid trade war woes

AFP, *Beijing*

Chinese factory activity slowed in October, official data showed Wednesday, adding to a growing list of bad news for the Asian giant as it struggles to maintain economic momentum in the face of US tariffs and a weakening yuan.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), a key gauge of factory conditions, came in at 50.2 for the month, down from 50.8 in September, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

The figure was also below the 50.6 reading tipped in a Bloomberg News survey of economists, though it was still slightly above the 50-point mark that separates expansion from contraction.

The figures are the latest sign that the world's second-largest economy is losing momentum as it faces challenges at both home and abroad -- from a trade war with the US to a massive debt buildup.

"All the numbers from China's PMI release today confirm a broad-based decline in economic activity," ANZ's Raymond Yeung said in a research note.

"Economic conditions facing China's private sector are much worse than what the headline figure suggests," he warned, noting that a closer analysis of the figures shows that manufacturing by small and medium-sized businesses actually contracted in October.

AFP

This aerial view shows new buses lined up for export at a port in Lianyungang, east China's Jiangsu province, yesterday.

Chinese economic growth slowed to 6.5 percent in the third quarter, down from a high of 6.8 percent this year.

The number was in line with Beijing's annual target. But more downward pressure could threaten the country's key political goals of eliminating poverty by 2020 and building a "moderately prosperous society".

American tariffs on virtually all Chinese imports have sapped confidence in Beijing's ability to maintain current growth levels.

Analysts say that the country's overleveraged companies and local governments are likely to put a further drag on expansion.

China's ailing stock markets have made the concerns even more acute, Yeung said, noting that "risks related to stock-pledged lending have escalated due to the fall in Chinese equities".

Offering stock as collateral for loans is a common practice in China.

Further complicating the picture is the falling price of the yuan against the dollar, with the unit at its lowest level in a decade.

A weaker yuan makes Chinese exports less expensive overseas, offsetting some of the higher costs brought by the US tariffs but it has also driven up the cost of critical raw materials from abroad and threatened domestic confidence in the currency, driving some investors to move assets overseas.

GM profit tops estimates, sees strong full year

REUTERS, *Detroit*

General Motors Co on Wednesday posted far stronger-than-expected quarterly profit and said its full-year earnings forecast would come in at the high end of its forecast due to strong demand in North America.

GM shares jumped 7.6 percent in pre-market trading.

The Detroit automaker reported third-quarter net income of $2.53 billion, or $1.75 a share, compared with a loss last year of $2.98 billion, or $2.03 a share. Last year's quarter included a charge related to Europe.

Excluding one-time items, GM earned $1.87 a share in the third quarter, easily beating the $1.25 analysts polled by Refinitiv estimates had expected.

Revenue in the quarter rose 6.4 percent to $35.8 billion, above the $34.85 billion analysts had expected.

GM was able to push through higher pricing, mostly in North America, allowing it to benefit by $1 billion in the quarter, offsetting higher commodity costs. Those pricing gains are sustainable, the company's CFO said.

"Our third-quarter performance demonstrates our determination to manage risks and deliver strong business results," GM Chief Executive Mary Barra said in a statement. The Detroit automaker said it still sees a full-year profit in the range of $5.80 to $6.20 a share, but said it now expected to finish at the high end of the range with potential to finish even higher. It cited a favorable tax rate and its strong performance.

Oil rises 1pc ahead of US sanctions on Iran

REUTERS, *London*

Oil prices rose more than 1 percent on Wednesday as markets braced for the imposition of US sanctions on Iran next week and as stock markets clawed back some of their recent losses.

Benchmark Brent crude oil was up 80 cents at $76.71 a barrel by 0840 GMT. The contract fell 1.8 percent on Tuesday, at one point touching its lowest since Aug. 24 at $75.09.

US light crude was up 60 cents at $66.78. It hit a two-month low of $65.33 a barrel on Tuesday.

New US sanctions on Iran begin on Nov. 4 and Washington has made it clear to Tehran's customers that it expects them to stop buying any Iranian crude oil from that date.

Imports of Iranian crude by major buyers in Asia hit a 32-month low in September, as China, South Korea and Japan sharply cut their purchases ahead of the sanctions on Tehran, government and ship-tracking data showed.

Oil market sentiment also received some support from equity markets, which pulled back from 20-month lows on Wednesday after pledges by China to support its markets.

"The bullish argument for crude still centres on Iran sanctions which are due to begin in November, and continued output declines from Venezuela," said William O'Loughlin, investment analyst at Rivkin Securities.

Despite the rally on Wednesday, both crude benchmarks are around $10 below four-year highs reached on Oct. 3 and on track for their worst monthly performance since July 2016.

Tony Nunan, oil risk manager at Mitsubishi Corp in Tokyo, said the Brent price outlook for had changed dramatically:

"Everyone thought we were going to go into the $90s, but now we are heading for the $60s," he said.

Oil has been caught in the global financial market slump this month, with equities under pressure from the trade war between the world's two largest economies, the United States and China.

The United States has already imposed tariffs on $250 billion worth of Chinese goods, and China has responded with retaliatory duties on $110 billion worth

JAMUNA BANK

Golam Dastagir Gazi, a lawmaker and a director of Jamuna Bank, and Nur Mohammed, chairman of Jamuna Bank Foundation, open "Jamuna Bank Foundation Dialysis Centre" at Shantinagar in Dhaka. Shafiqul Alam, managing director, was present.

Eurozone inflation rises to 2.2pc in October

AFP, *Brussels*

Eurozone inflation rose to 2.2 percent in October, official data showed Wednesday, moving further away from the European Central Bank's (ECB) target rate, as unemployment in the single currency zone remained stable.

The rise from 2.1 percent in September, driven by a hike in energy prices, marks another step up from the ECB's aim of near to or lower than two percent and could add to pressure on the bank to end its crisis-era stimulus measures.

Unemployment in the 19-country eurozone stood at 8.1 percent in September, the same as the month before and the lowest figure since 2008.

The closely-watched core inflation figure -- which strips out energy, food, alcohol and tobacco -- also rose in October, reaching 1.1 percent compared with 0.9 percent the month before.

The headline figure, which is in line with forecasts by analysts quizzed by financial services firm Factset, was pushed up by a 10.6 percent rise in the cost of energy, driven by higher oil prices and a weaker euro.

ECB President Mario Draghi last week confirmed plans to end "quantitative easing" (QE) or mass bond-buying at the end of December.

Introduced in 2015, the scheme currently sees the bank buy billions of euros of government and corporate bonds per month, aiming to pump cash through the financial system to stoke lending, economic growth and inflation.

Draghi also insisted the ECB will keep interest rates at historic lows until late next year to support growth and encourage inflation towards the goal of just below 2.0 percent.

Tuesday brought disappointing growth data for the eurozone, with stagnation in Italy and problems with German car production dragging quarterly expansion to its slowest rate in four years.

GDP in the eurozone rose just 0.2 percent in the third quarter, partly as a result of zero growth in Italy, the area's third biggest economy.

But Jennifer McKeown, chief European economist at Capital Economics, said the inflation rise "supports the ECB's judgment that underlying price pressures are gradually rising despite the slowdown in activity over recent months".

Rising costs to moderate after 2019: Facebook

REUTERS

Facebook Inc on Tuesday relieved investors by forecasting that margins would stop shrinking after 2019 as costs from scandals ease up, sending shares up despite a second-straight quarter with record-low user growth.

Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg repeated the company's warning that growing user interest in private messaging, video and safer content would cause costs to rise faster than revenue for "some time." But he said he was focused on bringing them in line.

That same guidance three months ago sparked Facebook's biggest one-day sell-off as some investors braced for dire results. The third-quarter performance and revised guidance suggested that the downward trend would be more gradual and taper off after 2019, financial analysts said.

Shares of Facebook traded up about 3 percent after updating its forecast. They reversed course several times, falling and gaining as much as 5 percent, during an hour of volatility after closing on Tuesday up 2.9 percent at $146.22.

Facebook, Amazon.com Inc and Google parent Alphabet Inc had suffered a battering over the last month on Wall Street after leading a years-long rally. Slowing growth has been a top concern, and Facebook's weak results did not squash those fears. "The best news was that the quarter was just not a disaster," Ivan Feinseth, analyst at Tigress Financial Partners, told Reuters.

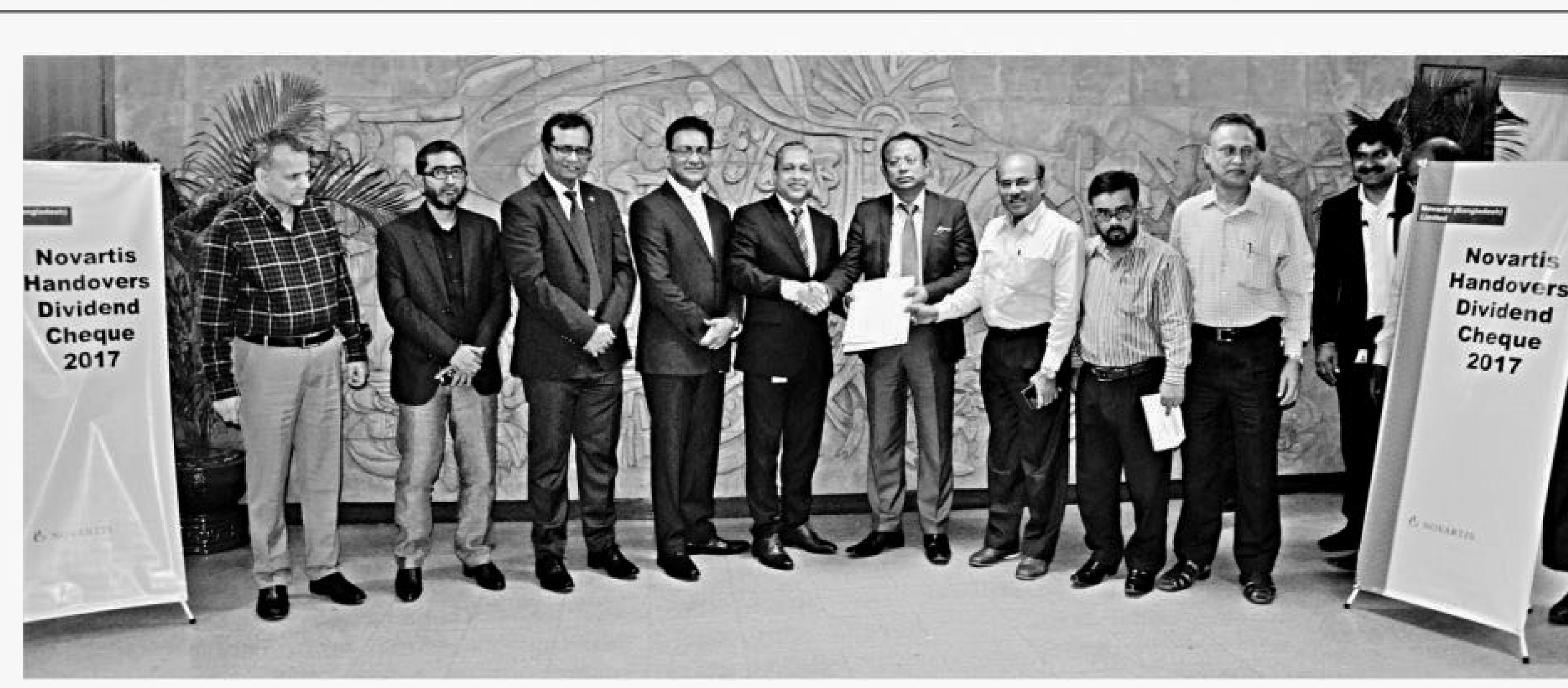
The company estimated revenue growth would slow in the current quarter, compared with last quarter, which could mark the worst performance since its initial public offering in 2012.

The main Facebook service and its Messenger sibling grew monthly users to 2.27 billion, up 10 percent compared with a year ago but a percentage point below both expectations and last quarter's pace.

Zuckerberg said that Facebook's problem is that users are gravitating toward features such as direct messaging and video viewing faster than it can find ways to place ads there while attracting clicks and not annoying users.

IBBL

Mohammed Monirul Moula, additional managing director of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited (IBBL), opens a branch at Rangunia in Chattogram on Tuesday.



NOVARTIS (BANGLADESH) LTD

Riad Mamun Prodhani, managing director of Novartis (Bangladesh) Ltd, hands over a cheque of its dividends for 2017 to Shah Md Aminul Haq, chairman of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), at the BCIC headquarters in Dhaka recently. The BCIC owns 40 percent stakes in Novartis Bangladesh. Novartis approved 20 percent cash dividend at its 45th annual general meeting on August 11.