**ASIAN MARKETS** 

**TOKYO** 

7 2.26%

**MUMBAI** 

**0.51%** 

As of Friday

\$57.06

আস্থাটাও বেশি এসআইবিএল সুপার সেভিংস একাউন্ট পঞ্চান্ন-উর্ধ্ব সিনিয়র সিটিজেনদের জন্য। ১৮-উর্ধ্ব মহিলারাও এই হিসাবটি খুলতে পারবেন। 16491 www.siblbd.com

DHAKA MONDAY JANUARY 7, 2019, POUSH 24, 1425 BS starbusiness@thedailystar.net

# Europe quicker now

COMMODITIES

\$1,282.60

#### Exporters hail transshipment from Kolkata

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REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

**STOCKS** 

CSCX

**1.57%** 

DSEX

Bangladesh's garment shipment to Europe has expedited with the introduction of transshipment facility from Kolkata's Netaji International Airport on a pilot basis, exporters said.

Last week, the first-ever bonded cargo from Bangladesh flew out of Kolkata airport. The cargo, weighing 4.1 tonnes, was Benapole land port, where it was loaded on to Indian trucks. The Indian trucks carried the goods to the Kolkata airport.

"This is like opening up a new window for us," said Siddiqur Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The development comes as part of a renewed bilateral trade framework between the two neighbouring nations following government-led panel discussions between the two sides in New Delhi at the end of

Transshipment, which is the shipment of goods or containers to an intermediate destination for delivery to final destination through another mode of transport, will shorten the long lead time by a few days. Moreover, the cost of carrying goods will reduce significantly.

The programme will be run on a pilot basis for six months to gain experience to carried by Bangladeshi trucks to the come up with regulation to check cargo diversion.

The first cross-border and land-to-air transshipment from Bangladesh was run by Expo Freight. "Primarily, we are sending three cargo

flights a week. Our target is to introduce six flights per week," said Maria Rahman, head of key accounts management team of Expo Freight.

The logistics provider has already sent seven flights of cargo after the launch of new operations from the Kolkata airport.

About the charge, Maria said if it costs Tk 5 for carrying a kg of goods by an airline to Europe from Bangladesh, the Dhaka-Kolkata-Europe route will cost Tk 3.5 a kg. It takes three to five days to

reach the final destinations in Europe from Dhaka, she added.

READ MORE ON B3

## Apparel shipment to I will not fail

**CURRENCIES** 

**BUY TK** 82.95

SHANGHAI

**2.05%** 

**1.54%** 

#### Incoming Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal says

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

...... The finance ministry will make a fresh start from today and will be beyond reproach, said AHM Mustafa Kamal after he was given charge of the ministry.

"You will see many new things there. This is my subject and I studied the subject. So, I can tell you: I will not make any false promise and I will not fail."

The way the finance ministry had been run in the past will not be the same under his charge.

Kamal's comments came at a media briefing yesterday on the implementation of the annual development programme (ADP) in the first half of the fiscal year, held at the auditorium of the National Economic Council.

Cabinet Secretary Shafiul Alam yesterday announced the names of the members of the upcoming cabinet and their portfolios.

As per the announcement, Planning Minister Kamal is being given the charge of the finance ministry and MA Mannan, state minister for finance and planning, will take his post. They will take oath today.

Replying to a query about the financial sector, Kamal said: "It is not difficult to address the existing problems. You will no longer see the faults that you now see."

He will straight away get down to identifying the problems in the finance ministry and then take action accordingly.



Outgoing Finance Minister AMA Muhith speaks with his successor AHM Mustafa Kamal while watching the Bangladesh Premier League match between Comilla Victorians and Sylhet Sixers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

MA Mannan, however, said he would not come up with anything revolutionary as the planning minster. "The progress that has already made will be taken forward."

two ministries would coordinate budget has been implemented. going forward.

In the first six months of fiscal Kamal said. 2018-19, 27.42 percent, or Tk

Both Kamal and Mannan said the 94,595 crore, of the development

"This is higher than a year earlier,"

#### State banks' cash recovery flatters to deceive

JEBUN NESA ALO

Despite the huge loan rescheduling spree, the four state-owned banks saw poor cash recovery from their top defaulters in the first nine months of 2018.

Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali banks recovered a total of Tk 1,308 crore from defaulters between January and September last year in contrast to the rescheduled amount of Tk 2,722 crore, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

Sonali and Janata recovered a higher amount than a year earlier during the period from their top 20 defaulters, but the other two recovered only a tiny amount.

Save for Sonali, the recovery from defaulters other than the top 20 ones was also slower.

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Preparations are going on in full swing for the Dhaka International Trade Fair beginning on January 9. The 24th edition of the month-long event usually begins on the first day of the month, but this year it has been deferred because of the parliamentary election. The exposition will continue till February 8.

### Stocks hit 8-month high

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The stockmarket has continued to maintain its post-election rally, reaching an eightmonth high of 5,687 points yesterday.

Turnover has also been increasing since the national polls held on December 30. The key index of the Dhaka Stock

Exchange, DSEX, increased 300 points in just five sessions. It rose 96.53 points, or 1.72 percent, yesterday. Turnover crossed Tk 1,000 crore after four months. "Investors' confidence bounced back

after a peaceful election and they are investing," said a leading merchant bank's managing director preferring anonymity. He said the index was also going up for the same reason. Market capitalisation of the DSE

crossed Tk 4 lakh crore after eight and a half months. It was Tk 4,04,667.64 crore on April 26 last year.

The merchant banker said many stocks remained lucrative despite the rally so there was no major cause for concern till now. However, the rampant rise of junk stocks, which more surprisingly made their way to the top gainers' list, was disquieting.

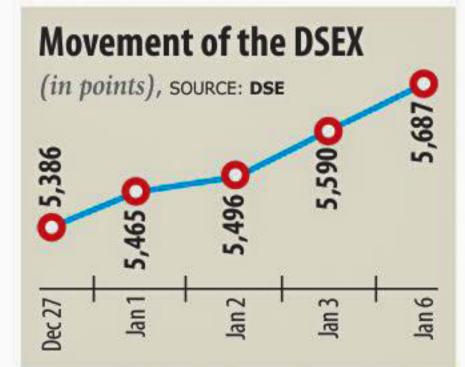
"These stocks may turn to dust in the investors' portfolio, so investors should be careful," he suggested.

Four junk stocks were in the top gainers' list yesterday.

chart with 28.32 lakh shares worth Tk 31.07 crore changing hands, followed by Paramount Textile, Beximco, VFS Thread Dyeing and Brac Bank. Savar Refractories, one of the junk

BBS Cables dominated the turnover

stocks, topped the gainers' list rising 10 percent to Tk 146.3. Sonargaon Textile was the top loser shedding 6.72 percent.



Chittagong stocks also rose with the bourse's benchmark index, CSCX, increasing 163.79 points, or 1.57 percent, to finish the day at 10,531.43.

Gainers beat losers as 202 advanced and 53 declined while 18 finished unchanged on the Chittagong Stock Exchange. The port city bourse traded 2.14 crore shares and mutual fund units worth Tk 33.17 crore.

## Cassava yield rises yet full potential untapped

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Annual production of cassava, a root vegetable similar in looks to sweet potato and commonly eaten across Africa, is estimated to have doubled in Bangladesh, thanks to growing demand for its starch from the industrial sector.

Yet locals can meet just 2 percent of the demand at home, prompting garment, pharmaceutical and food processing industries to import the rest from Thailand, India and Vietnam.

Cassava takes around a year to grow on being planted between November and March and the variety available in Bangladesh can be harvested once.

Food processor Pran estimates that 30,000 tonnes of Cassava were grown on 6,000 acres of land in 2018 whereas in 2017 some 14,000 tonnes were harvested from 3,700 acres.

However, extracting just one four kilogrammes of cassava.

lakh tonnes of starch, local growers can garner only 5,000 to 6,000 tonnes, said Mahatab Uddin, chief operating officer

of Pran Agro Business. Meanwhile, industrial demand for

percent every year, he pointed out.

kilogramme of starch can require some While the industries seek around 3.50

without any prior training. Liton Datta, another farmer who cassava starch is growing by 10 to 15

The solution, according to cultivators and sector insiders, lies in expanding its farming while using high-yield varieties.

Uddin said cassava's sole weakness was waterlogging. Flash floods and excessive rains dented 2017's harvest as 2016's yield was around 1,000 tonnes more, but required 700 acres of less

land, he said. Agriculture graduate Rajib Kumar Roy echoed Uddin, saying two to three days' waterlogging would do the damage, for which hilly or partially-hilly areas were the land of choice.

Roy too was interested in expanding his farm, for he hopes to make a profit of Tk 5 lakh from a 200-tonne harvest cultivating some 60 acres of land in Srimangal upazila.

There is no need for extra efforts demanded by paddy and other crops, except that fertiliser has to be used, he said, adding that it was very easy and cheap and anyone could cultivate it

cultivated cassava on 200 acres of land at Rongirkul village in Moulvibazar's Kulaura upazila, expects to make a profit of roughly Tk 20 lakh from his harvest which he believes would amount to 1,400 tonnes.



According to him, every acre of land requires Tk 25,000 to Tk 35,000 and yields at least 6 tonnes of cassava.

There are varieties of the crop which can be harvested twice a year and can raise per acre output to 14-15 tonnes, Datta said.

Masuk Mia, a grocer, cultivated cassava on 350 acres of land in Bijoynagar of Brahmanbaria and Kanighat of Sylhet

under a contract with Pran. Pran says it provides farmers Tk 17,000 per acre in advance for cassava farming before it purchases each

kilogramme for Tk 7.5. He said a profit of at least Tk 10,000 can be made from an acre with mini-

He accused the Department of Agricultural Extension of not cooperating with farmers and not giving clues on how to improve the quality of the har-

Talking to The Daily Star, Bimal Chandra Kundo, principal scientific officer of the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), said they did not have enough scientists to research

STAR

and develop high-yield cassava. READ MORE ON B3

Cassava collected from farmers being readied for the production of starch. The photo was taken at Pran's Habiganj Industrial Park on Saturday.