

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▲ 0.69%	▲ 0.82%	\$1,887.20	\$43.89	▲ 0.72%	▲ 0.42%	▲ 1.11%	▼ 0.21%	BUY TK 83.95	89.50	110.07	12.59
4,905.09	8,459.37	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	43,952.71	26,014.62	2,778.55	3,339.90	SELL TK 84.95	102.30	113.87	13.24

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An extraordinary rise of remittance

in extraordinary times

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

The largely battered hundi system because of travel restrictions, the zero-interest rate on deposit products in western countries, repeated floods in Bangladesh, and a massive collapse in demand in many nations hosting migrant workers from this South Asian nation have taken the inbound remittance to a level that was never seen before.

The stream of remittances, credited for alleviating poverty in lower- and middle-income countries, is so strong that it has baffled economists and made the World Bank reverse its forecasts about the flow of the remittance.

This too came when the world was struck with a recession, one of the deepest since the Great Depression.

A good number of migrant workers have lost jobs due to the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The flow of Bangladeshis going abroad in search of jobs has also ebbed. But the crisis has had little impact on remittance.

Migrant workers remitted \$2.11 billion last month, which was way higher than \$1.64 billion flown to the country in the same month a year ago.

October's receipts were the third-highest monthly flow in history, behind July's \$2.59 billion and September's \$2.15 billion.

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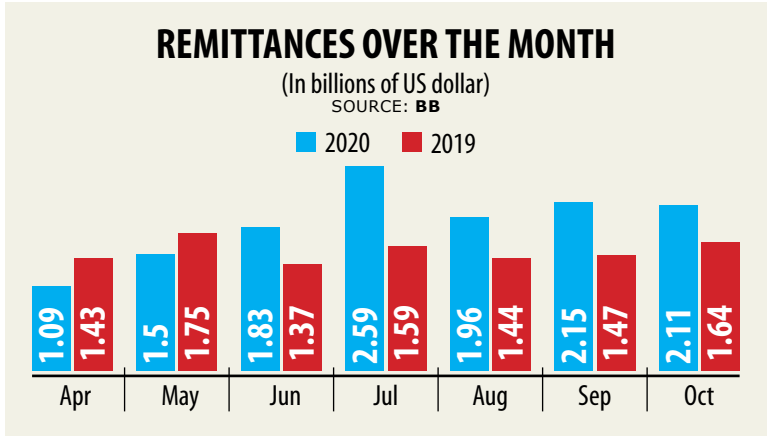
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Between July and October, remittance hit \$8.82 billion, up from 43.24 per cent year-on-year.

Bangladesh received a record \$1 billion in just 12 days of November, a rare feat in such a short span of time, according to the finance ministry.

Remittance has been on the rise in recent months.

Both Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Azha, the two religious festivals making up the major spending seasons in the Muslim-majority nation, were celebrated during the period. A significant part of the country faced a number of floods this year. As a result, the expatriates sent more money to their struggling near and dear ones.

Ninety-five per cent people in Bangladesh suffered a loss of income due to the shutdown and social distancing measures enforced by the government during the

peak of the pandemic in the country, according to a Brac survey.

Studies show that remittances tend to rise during downturn phases in the economic cycle. Migrants send more money home to support their financially distressed families, wrote Zahid Hussain, an economist, in January.

But perhaps a more important reason for a whopping 53.5 per cent year-on-year increase in remittance flows in the third quarter was the damage from the floods that inundated more than one-quarter of the country's landmass, affecting nearly 1 million homes and 4.7 million people, said the World Bank in October.

Other plausible explanations include pent-up remittances after the shutdown in the second quarter, a shift in flows from informal to formal channels, and the 2 per cent cash incentive the government granted to remitters.

The stagnated hundi system – an illegal cross-boundary financial transaction – has mainly driven the remittance growth, said Tasneem Siddiqui, the founding chair of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit.

The restriction on the movement globally has created a standstill situation for the global hundi

REASONS BEHIND RISING REMITTANCE

A slump in transactions through informal channels

Imposition of a travel embargo left a positive impact

Fund transfer made easier thanks to growing network of MFS and agent banking

Low interest rate in developed economies encouraged migrants to invest in Bangladesh

Introduction of 2pc government incentive on remittance

Loss of jobs also compelled many migrants to send money home

Inflow increased as flood and Eid came during the pandemic

cartel, she said.

"The ongoing upward trend of remittance is a highly extraordinary phenomenon for any nation during the ongoing business slowdown," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.

Along with the migrant workers, some expatriate Bangladeshis, who run businesses abroad, may also have transferred funds to the country as part of their portfolio investment, Mansur said.

A portfolio investment is an ownership of a stock, bond, or other financial assets with the expectation that it will earn a return or grow in value over time, or both.

It entails passive or hands-off ownership of assets as opposed to direct investment, which would involve an active management role.

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Apex goes global

Opens its first international outlet in Nepal

REFAVET ULLAH MIRDHA and JAGARAN CHAKMA

Apex Footwear has launched its first international outlet, finding its niche in Kathmandu, the capital of the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal.

The leading Bangladeshi footwear manufacturer, retailer and exporter, organised the launch of its "Venturini" store virtually on November 14.

"The next market will be in Asia. So, we started to enter the international market through the launch of the first outlet in Nepal," said Apex Footwear Chairman Syed Manzur Elahi, who has pioneered the rise of Bangladesh's footwear industry.

"We will explore the market in South Asia at first. Then we will go outside of this region within the next 10 years," he said.

Apex Footwear is conducting market studies in Sri Lanka and Bhutan in order to open outlets.

"Gradually we will open outlets in Myanmar and Thailand," said Elahi, who has also served as a former caretaker government adviser.

Customers in Nepal can now enjoy the exclusive collections offered by Venturini along with Apex's other private

labels – Maverick, Sprint, Moochie, Nino Rossi, Sandra Rosa, and a wide range of accessories from internationally renowned brands Cross and Police, said Apex in a Facebook post.

Apex continues to expand its footprint beyond Bangladesh as a brand that truly is "Born in Bangladesh, worn around the world", read the post.

Apex came about on January 4, 1990, and is listed on both stock exchanges of Bangladesh. It has 260 sales points across the country.

The company is already present in all major export markets, albeit behind the scenes in the form of its 135 global customers, including major shoe retailers in Europe, North America and Japan.

Nowadays it lays claim to being the largest shoemaker in South Asia, responsible for approximately 15 per cent of the leather footwear export from Bangladesh.

The shoemaker's annual turnover in fiscal 2018-19 stood at Tk 1,580.88 crore.

However, it was not immune to the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic this year, with business falling by almost 40 per cent.

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COLLECTED

People are seen in the first outlet of Venturini, a brand of Bangladesh's Apex Footwear Ltd, at Kathmandu in Nepal on November 14.

Apparel makers demand easing conditions for using duty-free fabrics

REFAVET ULLAH MIRDHA

Local apparel manufacturers have urged the bond authorities to increase the amount of waste permitted while producing garments from items imported duty free under bonded warehouse benefit.

The garment makers' placed the demand as they are shifting productions from basic garments to high-end value-added items.

Currently, manufacturers are allowed to waste 7 to 9 per cent of the required materials while making export-oriented garment items. It is 7 per cent during the dyeing process and 9 per cent in case of processed knitted fabrics.

However, the percentage of waste in making export-oriented garment items has risen as most local manufacturers are entering the high-end market.

A portion of fabrics is wasted for various reasons during manufacturing. For instance, incidents of wasting fabrics and yarn take place when these materials are cut or processed. Scraps are also produced while sewing fabrics.

The process of making fancy or high-value added garment items generate more waste compared to the production of basic apparel products.

Garment manufacturers and exporters in a meeting with the Customs Bond Commissionerate (CBC), Dhaka yesterday demanded an increase in the percentage of waste permitted in making export-oriented garment items to 25 or 30 per cent. CBC Dhaka is a field office under the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

This is because, in many cases, garment manufacturers and exporters cannot maintain the commerce ministry's fixed 7 per cent and 9 per cent waste allowances in making fancy and high-end garment items, they said.

As a result, the bond office and customs offices sometimes cause delays in releasing goods from ports because of a mismatch in the amount of fabrics imported and its consumption for making finished apparel goods for export under bond licences.

At the meeting, garment exporters showed that a prominent local manufacturer's waste was calculated at 40.24 per cent between 2015 and 2018.

This manufacturer's export price was \$5 per unit during this time as it was making fancy and value-added products.

Of the 40.24 per cent, visible waste was 8.43 per cent, invisible waste 9.72 per cent, cutting waste 15.38 per cent, cut panel waste 5.66 per cent and rejected garment waste was 4.95 per cent, according to a document submitted to the bond office by garment exporters.

Between 80 per cent and 90 per cent are cut maintaining right processes. Still, 10 to 20 per cent of the fabrics are wasted, the documents showed.

Since the beginning of the local garment sector's journey four decades ago, Bangladesh has been mainly known for producing basic and semi value-added garment items.

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Govt turns to international market for rice

SOHEL PARVEZ

The government has started buying rice from the international market in its effort to replenish public food stocks and increase its capacity to intervene in the market to curb a price spike of the staple food.

As part of the move, the Directorate of Food floated a tender on Sunday to purchase 50,000 tonnes of parboiled rice from the international market.

It is likely to seek bids for another 50,000 tonnes soon, said Director General Sarwar Mahmud.

"We will gradually make purchases on the basis of our procurements from the domestic market and the overall market situation," he said over the phone.

The move comes as the Directorate of Food could not attain its purchase target for paddy and rice from winter crop Boro.

This stemmed from a lack of interest of farmers and millers amidst soaring prices resulting from apprehensions of reduced yield for inclement weather, recurrent floods and pandemic-induced fears of food shortages.

The food ministry was able to materialise 67 per cent of its plan to purchase 11.5 lakh tonnes of rice from millers.

As for its purchase target of 8 lakh tonnes from the harvest of Boro, just over one-fourth of it has been attained. Boro accounts for over half of the annual rice basket of 3.66 crore tonnes.

As the distribution of foodgrains continued under various programmes, including social safety nets, stocks of rice and wheat dipped 40 per cent year-on-year to 8.8 lakh tonnes early this week.

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Bangladesh gets \$256.5m Green Climate Fund

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh has received \$256.5 million from the global Green Climate Fund to promote private sector investment through large scale adoption of energy-efficient technologies in the textile and garment sectors.

This is the first concessional credit line for Bangladesh, and the first private sector financing from the GCF in the country, the Infrastructure Development Company Ltd (Idcol) said yesterday.

The fund was approved at the board meeting of the GCF on November 13.

The GCF is a fund established within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as an operating entity of the financial mechanism to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices

to counter climate change.

The Idcol, as the direct access entity (DAE) of the GCF, received the approval of the funding proposal for the programme titled "Promoting private sector investment through large scale adoption of energy-saving technologies and equipment for Textile and Readymade Garment sectors of Bangladesh".

It is the largest approved funding proposal for any DAE of the GCF accredited globally, the Idcol said in a press release.

Under the programme, Idcol will get \$250 million concessional loan for a tenure of 20 years with a grace period of five years for financing energy-efficient equipment.

Another \$6.5 million will come as technical assistance (grant) to develop enabling environment by covering areas such as capacity building, awareness, support in

POINTS TO NOTE

- First concessional credit line from the GCF
- First private sector financing
- Loan tenure **20** years with a grace period of five years
- \$100m** for textile sector energy-efficiency projects
- \$150m** for financing energy efficiency projects in the garment sector
- Garment sector is the largest industrial contributor in CO2 emissions at **15.4pc**, followed by the textile sector at **12.4pc**

get the fund from the GCF, said Mahmood Malik, executive director of Idcol.

The fund for the garment sector would be distributed through three banks and one non-bank financial institution, he said.

Lenders would get the fund at a flat rate of 1.75 per cent for 20 years. Industries would get the loans at 4.75 per cent, Malik said.

The Sustainable & Renewable Energy Development Authority is also implementing a component of the programme to strengthen the regulatory and institutional framework at the national level to overcome the operational constraints related to implementing energy efficiency and conservation in the country.

Presently, the industrial sector in Bangladesh accounts for 47.8 per cent of commercial energy consumption. Textile and RMG account for approximately 38 per cent of the total energy consumption in the industrial sector.

The readymade garment sector is the largest industrial contributor in CO2 emissions at 15.4 per cent, followed by the textile sector at 12.4 per cent, according to the GCF website.

"These sectors are not operating efficiently because of continuous usage of old and badly maintained machines coupled with poor energy management."

If the current industrial energy intensity persists, along with the economic growth outlook in the medium to long term, Bangladesh will face severe difficulties in managing rising energy demands and achieving its GHG emission reduction targets under the Paris Agreement, the GCF said.

Textile and garment manufacturers face several barriers to investing in energy efficiency including inadequate financial incentives, lack of technical expertise and the lack of an enabling environment.

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# Funds' bullish corn, soy views little changed after USDA's supply cuts

KAREN BRAUN FOR REUTERS

Chicago corn and soybean futures surged after the US government slashed domestic supply outlooks last week, but against expectations, speculators' bullish bets were very little changed by comparison.

The US Department of Agriculture on Nov. 10 made historically large cuts to the US corn and soybean

Money managers increased their net long in CBOT soybeans through Nov. 10 to 221,094 futures and options contracts from 210,957 in the prior week. They had been pegged as buyers of 67,500 futures contracts in that period, which would have established a new record long.

Outright soybean shorts are almost nonexistent after falling to just 2,924

year highs for the time of year. The increase of coronavirus cases worldwide and the possible economic consequences continue to offer headwinds, but strong export demand and supply tightening keep limiting selling interest.

Since Nov. 10, CBOT corn has fallen 1.6 per cent, and trade sources estimate full per cent selling at 32,500 futures contracts. Soybeans have risen fractionally in the last four sessions, including a new high settle on Monday of \$11.53-1/2 per bushel, and the total buying is pegged at 17,500 contracts.

Money managers increased their net long in CBOT soybean oil to 97,111 futures and options contracts through Nov. 10 from 89,051 a week earlier. That is their most optimistic view on the vegoil for the time of year since 2016.

Soybean oil futures have risen nearly 4 per cent since then, setting a near four-year high for the most-active contract on Monday. Soybean oil futures are affected by movements in Malaysian palm oil futures, which on Friday reached their highest point in the benchmark contract since May 2012 on shrinking supplies.

Investors hold their most bullish-ever view on soybean meal for the time of year, though they trimmed their net long to 83,798 futures and options contracts through Nov. 10 from 85,130 a week earlier.

Most-active meal futures have slid more than 1 per cent over the last four sessions after reaching a two-and-a-half-year high last week.

Chicago wheat futures were nearly unchanged in the week ended Nov. 10, though money managers reduced their net long to 32,633 futures and options contracts from 48,605 a week earlier. That was their largest wheat selling week since August and it was driven by both new shorts and a reduction in longs.

That selling may have continued over the last four sessions as most-active futures have fallen 1.7 per cent. Unlike in corn and soybeans, open interest for Chicago wheat fell by 2.7 per cent in the week ended Nov. 10.

Funds barely touched their bullish bets in the other wheat contracts. They increased their Kansas City long by 470 futures and options contracts to 47,329 through Nov. 10, and they reduced their Minneapolis long by 360 contracts to 6,808.

# Oil falls on surge in coronavirus

Oil prices fell on Thursday, weighed down by the surge in coronavirus cases that is hampering the global economy, along with an unexpected rise in US crude stockpiles.

Oil futures tracked with US equities, which also fell on pandemic concerns. Europe is grappling with a sharp increase in infections and new social restrictions. In the United States, new cases have surpassed 100,000 per day for several days, and more than a dozen states have doubled their caseloads in the last two weeks.

Brent crude fell 27 cents to settle at \$43.53 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell 33 cents to settle at \$41.12 a barrel.

"When stocks gave up gains, oil followed," said Phil Flynn, senior analyst at Price Futures Group in Chicago. "It's a very nervous market."

US government data added to the bearishness, as crude inventories rose by 4.3 million barrels last week, compared with an expected fall of 913,000 barrels. Both contracts rallied this week after data showed an experimental coronavirus vaccine being developed by Pfizer Inc and BioNTech was 90 per cent effective, raising hopes that the pandemic will be brought under control.

Even with that development, though, oil demand remains shaky. The International Energy Agency (IEA) said global oil demand was unlikely to rise significantly until well into 2021, if the vaccine is successful.

"While the vaccine remains the best news received since the virus spread, life won't return to normal in a matter of days or weeks," said Hussein Sayed, chief market strategist at FXTM.

# Japan's economy vaults back from Covid-induced recession

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan's economy grew at the fastest pace on record in the third quarter, rebounding sharply from its biggest postwar slump, as improved exports and consumption helped the country emerge from the damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

However, analysts painted the sharp bounceback as a one-off from the depths of recession, and cautioned that any further rebound in the economy will be moderate as a resurgence in infections at home and abroad clouds the outlook.

The world's third-largest economy expanded an annualised 21.4 per cent in July-September, beating a median market forecast for an 18.9 per cent gain and marking the first increase in four quarters, government data showed on Monday.

It was the biggest increase since comparable data became available in 1980 and followed a 28.8 per cent plunge in the second quarter, when consumption took a hit from lock-down measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

"The strong growth in July-September was likely a one-off rebound from an extraordinary contraction caused by the lock-down steps," said Yoshiaki Shinke, chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute.

"The economy may not fall off a cliff. But given uncertainty over the outlook, I would err on the side of caution in terms of the pace of any recovery," he said.



People wearing protective masks, following the coronavirus disease outbreak, walk past a countdown clock for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Japan.

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১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়, স্বাস্থ্য সেবা বিভাগ।
২	সংস্থা	স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর।
৩	ক্রয়/সংগ্রহের স্বত্বাধিকারীর দপ্তরের নাম	তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁ।
৪	ক্রয়/সংগ্রহের স্বত্বাধিকারীর জেলা	নওগাঁ।
৫	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর নাম	ডাঃ মোহাম্মদ সাঈদুল হক।
৬	দরপত্র ও সরবরাহকারীর ধরণ	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁর ফ্রপ ভিত্তিক এমএসআর সম্মতী ক্রয়। প্রকৃত যোগ্য ঠিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী/প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান।
৭	সংগৃহীত পণ্যের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	(১) ফ্রপ-ক.ঔষধপত্র (ইউসিএল বহির্ভূত) (২) ফ্রপ-খ-মুদ্রাপত্র (৩) ফ্রপ-গ-লিনেন (৪) ফ্রপ-ঘ-গজ ব্যাভেজ তুলা (৫) ফ্রপ-ঙ-কেমিক্যাল রি-এজেন্ট এবং (৬) ফ্রপ-চ-আসবাবপত্র।
৮	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য ও ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া	প্রতিটি ফ্রপের দরপত্র দলিলের জন্য ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁর অনুকূলে সরকারি কোষাগারে কোড নং-১-২৭১১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ খাতে সোনালী ব্যাংক, নওগাঁর জমা দিয়া চালানের মূলকপি এবং অনলাইনে চালান যাচাই কপি বা সিআর গ্রহণপূর্বক য-য প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজস্ব ছাপানো প্যাডে তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁর বরাবরে আবেদনপূর্বক শর্তে উল্লেখিত কাগজপত্র প্রদর্শন অন্তে দরপত্র দলিল ক্রয়/সংগ্রহ করতে হবে।
৯	ক্রয়/সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহবান পদ্ধতি (Open Tender Method)।
১০	বাজেট/অর্থের উৎস	স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, টাকা এবং স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয় (অনুমোদন/রাজস্ব ও উন্নয়ন)।
১১	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি জারির তারিখ	১৬/১১/২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
১২	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময়	তারিখঃ ১৯/১১/২০২০ইং হইতে ২০/১২/২০২০ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সরকারি ছুটির দিন ব্যতিত) সময়ঃ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে বৈকাল ২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	সিডিউল বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২০/১২/২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়ঃ সকাল ৯.০০মিঃ থেকে বিকাল ২.০০মিঃ।
১৪	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	২১/১২/২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়ঃ সকাল ১০.০০টা হতে দুপুর ১২.০০টা।
১৫	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২১/১২/২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়ঃ দুপুর ১.০০মিঃ।
১৬	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের স্থান	ক) তত্ত্বাবধায়কের দপ্তর, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁ। (খ) পুলিশ সুপার এর কার্যালয়, নওগাঁ।
১৭	দরপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান	ক) তত্ত্বাবধায়কের দপ্তর, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁ। (খ) পুলিশ সুপার এর কার্যালয়, নওগাঁ।
১৮	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	ক) তত্ত্বাবধায়কের দপ্তর, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁ।
১৯	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ	টেলিফোনঃ ০৭৪১-৬২০২০ (অফিস চলাকালীন)।
২০	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ওয়েবসাইট	<a href="http://www.cplu.gov.bd">www.cplu.gov.bd</a>
২১	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ	যে কোন তফসীলভুক্ত ব্যাংক হইতে ক- ঔষধপত্র ফ্রপের জন্য ৪,০০,০০০/- (চার লক্ষ) টাকা, খ- মুদ্রাপত্র ফ্রপের জন্য ২,০০,০০০/- (দুই লক্ষ) টাকা, গ- লিনেন ফ্রপের জন্য ৮০,০০০/-, ঘ- গজ ব্যাভেজ তুলা ফ্রপের জন্য ৮০,০০০/- (আশি হাজার) টাকা, ঙ- কেমিক্যাল রি এজেন্ট ফ্রপের জন্য ৭০,০০০/- (সত্তর হাজার) টাকা এবং চ- আসবাবপত্র এর প্রতিটি ফ্রপের জন্য ৫০,০০০/- (পঞ্চাশ হাজার) টাকা তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁর অনুকূলে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে দরপত্র সিডিউলের সহিত দাখিল করতে হইবে।
২২	বিশেষ নির্দেশাবলী	পিপিএ-২০০৬, সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীসহ এবং পিপিআর-২০০৮ সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীসহ অনুসরণযোগ্য। পরবর্তীতে যেকোন জারিকৃত সরকারি আদেশ গ্রহণযোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হইবে। সম্ভাহক সত্তা কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র প্রক্রিয়াকরণের যে কোন ধাপে আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণ দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। বিস্তারিত তথ্য জানার জন্য অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয়ে নওগাঁ যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল।

ডাঃ মোহাম্মদ সাঈদুল হক  
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক (চঃ দাঃ)  
২৫০ শয্যা জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, নওগাঁ  
ই-মেইলঃ [naogaon@hospi.dghs.gov.bd](mailto:naogaon@hospi.dghs.gov.bd)

জিডি-১৮৩৫

# গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ

অধিনায়কের কার্যালয়

৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন

ঘোলাশহর, চট্টগ্রাম

## উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)

স্মারক নং-এপিবি(ক)/কিউএম-২০২০/৮৮০৪

তারিখঃ ১৭/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ

২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে চট্টগ্রামস্থ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন কোর্সের ৩য় ও ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের (জানুয়ারি/২০২১খ্রিঃ মাস হইতে জুন/২০২১খ্রিঃ মাস পর্যন্ত) ভিটামিন-এ যুক্ত ভোজ্যতৈল (সয়াবিন) এবং ছোটদানার দেশী মত্তর ডাল উন্নতমানের স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে ক্রয়ের ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী অভিজ্ঞ ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীগণের নিকট থেকে "The Public Procurement Act-2006" and "Regulation-2008" (সংশোধিত-২০০৯, ২০১৬ এবং ২০১৮) এর বিধান মোতাবেক নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তসাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/পুলিশ বিভাগ।
০২.	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
০৩.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, ঘোলাশহর, চট্টগ্রাম।
০৪.	কি কারণে দরপত্র আহ্বান	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের ৩য় ও ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের ভিটামিন-এ যুক্ত ভোজ্যতৈল (সয়াবিন) এবং ছোটদানার দেশী মত্তর ডাল উন্নতমানের স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে ক্রয়ের ঠিকাদার নিয়োগ।
০৫.	দরপত্র সূত্র নং	স্মারক নং-এপিবি(ক)/কিউএম-২০২০/৮৮০৪
০৬.	তারিখ	তারিখঃ ১৭/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ।
কালের বিবরণঃ		
০৭.	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM).
অর্থের উৎসঃ		
০৮.	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত (পিএলএ খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ হতে)।
তথ্যাদিঃ		
০৯.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রতিকায় প্রকাশের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	২৩/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ।
১০.	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৭/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত)।
১১.	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৮/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (১২ঃ০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে)।
১২.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৮/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ ১২ঃ৩০ ঘটিকায়।
১৩.	টিইসির সভার তারিখ	০৯/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ ১১ঃ০০ ঘটিকায়।

অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ		
১৪.	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল বিক্রয়কারী অফিস	১। ডিআইজি, এপিবিএন, উত্তরা, ঢাকা এর কার্যালয়। ২। অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম। ৩। পুলিশ সুপার, চট্টগ্রাম জেলা এর কার্যালয়।
	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিস	অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, ঘোলাশহর, চট্টগ্রাম এর কার্যালয়ে।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম এর কার্যালয়।

দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্যঃ

১৫.	দরপত্র যোগ্যতা	(১) হালনাগাদ বৈধ ড্রাইসেলিং (২) টিআইএন নম্বর উল্লেখ্য হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদ (৩) ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ (৪) ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী সনদ (৫) নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র (৬) সরকারি কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে উক্ত সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদপত্র (৭) অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা যাচা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল এ উল্লেখ আছে।				
১৬.	মালামালের বিবরণ					
	ক্রঃ নং	আইটেম	পরিমাণ	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (টাকা) (অফেরতযোগ্য)	নিরাপত্তা জামান (টাকা)	কাজের সময়সীমা
	০১.	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের ৩য় ও ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের ভিটামিন-এ যুক্ত ভোজ্যতৈল (সয়াবিন) ক্রয়	চাহিদা অনুযায়ী	১,০০০/-	৭০,০০০/-	জানুয়ারি/২০২১খ্রিঃ মাস হতে
	০২.	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের ৩য় ও ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টারের দেশী মত্তর ডাল ছোটদানার উন্নতমানের স্বচ্ছ পলিপ্যাকে ক্রয়		১,০০০/-	৩০,০০০/-	জুন/২০২১খ্রিঃ মাস পর্যন্ত

দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর বিবরণঃ

১৭.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মুঃ মাহবুবুর রশীদ।
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার)।
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, ঘোলাশহর, চট্টগ্রাম।
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	ফোনঃ ০২-৪১৩৮০০৮৪ ফ্যাক্সঃ ০২-৪১৩১৮০০৫২ (অফিস) E-mail: co9ap@police.gov.bd

২১. বিশেষ শর্তাবলী

ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

গ) আইটেমের দর বাজার মূল্যের সাথে সামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ হতে হবে।

ঘ) সর্বনিম্ন দরদাতার দর গ্রহণে কর্তৃপক্ষ সকল ক্ষেত্রে বাধ্য নয়।

ঙ) দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়েছে।

মুঃ মাহবুবুর রশীদ

বিপি-৭১০১১২২৭১৯

অধিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার)

৯ এপিবিএন, চট্টগ্রাম

ফোনঃ ০২-৪১৩৮০০৮৪ ৫০২-৪১৩১৮০০৫২

E-mail: co9ap@police.gov.bd

জিডি-১৮৪০





**Aziz Al Kaiser, vice chairman of Partex Star Group, cuts a cake to launch an augmented reality-based android mobile app, Partex Doors, recently. The app will enable selections from an exclusive collection of Partex Doors and give a preliminary idea on how doors would look fitting into their homes or offices.**

## US being left behind after Asia forms world's biggest trade bloc: US Chamber

REUTERS, Washington

The US Chamber of Commerce said on Monday it was concerned the United States was being left behind after 15 Asia-Pacific economies on Sunday formed the world's largest free-trade bloc, cementing China's dominant role in regional trade.

The Chamber welcomed the trade-liberalizing benefits of the new Regional Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (RCEP), saying US exporters, workers and farmers needed greater access to Asian markets. But it said Washington should not join the bloc.

RCEP covers 30 per cent of the global economy and 30 per cent of the global population, joining for the first time Asian powers China, Japan and South Korea. It aims in coming years to progressively lower tariffs across many areas.

The United States is absent from both RCEP and the successor to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), leaving the world's biggest economy out of two trade groups that span the world's fastest-growing region.

Myron Brilliant, executive vice president of the Chamber, said US President Donald Trump's administration had moved to confront unfair trade practices by China

but secured only limited new opportunities for US exporters in other parts of Asia.

Trump in early 2017 quit the TPP agreement, which his predecessor, Barack Obama, had negotiated as part of a US pivot to Asia. Trump has not concluded any comprehensive new trade deals in Asia since then, Brilliant said.

"Given the shortcomings of RCEP, we would not recommend the United States joining," Brilliant said, noting that recent US trade agreements had included stronger, enforceable rules on issues such digital trade, non-tariff barriers and intellectual property protections.

"The United States should, however, adopt a more forward-looking, strategic effort to maintain a solid US economic presence in the region," he said.

"Otherwise, we risk being on the outside looking in as one of the world's primary engines of growth hums along without us."

Brilliant noted that US exports to the Asia-Pacific market had increased steadily in recent decades but that the market share of US firms had declined.

He underscored the importance of the Asia-Pacific market, citing forecasts that call for an average growth rate of over 5 per cent in 2021 and a rapid expansion in the middle class.

## Vodafone increasingly confident after resilient first half

REUTERS, London

Vodafone Group, the world's second largest mobile operator, said it was increasingly confident about its full-year performance after a "resilient" first half, despite underlying momentum being obscured by the impact of COVID-19.

Vodafone nudged up the target range for adjusted core earnings to between 14.4 billion euros and 14.6 billion euros for its 2021 financial year, compared to 14.5 billion euros for the previous year.

For the six months to the end of September, its adjusted earnings fell by 1.9 per cent to 7.0 billion euros on a 2.3 per cent drop in group revenue to 21.4 billion euros, as the pandemic impacted roaming revenue and handset sales.

Chief Executive Nick Read said the results underlined "increased confidence" in the outlook and demonstrated progress in increasing customer loyalty, growing its fixed broadband base and delivering 5G efficiently through network sharing.

The slight upgrade to the outlook compared to a previous forecast for full-year core earnings to be "flat to slightly down" on the previous year, and analysts were forecasting on average 14.37 billion euros.

Vodafone also confirmed its full-year free cashflow guidance of at least 5 billion euros before spectrum and restructuring costs on Monday.

## Govt plans big to rehabilitate rural road network

FROM PAGE B4

Hasina also directed the ministries concerned, including the Local Government Division, to make sure the quality of works with top quality bitumen and ensuring that water does not remain stagnant on roads for a long time.

Instructions were also given to prepare a master plan for rural roads and infrastructures with the Local Government Division as the lead division.

Ecneec also approved a project for protecting Gobindi and Holdia areas under Saghata upazila and Katalmari area under Fulchari upazila of Gaibandha district from erosion on the right embankment of the Jamuna River with Tk 798.53 crore.

The two other projects approved at the meeting were waste system development of Khulna City Corporation with Tk 393.40 crore and the first revision of the construction of Sheikh Hasina Sangskritik Palli with an additional cost of Tk 102.77 crore.

## An extraordinary rise of remittance in extraordinary times

FROM PAGE B1

Many countries in North America and Europe now face the deadlock of a zero per cent interest rate. It would take at least four to five years for a country to get rid of the situation, he said.

So, Bangladeshi diasporas now send money as the interest rate on deposit products offered by local lenders is much higher than those in the countries they are now based, said Mansur, a former official of the International Monetary Fund.

Local banks offer 4-6 per cent interest rate on deposits.

"Beneficiaries of remittances can easily receive remittance through burgeoning mobile financial services and agent banking outlets. This has also undermined the hundi system," said Md Arfan Ali, managing director of Bank Asia.

The two per cent incentive introduced by the government in July last year, has also encouraged remitters to send their hard-earned money through the banking system, said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

But, he warned, that money-launderers

may use the formal channel to whiten their black money during the pandemic.

Bangladeshi workers were largely employed in the sectors that are essential to the economies of the host countries, for which it took time for them to become unemployed, said Zahid Hussain in October.

More than one crore Bangladeshis live in about 160 countries. Most of them are low-paid migrant workers in the Middle East and Southeast Asian countries.

Studies show that remittances alleviate poverty in lower- and middle-income countries, improve nutritional outcomes, are associated with higher spending on education, and reduce child labour in disadvantaged households, according to the World Bank.

A fall in remittances affect families' ability to spend on these areas as more of their finances will be directed to solve food shortages and immediate livelihoods needs.

Inbound remittance in Bangladesh is expected to accelerate by about 8 per cent to \$19.8 billion this year.

# Malaysia's FGV says crude palm oil output to worsen in Q4

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

The world's largest producer of crude palm oil, Malaysia's FGV Holdings Bhd (FGV), warned on Tuesday that its fourth-quarter output would be hit by uncertainties over the weather and curbs to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

The Malaysian benchmark has rallied 18 per cent over the period from July to September and crude palm oil (CPO) is now trading at 3,327 ringgit (\$810.57) per tonne on lower than expected production and tightening supply.

"We expect both fresh fruit bunches and crude palm oil production in 4Q FY2020 to be impacted by weather uncertainties and partial lockdown in Sabah," Haris Fadzilah Hassan, FGV's group chief executive, said in an exchange filing.

As a result, the price of CPO would stay strong until the end of the year, he added.

Haris Fadzilah did not elaborate on the weather conditions, but heavy rainfall and floods brought by a La Nina weather pattern have already disrupted harvesting in Malaysia and neighbouring Indonesia, which are the world's top producers.

Sabah is Malaysia's largest palm oil producing state, where a partial lockdown was imposed last month in some districts after a surge in virus infections.

Pandemic-driven border closures this year have also worsened a shortage of workers to harvest the perishable palm fruit, further hurting output.

FGV, which is already grappling with a shortage of nearly 2,700 workers, said it expects the shortage in

the fourth quarter to worsen by 4 per cent from the last.

"We may face difficulties once borders open and workers who have been postponing their trip back home decide to go back," Haris Fadzilah told an online media briefing.

FGV expects CPO prices to trade between 2,500 ringgit and 2,600 ringgit per tonne in the first half of 2021, but said its full-year outlook remained "very conservative".

It posted a third-quarter net profit of 136.9 million ringgit (\$33.37 million), versus a loss of 262.4 million a year ago, due to higher CPO prices and lower losses in its sugar sector.

Revenue rose to 3.99 billion ringgit.

FGV has completed the conditional sale and purchase agreement for two divestments worth 57.2 million ringgit, it added.

# Walmart sells majority stake in Seiyu, nearly exiting Japan

REUTERS, Tokyo

Walmart Inc is selling a majority stake in Japanese supermarket chain Seiyu to investment firm KKR and e-commerce company Rakuten for over \$1 billion, after years of struggling to make money amid stiff competition.

The deal, which values Seiyu at 172.5 billion yen (\$1.65 billion), comes after on-off speculation about the US retail giant looking to exit Japan. It is well below the 300-500 billion yen it reportedly sought a few years ago.

KKR will buy 65 per cent of Seiyu while Rakuten, which already has an online venture with the chain, will acquire a 20 per cent stake. Walmart will retain 15 per cent, the companies said in a joint statement on Monday.

The world's biggest retailer first entered the Japanese market in 2002 by buying a 6 per cent stake in Seiyu, and gradually built up its stake before a full takeover in 2008.

But it has struggled in Japan, like other foreign entrants such as Tesco PLC and Carrefour SA who were lured by the high spending power of Japanese consumers but were frustrated by tough competition.

Some analysts said Walmart, while failing to make much money in Japan, had done better than other foreign retailers considering it saved money-losing Seiyu from bankruptcy by cutting costs and improving private brand sales.

"Walmart was always going to struggle, because they had to turn around the business and also they needed to grow volume to really have a viable share in the Japanese market and the only way to do that

was through more acquisitions, which it wasn't willing to spend money on," said Roy Larke who specialises in Japan's retail industry at JapaneseConsuming.

The Seiyu deal is the latest divestiture of underperforming assets by Walmart, following its exits in Britain and Argentina, as it struggled to compete with nimble

local rivals. In Asia, it pulled out of South Korea in 2006 and shifted focus in China to expanding members-only warehouse chain Sam's Club as competition from online marketplaces such as Alibaba BABA.N intensified. Walmart is expanding in India, though, with its \$16 billion purchase of ecommerce provider Flipkart.



**The logos of Walmart and Seiyu are pictured at the headquarters office in Tokyo, Japan.**

REUTERS/FILE

## Apex goes global

FROM PAGE B1

Its earnings per share came down to Tk 5.62 last fiscal year whereas it was Tk 10.91 in the previous fiscal year.

Despite all this, hope lies in the fact that its EPS doubled in the July-September quarter of 2020-21.

The footwear company's per-share net asset value stood at Tk 252 as on September 30. Its stocks closed at Tk 219.30, which is 0.09 per cent higher than that of the previous day.

"The response to our store and Venturini brand in Kathmandu has been very encouraging," said Managing Director Syed Nasim Manzur while talking to The Daily Star.

"Nepalese consumers have been exposed to global brands and appreciated our high-quality leather and workmanship."

"They are also keen on a sophisticated and engaging retail experience which we try to deliver. All in all, we are very proud and hopeful about our journey in the land of the Himalayas," he said.

Opening the first store in Kathmandu with a local distributor, it is clear that the Bangladeshi brand will go on to grab the Nepalese market, said Chief Executive

Officer Rajan Pillai.

"It is quite a franchise, and we have plans to open two other outlets in Nepal with our distributor," he said.

Nepal does not have a local brand, but its growing middle class have an affinity for branded products as some sections of Nepalese consumers like to spend money behind the good quality, said Pillai.

Regarding the Covid-19-induced challenges, he said their drop in business resulted from the unattained sales targets of the two Eids this year.

However, business is gradually making a comeback and expectations are that the recovery will be possible within a short time, he said. Apex also plans to launch outlets in Delhi and Mumbai in the first half of next year, he said, adding, "Not only in South Asia, but we are also looking to enter the markets of the Middle East."

However, Pillai has reservations on

termining a footwear brand "one of the tops" solely based on its annual turnover.

There is no confusion that Apex is Bangladesh's top brand in terms of quality and it firmly believes it will go on to stand out as an international brand in the future, he said.

## Apparel makers demand easing conditions for using duty-free fabrics

FROM PAGE B1

In recent years, however, local manufacturers started producing diversified garment items like fancy, semi value-added and high value-added garment items, to become more competitive in the international market since the price of basic garment items is declining worldwide, as new suppliers like Myanmar and Ethiopia also produce cheap basic garments.

The price of "Made in Bangladesh" garment items for export declined by 1.79 per cent over the last five years but the cost of production rose

30 per cent, according to industry insiders.

"Exporters like local fabric and yarn suppliers should be treated equally in the process of Utilisation of Declaration and ease of audit period like garment exporters," they said at the meeting.

Representatives from the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association and Bangladesh Textile Mills Association participated in the meeting with the bond commissioner.

## Govt turns to international market for rice

FROM PAGE B1

The current stock is nearly half of the comfortable level of over 15 lakh tonnes, which provides the government with the flexibility to intervene with open market sales and other schemes.

The interventions seek to reach the staple to the poor and low-income people at lower-than-market prices and curb price spirals.

The average retail price of coarse rice was 24 per cent higher, each kilogramme costing Tk 46.5, yesterday in Dhaka from that a year ago, shows market data compiled by the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

In order to refill public storages, the food and agriculture ministers earlier spoke out of plans to import two lakh tonnes of rice.

Mahmud said his office did not fix any target for making purchases from the international market. "We will decide by observing, considering the overall situation," he said.

Officially, the Directorate of Food planned to start buying paddy from farmers from November 7, and rice from millers from November 15 during the current harvest season of Aman.

Though the purchase of paddy has started, the amount of grain bought is, till date, insignificant while contracts with millers for the purchase of rice are yet to be finalised, said Mahmud.

The government has an allocation to import 1 lakh tonnes of rice during the current fiscal of 2020-21.

## Bangladesh gets \$256.5m Green Climate Fund

FROM PAGE B1

The sectors must overcome these barriers so that Bangladesh can meet its nationally determined contributions target of 15 per cent GHG emission reduction compared to a business-as-usual scenario by 2030, the Fund said.

The programme provides an integrated package of concessional financing for textile and RMG manufacturers, and technical assistance to create an enabling environment and ultimately to reduce 14.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in emissions.

Set up in 1997, Idcol is a government-owned non-bank financial institution working to catalyse private sector investment in the areas such as renewable energy and infrastructure.



# DSE rises riding on banking stocks

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Investors went after the banking stocks yesterday pinning hopes on the higher profits posted by banks in the last quarter, resulting a 33.67-point rise in the benchmark general index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Stock prices of 29 out of the listed 30 banks rose on the day when the DSEX increased 0.69 per cent to 4,905.

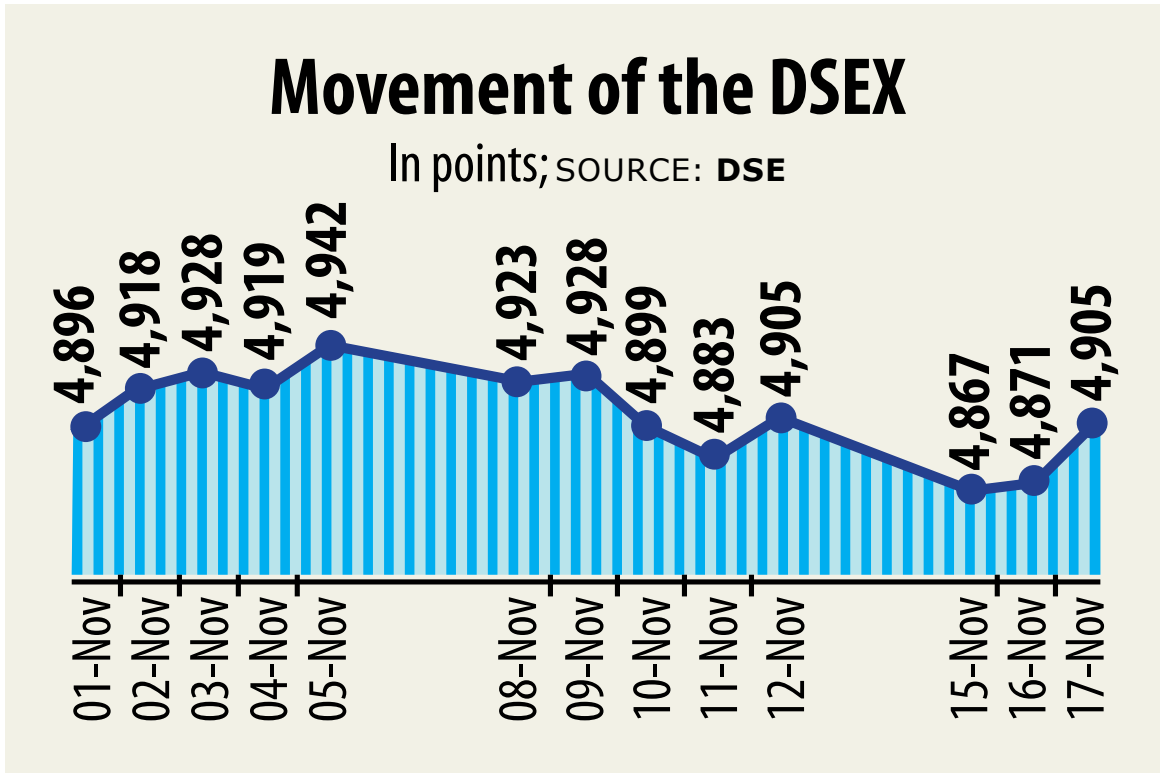
As banks are the biggest sector in the stock market, so its upward trend impacted the index positively, said a stock broker.

Most of the listed banks witnessed higher profits in the July-September quarter of 2020 and the possibility of it to continue in the next quarter also encouraged people to buy banking stocks, he said.

People believe they will be able to make more profits by investing on banking stocks or bonds as the lenders' deposits continued rising during the pandemic, he said.

Deposits at banks rose 10.49 per cent year-on-year to Tk 1,305,453 crore in the last fiscal year on the back of rules around national savings certificates and record flow of remittance.

Banking stocks were on an upward trend as a rumour is now floating in the market that the gamblers will start playing with the stocks soon, said Abdul Halim, a stock investor, who bought banking stocks yesterday.



"I think the banking sector will face a big blow next year when they will have to keep provision against substandard loans."

"Even after that I chose banking stocks, because still the stocks are undervalued and the companies will pay higher dividends for 2020," Halim said.

However, an analyst of a reputed asset management company said

most of the banks are overvalued because their real asset value is very poor.

The banking and non-banking financial sector is now struggling with non-performing loans, which might get worse due to the impact of the pathogen, he said.

So, the investors should be careful, the asset manager added.

Turnover, one of the important

indicators of the stock market, hit Tk 790.9 crore yesterday, up from Tk 790.1 crore on the previous day.

ICB AMCL Second Mutual Fund topped the gainers' list with a 10 per cent rise followed by Miracle Industries, Hakkani Pulp, Associated Oxygen and Appollo Ispat.

Beximco Pharmaceuticals was the most traded stocks that traded worth Tk 63.9 crore followed by Brac Bank, Beximco Ltd, Asia Insurance and Grameen One: Scheme Two.

Of the total 357 traded companies, 149 advanced, 127 declined and 71 remained unchanged.

Renata shaded the most that lost 11.13 per cent yesterday followed by Prime Finance First Mutual Fund, Exim Bank First Mutual Fund, NCC Bank First Mutual Fund and CAPM BDBL Mutual Fund.

The Chattogram Stock Exchange also witnessed an upward trend in its index.

CSEX, the benchmark index of the port city bourse, rose 68 points, or 0.82 per cent, to 8,459.37 yesterday.

Out of the total 256 companies' stocks, 108 rose, 101 fell and 47 remained the same.

# Entrepreneur village for weavers

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The government is planning to set up an entrepreneur village for weavers with the objective to improve economic conditions of handloom weavers.

The village will be built on the own land of the Bangladesh Handloom Board, where fairs and exhibitions will also be arranged for the handloom products.

"There will be modern business space in the village for entrepreneurs involved in weaving along with one-stop services for exports," said Textiles and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi.

He said the village will be equipped with the facilities to help market of weaving products and create new designs and skilled designers to meet the needs of consumers in the changing market.

"Besides, skilled human resources will also be created."

The minister was speaking at a workshop on the "National Handloom Policy-2020" organised by the board at the JDPCC

Conference Room at Farmgate in Dhaka yesterday.

One of the main goals of the present government is to develop the handloom industry and weavers, the minister added.

If any plan or policy is formulated, it would be to improve the living standard of the weavers, he said.

He hoped that through the workshop it will be possible to formulate a suitable, effective and helpful policy for the weavers.

According to the latest handloom census, 40 per cent of the country's domestic cloth demand is supplied by the handloom industry.

The contribution of the weaving industry in terms of value addition to the national economy is more than Tk 1,227 crore and 1.5 million people are directly and indirectly involved with the industry, the ministry said in a statement.

The total number of handloom units stands at about 1.83 lakh and there are around 5.05 lakh manual handlooms with over 3.11 lakh active ones.

# Govt plans big to rehabilitate rural road network

*Ecneec okays Tk 5,905cr project*

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved a Tk 5,905.59 crore project to maintain the rural road network by rehabilitating the roads, bridges and culverts destroyed by cyclone Amphan, excessive rains and floods.

The approval came from the weekly Ecneec meeting held with its Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The premier presided over the meeting virtually from her official residence Gono Bhaban. The ministers, state ministers and secretaries concerned joined the event from the NEC conference room.

Planning Division Senior Secretary Md Ashadul Islam briefed reporters virtually after the meeting.

Islam said the Ecneec meeting approved a total of five projects involving an overall estimated cost of Tk 7,505.29 crore.

Planning Commission Member Md Zakir Hossain Akand said the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) will implement the project by December 2023 titled 'Rehabilitation of affected rural road infrastructures due to cyclone Amphan and Flood' in 355 upazilas under 55 districts.

The project aims at reducing the transportation cost and time through ensuring a sustainable road maintenance

system, simplifying the marketing system of various products and produce, generating more rural jobs and thus keeping the rural economy moving.

The project areas cover cyclone Amphan-affected 69 upazilas under 14 districts of Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram and Dhaka divisions, flood-affected 182 upazilas under 28 districts of Rangpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet and Chattogram divisions.

The project areas also cover 139 upazilas under 22 districts of Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Chattogram divisions which were affected due to excessive rains.

The prime minister at the meeting asked the authorities concerned to complete the works on Amphan-affected roads in a quicker way in coordination with other ministries and divisions so that there is no overlapping of works.

She also stressed that the main strategy for checking river erosion should be to keep the usual flow of water through conducting capital dredging and maintenance dredging.

She once again underscored the need for identifying the quicksand in rivers and thus removing those through dredging as well as creating buffer zones for preserving water.

She also asked the relevant line ministries to have the focus so that river silts do not block the usual flow of water.

READ MORE ON B3

# Panel to investigate unusual price hike of mutual funds

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The stock market regulator yesterday formed a two-member panel to find out the reasons behind the unusual price hike of mutual funds.

Meanwhile, prices of almost all mutual funds dropped on the day with the spread of the news of the committee's formation.

The panel was asked to look into the unusual price hike of CAPM IBBL Islamic Mutual Fund, SEML IBBL Shariah Fund, Vanguard AML Rupali Bank Balanced Fund, NCCBL Mutual Fund-1 and Prime Finance First Mutual Fund.

They were asked to submit the investigation

report within 30 workdays.

BSEC spokesperson Rezaul Karim said Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission formed the committee as some mutual funds were rising abnormally.

Units of CAPM IBBL Islami Mutual Fund rose around 150 per cent to Tk 16 during the last two weeks when SEML IBBL Shariah Fund also doubled to Tk 14.50.

In the same time, Vanguard AML Rupali Bank Balanced Fund, NCCBL Mutual Fund-1 and Prime Finance First Mutual Fund rose 90 per cent, 65 per cent and 55 per cent respectively, according to DSE data.

# In Covid-19 vaccine race, Hungarian village firm takes global role

REUTERS, Szirak, Hungary

In an unassuming house in rolling hills east of the Hungarian capital, a small family firm is helping oil the wheels of the world's big pharmaceutical companies on the path to a coronavirus vaccine.

Biologist Noemi Lukacs, 71, retired to Szirak, her birth village, to establish English & Scientific Consulting (SciCons) and manufacture a genetic sensor so sensitive that a few grams can supply the entire global industry for a year.

"We produce monoclonal antibodies," Lukacs told Reuters in the single-storey house where she was born, now partly converted into a world-class laboratory. The white powder ships worldwide from here, micrograms at a time.

"These antibodies recognise double-stranded RNA (dsRNA)," she explained. DsRNA is a byproduct of viruses replicating, so its presence signals the presence of a live virus, long useful in virus-related research.

More importantly, dsRNA is also a byproduct of the process used by US giant Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech to create their experimental COVID-19 vaccine which is more than 90% effective according to initial trial results last week.

And because dsRNA can be harmful to human cells, it has to be filtered out from any vaccine to be used in humans. Several filtering methods exist, but the most widely used way to do quality control is to expose the vaccine to Lukacs' antibodies.

Not only will the antibodies show if there is any dsRNA in the vaccine, they will also tell researchers how much of it is present. Only once completely freed from dsRNA can the vaccine be administered.

The result: a line of big pharma representatives outside her door.

The small company is growing rapidly, yet its revenue was only 124 million forints (just over \$400,000) last year, with profits at 52 million forints. That feeds five employees and even leaves some for local charity

projects in Szirak.

To Lukacs, that is just fine. The success of the RNA field, long frowned upon, is vindication enough.

The former university professor followed the race to the vaccine closely and rooted especially for the contestants who look set to come first: those using modified RNA to train cells of the human body to recognise and kill the coronavirus. The RNA was her dog in the race.

The messenger RNA, or mRNA, methodology is a whole new group of drugs, with the COVID vaccine the first product likely to get regulatory approval and go into mass production. But more applications are expected, which has Lukacs overjoyed.

"Once you get into the RNA field, it is an extremely exciting area," she said, recalling decades of struggles when the rest of the scientific community did not share her excitement.

Or most of the rest, that is. Another Hungarian woman, Katalin Kariko, working across the Atlantic, patented

the method that enables the use of RNA and promises to free the world not only of the coronavirus but scores of other diseases.

In the process, Kariko - now the Vice President of Germany's BioNTech, which was first alongside US giant Pfizer to break through with a vaccine earlier this month - became an early SciCons customer.

The COVID breakthrough and other RNA uses may necessitate more use of Lukacs' antibodies as well, but they do not anticipate much of a boon.

"We would be happy to sell more of it," said Johanna Symmons, her daughter and the small company's chief executive. "We probably will too. But it's not like we'll get silly rich."

Being part of the solution reaps its own rewards.

"We have cooperated with most vaccine manufacturers, and certainly almost all of the ones using the mRNA method," she said with a hint of pride. "We have been a small screw in this large machine."



REUTERS

**Hungarian biologist Alexandra Torok and Noemi Lukacs check the purity of an antibody, a genetic sensor of sorts, manufactured by a small family company and sold to the largest pharmaceutical companies in the race for a coronavirus vaccine, in Szirak, Hungary on November 13.**

# Asia stocks edge higher after vaccine hopes push Wall Street to record highs

REUTERS, Hong Kong/New York

Asian stocks held gains and moved tentatively further into record territory on Tuesday, after US benchmarks were pepped up by news of another promising coronavirus vaccine, though futures indicated the rally could stall in European hours.

Investor sentiment was given a boost when Moderna Inc said its experimental COVID-19 vaccine was 94.5 per cent effective in preventing infection based on interim late-stage data.

The Cambridge, Massachusetts-based firm became the second drugmaker, after Pfizer Inc, to announce promising trial data in the development of a vaccine. Its shares gained 9.6 per cent on the day.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan gained 0.17 per cent on Tuesday, a day after hitting its highest level since launching in 1987.

The MSCI World Index of global shares which also hit a record high on Monday, ticked higher still in the Asian session.

"The market is assuming that we can see the end of the tunnel, that in 2022 a large part of the world's population will start to receive access to vaccines," said Herald van der Linde, HSBC's head of equity strategy for Asia Pacific.

There were initial indications that this was sparking a change in investors' attitudes, he added.

"The vaccine might mark a normalisation in markets whereby people start to rotate and move out of stocks and markets that have rallied, and move into ones that have not done as well," van der Linde said, citing some markets in Southeast Asia.

Asia gains on Tuesday were led by benchmarks in Singapore and Indonesia which both rose around 1 per cent, while Hong Kong rose 0.1



REUTERS/FILE

**A man wearing a protective face mask, following an outbreak of the coronavirus, talks on his mobile phone in front of a screen showing the Nikkei index outside a brokerage in Tokyo, Japan.**

per cent and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was up 0.23 per cent.

Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.24 per cent after hitting a 29-year high the day before, but Chinese blue chips dropped as recent bond defaults hit sentiment.

However, despite a steady if muted performance in Asian trading, futures predicted a turnaround later in the day.

S&P 500 futures dropped 0.44 per cent, European EuroSTOXX 50 futures fell 0.55 per cent and FTSE futures fell 0.4 per cent late in the Asia session.

The positive vaccine news helped oil prices hold onto Monday's gains. US crude on Tuesday firmed 0.56 per cent to \$41.57 per barrel after rising 3.02 per cent on Monday, and Brent gained 0.7 per cent after a 2.43

per cent jump the day before.

In currency markets, China's central bank on Tuesday lifted its official yuan midpoint to the highest in nearly 29 months, underpinned by solid gains in spot prices a day earlier on the back of strong economic data.

The vaccine news helped the risk-friendly Australian dollar, which climbed to a one-week high against its US counterpart. Rising virus case numbers in the United States clouded views on the dollar, which dropped against a basket of major currencies.

US Treasury yields rose on Monday and into Tuesday and the yield curve steepened in the wake of the vaccine developments. The yield on Benchmark 10-year notes was last at 0.9127 per cent, from 0.893 per cent late on Friday.