

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
0.29%	0.10%	\$1,904.36	\$69.70	51,937.44	28,860.08	3,164.28	3,615.48	83.95	101.35	118.30	12.97
5,990.98	10,462.23	(per ounce)	(per barrel)					BUY TK			
								SELL TK			



Star BUSINESS

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Garment export may recover by Oct: BGMEA

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Garment export might make a full recovery to pre-pandemic levels by October this year as shipments are rebounding with the reopening of Western retail stores, said the BGMEA president yesterday.

Between July and April of the current fiscal year, receipts were up 6.24 per cent year-on-year to \$26 billion, showing the resilience of the industry amidst the fallouts of Covid-19.

Of the sum, \$13.99 billion came from knitwear, which registered 15.34 per cent year-on-year growth. Earnings from woven fell 2.71 per cent to \$12 billion.

Knitwear shipment is increasing as people are spending more time indoors. Because of the pandemic, demand for woven garment, such as formal shirts and trousers, has fallen. Woven exports declined by more than 10 per cent in most months over the past one year.

April saw the lowest decline, meaning



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"The trend of garment shipment is good. I hope the full recovery of exports will be by October," says Faruque Hassan, BGMEA president

now the segment is rebounding thanks to gradual reopening of stores and offices.

"The trend of garment shipment is good with the rise in demand in the Western world," said Faruque Hassan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), in a press briefing at its Gulshan office in Dhaka.

"I hope the full recovery of exports from the garment sector will be by October this year," he said.

"We are hopeful because majority of the people in the US have already completed the vaccination and the consumers started going to the retail outlets which indicates that the economy is rolling on," he said.

Computer, IT accessories prices go up 20pc

Will affect online education amid pandemic, say experts

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN, SUKATA HALDER and MD ABU TALHA SARKER

The price of computers and IT accessories has shot up 20 per cent in the last 14 months as pandemic-induced restrictions prompted educational institutions and businesses to heighten focus on home-based schooling and work.

Moreover, the hardware imports have dropped as both small and big overseas manufacturing factories kept shut either partially or completely while freight charges have increased.

Another development has been a widening supply-demand gap involving chips.

Importers and businesspeople said the hike in tech products' prices and the Covid-19 scenario were linked. With the Covid-19 situation prone to linger, chance are prices will not lessen or return to previous rates, they said.

"There is a crisis in the world market for chips," said importer Muzahid Al Beruni Suzon, general manager at Smart Technologies (BD).

"The production has decreased a lot because of it. The quantity of products that are in demand is not available for this," he said.

"I used to sell a Core i3 laptop for Tk 40,000-Tk 42,000. Now it is being sold at Tk 47,000 to Tk 48,000," said Suzon.

"Another reason for the price increase is the increase of freight charge," he also said.

Suzon said the crisis would not end suddenly as different countries were now affected by variants of coronavirus.

"It also happened during the first wave of coronavirus, a part of the quantity of products we ordered for import was also cancelled," he added.



PALASH KHAN

Prices of laptops, hard disks, RAMs, routers, motherboards and processors have marked a rise in local markets, traders say. The photo was taken from Multiplan Centre on Elephant Road in the capital yesterday.

"We sell about 12,000 laptops every month. The price of laptop hard disks, RAM, routers, motherboards, and processors has increased," said Mahfuzur Rahman, in-charge of Ryans Computers at Multiplan Center on Elephant Road.

"I would sell a Core i5 laptop with graphics card for Tk 53,000. But now it has become Tk

64,000," he said.

The current market price of a desktop comprising an AMD Ryzen 3 3200G processor, MSI B450 Max motherboard, Corsair LPX86B ram, MSI RX86B GPU, Western Digital blue 1 TB hard disk and a 22-inch monitor will cost Tk 65,840.

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Align budget with five-year plan for youth development

Say experts at Daily Star-ActionAid webinar

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government should align its upcoming budget with the Eighth Five-Year Plan and make special allocations to create jobs to reach its goals on youth development, speakers said at a webinar yesterday.

The Daily Star and the ActionAid Bangladesh jointly organised the programme on "Translating the Eighth Five-Year Plan into Fiscal Year Budget 2021-22: Youth Perspective."

Addressing the programme, Debapriya Bhattacharya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the large number of the disengaged youths, who are now lagging behind, should be given importance in the coming budget.

"There is a dual character within the youths in Bangladesh now. One section is very active, smart, productive, and the other is the large number of youths who are lagging behind," he added.

Bhattacharya also said that the fundamental elements of education



Fundamental elements of education should be improved and the voice of youths should be strengthened, says an analyst.

STAR/FILE

would have to be improved, and the voice of the youth should be strengthened.

He went on to say that there were some policy issues in the Eighth Five-Year Plan. "The material and statistical basis of the plan is very weak for data

crisis as the plan has been formulated based on old data."

"At this moment, no one can say how many youths are in our country and what part of the population they are.

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Cabinet okays draft of finance company bill

UNB, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle the draft of Finance Company Bill, 2021, keeping a provision of imposing a fine of Tk 1 crore as the maximum administrative punishment for violation of the law.

The approval came from the cabinet's virtual meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

She joined it from her official residence Gono Bhaban while other cabinet members from the Bangladesh Secretariat.

"The new proposed law has brought changes to the Finance Institutions Act, 1993 as it (the existing law) is not that much effective," said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam at a press briefing at the Secretariat.

As per the proposed law, the existing financial

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Tax collection more than doubles in April

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Revenue collection surged 116 per cent year-on-year to Tk 19,326 crore in April, the highest monthly growth in the current fiscal year, which has seen lower tax receipts because of the economic slowdown.

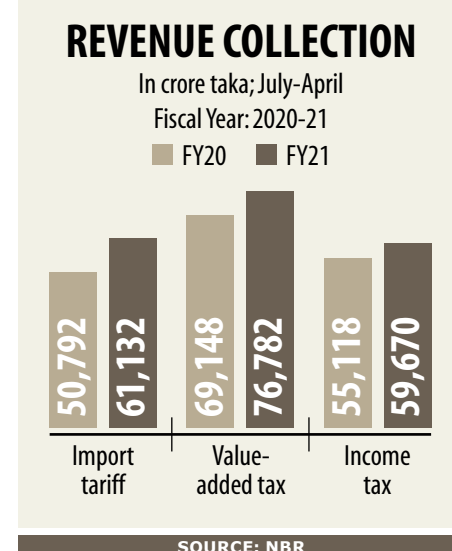
Receipts rose 13 per cent year-on-year to Tk 197,583 crore in the July-April period, buoyed by increased imports and higher collection from domestic sources ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, the biggest sales season in the country, provisional data from the National Board of Revenue (NBR) showed.

Despite the stellar performance in April, the tax administration is unlikely to achieve its revised collection target of Tk 301,000 crore in 2020-21: the NBR will have to generate Tk 103,416 crore in the final two months of the fiscal year ending in June.

Md Anwar Hossain, director-general for research and statistics of the NBR, however, hoped that the collection would be closer to the revised target at the end of the year.

"We usually receive a higher amount of tax in the last two months of a fiscal year," he said. In its independent review of the economy yesterday, the Centre for Policy Dialogue said the attainment of the target was highly unlikely.

The NBR raised Tk 61,132 crore from import tariff from July to April, up 20 per cent year-on-year.



Imports increased 6 per cent to \$46.23 billion in July-March period from a year ago, according to the Bangladesh Bank.

The collection from the value-added tax, the biggest source of revenue for the NBR, grew 11 per cent to Tk 76,781 crore in the 10-month period.

Tax officials logged an 8 per cent higher growth in income tax to take the collection to Tk 59,670 crore.

LPG prices cut further

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The price of liquefied natural gas (LPG) has decreased for the second time in two months thanks to lower prices in the international market.

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday cut the retail price of LPG of private companies by more than 7 per cent to Tk 842 for every 12-kilogramme (kg) cylinder.

The new price will come into effect from today, BERC Chairman Abdul Jalil said while announcing the new price at a virtual press conference.

However, the commission did not re-fix the price of LPG sold by the state-owned Liquid Petroleum Gas Ltd (LPGL). The current price of gas sold by the company in 12.5kg cylinders is Tk 591.

The new price of LPG used in cars is Tk 41.74 per litre, down from the current price of Tk 44.70.

The regulator had fixed the price of LPG for the first time in the country on April 12. It had said that the price would be adjusted every month in line with the international market.

Local companies import propane and butane, the main ingredients for making LPG, from different countries.

Saudi Aramco publishes the price of these two components of LPG every month. This is known as the Saudi contract price or Saudi CP. BERC has adjusted the price of LPG in the country on the basis of the base price of this Saudi CP.

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Higher profits give a fillip to cement stocks

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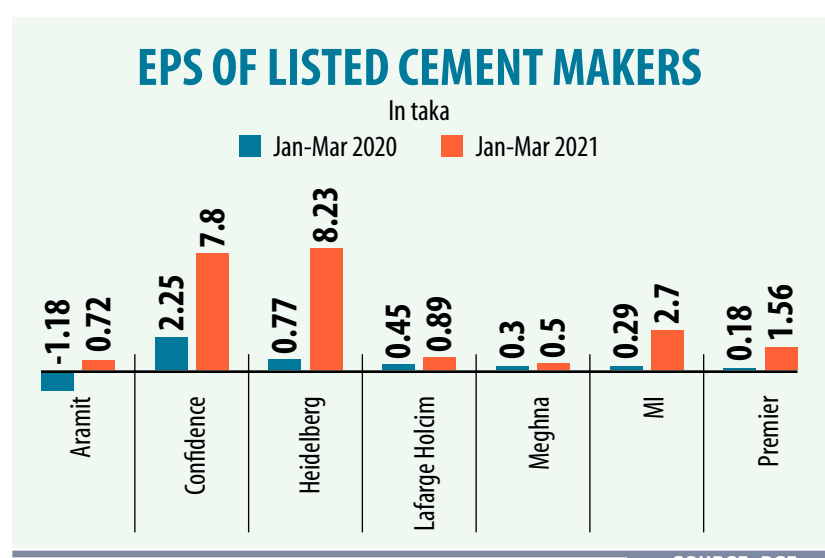
Thanks to a hike in cement prices, all the cement manufacturers witnessed higher profits in the January-March quarter of the current year.

This higher profit booking ultimately boosted the stocks of cement companies.

However, the DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), dropped 17 points, or 0.29 per cent, to 5,990 yesterday. Among all sectors, cement rose the highest with a 6.26 per cent jump. Mutual funds dropped the most, falling 1.84 per cent, followed by textile and bank.

"Announcement of higher earnings by listed cement makers is the main reason for the stock price rise," said Richard D' Rozario, managing director of Global Securities. When investors see higher earnings in a certain sector, they get inspired to buy its shares, he added.

According to the companies' senior officials, their earnings rose due to higher sales along with the increased price of cement in local markets.



In its disclosure yesterday, Confidence Cement announced that its earnings per share had almost tripled to Tk 7.80 in the January-March period of the current fiscal year. After the news broke, Confidence

Cement topped the gainers' list, rising 9.97 per cent atz the DSE, followed by Dutch-Bangla Bank, MI Cement, Rahima Food Corporation, and Premier Cement.

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Final auction for Islamic bond on Jun 9

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The final phase of the auction for Bangladesh Bank's Tk 4,000 crore sukuk bond is going to be held on June 9.

A sukuk is an Islamic financial certificate, similar to a treasury bond and structured to generate returns in compliance with Islamic finance principles.

The government will raise Tk 8,000 crore through the issuance of the sukuk to implement a safe water supply project. In the first phase of the auction held last December, various banks and individuals placed 39 bids worth Tk 15,153 crore against the targeted amount of Tk 4,000 crore.

Any local or foreign individual or bank can participate in the auction between 9:00am to 11:59am following the central bank's format.

A client will have to invest a minimum of Tk 10,000 in the security, and there is no upper limit. Banks, corporate institutions and individuals will be permitted to invest.

Investors will receive a profit of 4.69 per cent on their investment in the Islamic bond.

The central bank has fixed the rate based on the Bangladesh Government Islamic Investment Bond (BGIIIB).

The last declared profit-sharing ratio of the six-month BGIIIB is 3.69 per cent, and the central bank has added 1 percentage point to decide the rate for the sukuk.

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