

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES				
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY	
▲ 1.20%	▲ 1.03%	\$1,780.87	\$65.18	▼ 0.54%	▼ 0.98%	▲ 0.51%	▼ 1.10%	84.20	96.98	113.29	12.67	
6,842.23	11,942.30	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	55,329.32	27,013.25	3,102.75	3,427.33	BUY TK	85.20	100.78	117.09	13.32
								SELL TK	85.20	100.78	117.09	13.32

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 23, 2021, BHADRA 8, 1428 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

DBL on \$650m expansion spree

Will set up 10 manufacturing units in Sreehatta Economic Zone

JAGARAN CHAKMA

DBL Group, one of the leading exporters, is going to invest \$650 million to set up 10 manufacturing units for textiles, ceramics, and sanitary ware at the Sreehatta Economic Zone in Moulvibazar.

It made the disclosure during the foundation stone laying ceremony of the DBL Industrial Park at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka yesterday. So far, the state-run economic zone has received \$1.5 billion in investment proposals.

"The launch of the DBL Industrial Park is an important step towards achieving our vision of pushing forth the next phase of Bangladesh's growth through world-class infrastructure," said MA Jabbar, managing director of DBL Group, at the ceremony.

Set up in 1991, the Group operates in apparel, textiles, tiles, pharmaceuticals, dredging, semiconductor design, ICT and



KEY POINTS

Total planned investment: \$650m	Total factories to be set up: 10	Employment for: 5,630 people	Implementation time: 3 years	Major items to be made: textiles, ceramics, sanitary wares
---	---	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	---

telecommunications.

It has 39,000 employees and recorded a turnover of \$600 million in 2018-19. DBL has also invested in Ethiopia, where it has an apparel and textile factory.

"At DBL Group, we challenge conventional manufacturing methods and move the industry towards an efficient and automated platform," said Jabbar.

It will take three years to set up 10 industries on 167.6 acres of land at the industrial park, where 5,630 people will be employed.

"With this integrated and technologically advanced industrial park, we are aiming to upskill workers and create a sustainable co-dependency between man and machine so that our facilities can manufacture standard and luxurious products for both industrial and consumer use,"

Jabbar added.

The entrepreneur informed that DBL would begin the construction of a spinning mill this month.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ahmad Kaikus, principal secretary to the prime minister, said the economy of Bangladesh saw continuous growth because of the entrepreneurial spirit of its people and the ever-increasing investment from the industrial sector to expand into new business frontiers.

Hesaid the government had taken up comprehensive development plans to make economic zones a booming manufacturing hubs for advancing towards a more export-oriented economy to boost the development growth.

The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza) is working to establish 100 economic zones across the country.

"Today, DBL Group has joined the journey of economic expansion to fulfil the goals of creating world-class quality products and materials," said Shaikh Yusuf Harun, executive chairman of the Beza.

"This investment will largely make foreign investors more confident about investing in our economy, accelerating the nation's development progress."

Now, 28 economic zones, including 14 state-owned, are operational.

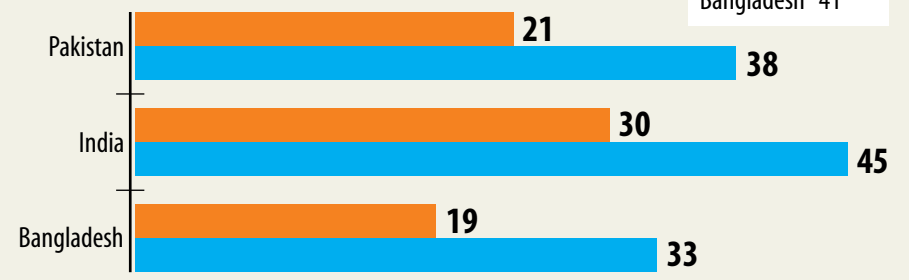
READ MORE ON B3

MOBILE INTERNET USERS

In % of total adult population

Female Male

SOURCE: GSMA CONSUMER SURVEY, 2020



Gender gap (in %)

Pakistan	43
India	33
Bangladesh	41

Women more into mobile internet

They diversified the use of internet services amid pandemic, survey finds

MAHMUDUL HASAN

Women in Bangladesh have increased and diversified their use of mobile internet services ever since the Covid-19 outbreak began as social distancing restrictions in particular have led to a rise in video calls, social media use and viewing of online videos, according to a survey.

The GSMA Mobile Gender Gap Report 2021 found that about 62 per cent of female mobile internet users had increased their mobile internet use during the pandemic.

For example, the proportion of female mobile owners in Bangladesh watching free videos on a weekly basis rose by 9 percentage points to 20 per cent in 2020.

A small-scale survey was conducted between October 4, 2020 and January 8, 2021 in eight low and middle-income countries.

Although mobile internet benefits

Bangladeshi women, this potentially life-enhancing service is still out of reach for most.

Despite the rise in mobile internet usage among existing users, it did not result in a large-scale adoption by new users in Bangladesh.

Data from the report indicates that mobile internet penetration among women in Bangladesh grew by only 3 percentage points last year, from 16 per cent to 19 per cent, as had been in previous years.

By comparison, 33 per cent of men in Bangladesh use mobile internet, resulting in a substantial gender gap.

The survey found that about 47 per cent of women in Bangladesh are aware of mobile internet but are not using it.

The mobile ownership gender gap varies by age cohort, but is highest for those over the age of 55 in most surveyed countries.

READ MORE ON B3

Yarn run-in ends

Spinners, apparel makers fixed price

REFAVET ULLAH MIRDHA

The dispute between spinners and garment manufacturers was resolved after the two sides fixed the price of the widely consumed 30-carded yarn at a maximum of \$4.20 per kilogram.

The two sides reached the decision Saturday night, ending the disagreement that would ensure a smooth supply of the key raw material to garment and terry towel exporters.

"We arrived at a consensus on the yarn price in consultation with the spinners on Saturday night," said Faruque Hassan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters

manufacturers and terry towel exporters of ensuring a stable supply as Bangladesh is receiving an increased volume of work orders from international retailers and brands.

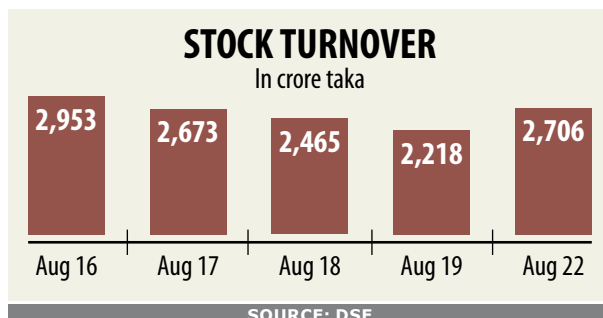
"We will be able to supply the yarn at the fixed prices," Khokon said.

The BGMEA and the Bangladesh Terry Towel and Linen Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BTLME) were in dispute with the BTMA as the prices of yarn were spiralling in the local markets.

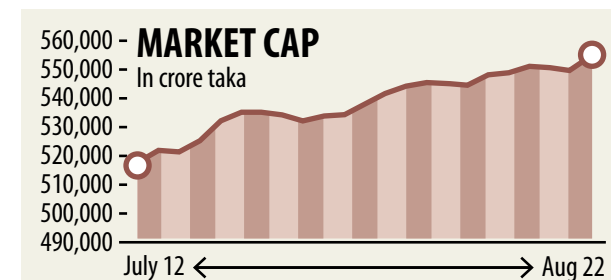
This prompted the leaders of the BGMEA and BTLME to write to the government in the first week of August, seeking to ease off conditions for yarn import through land ports to rein in the price hike.

Buoyant investors send stocks to new heights

DSE key index crosses 6,800 points



SOURCE: DSE



SOURCE: DSE

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The prime index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) surged to new heights yesterday thanks to increased participation of buoyant investors who have high hopes on the market going up even further.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of the country's premier bourse, advanced 81 points, or 1.21 per cent, to 6,842. This is the highest point to be reached since its inception in 2013.

The DS-30, the blue chip stock index, increased by 28 points to hit 2,451 at the same time.

"The market is rising mainly because investors are more confident and buoyant as well due to the low interest rates offered by the banking sector," said a merchant bank official.

Banks offer deposit rates ranging from 3 per cent to 5 per cent, which does not even cover the country's inflation rate. "So, people prefer to keep their funds away from banks and in the stock market, which offers a

large number of lucrative investment opportunities," he said.

However, many people are investing in overvalued stocks without paying due diligence with regard to examining their potentials, he said.

"So, their stock choices may hamper their investments," he added.

Turnover, another important indicator of the market, grew 22 per cent to reach Tk 2,706 crore at the DSE, where 247 stocks advanced, 96 fell and 33 remained unchanged.

"Investors dream that the index will continue to hit new highs this year as the money market has huge liquidity. So, they are buying stocks," said a stock broker.

And even though the index may go up further, investors should remain cautious of overvalued stocks, he said.

"It is also true that many stocks are still lucrative, where people can invest," he added.

The market has been in a rising trend for several months now and turnover is also higher as a result.

"This means the money flow is good enough," said Iftekhhar Ali, a stock investor.

As long as turnover remains high, the market will not fall, he said. "So, I'm investing my funds," he added.

Responding to a query, the investor said the overall market was not overvalued but he was cautious of certain stocks.

Aziz Pipes, a B-category stock with a paid-up capital of Tk 5 crore, topped the gainers' list yesterday, rising 10 per cent to Tk 130 per share after news broke that the company would resume production from October 1 this year.

Aziz Pipes halted production in January earlier this year due to the Covid-19 fallouts, which led to an increase in prices of raw materials amidst a fall in supply.

Stocks of Beximco were traded the most, worth Tk 153 crore, followed by LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, First Security Islami Bank, IFIC Bank and LankaBangla Finance.

READ MORE ON B3

No ISP monopoly to be allowed

BTRC chief says

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) will not allow any internet service provider (ISP) to create a monopoly in delivering services, said Shyam Sunder Sikder, chairman of the telecom regulator, yesterday.

"The regulator will ensure a level playing field so that small ISPs can operate and provide internet services to people as well," he told a virtual public hearing on telecom services organised by the BTRC.

Sikder made these comments in response to customer complaints regarding poor services provided by the ISPs.

Customers also complained of repeated call drops, poor network coverage, slow internet speed and deduction of money against value added services (VAS) without customers' knowledge.

Regarding the VAS money deduction, the BTRC chairman said his office would look into the issue.

The BTRC said it would allocate more radio frequency to improve the quality of internet services and phone calls.

READ MORE ON B3

AT A GLANCE

- Price of 30-carded yarn fixed at **\$4.20** per kg
- Spinners won't hike yarn price if cotton price doesn't cross **\$1** per pound
- Yarn price will fall if cotton price declines to **85** cents per pound
- Yarn demand soared due to a rise in demand for knitted products globally
- Garment exporters import nearly **30%** yarn from abroad
- Garment work orders rise with the rebound of Western economy

Association (BGMEA).

Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), also confirmed the development.

"We agreed to set the ceiling of yarn as garment and terry towel manufacturers were demanding lowering of the prices of yarn," he said.

As per the decision, spinners will get \$4.20 per kg for the 30-carded yarn if cotton price ranges between 85 US cents and \$1 per pound in the international markets.

Cotton was traded at 93 cents per pound when the price was set.

"If the cotton price goes past \$1 per pound, we will sit again to fix the new price limit," Hassan told The Daily Star.

"Similarly, if the cotton price drops below 85 cents per pound, spinners will also lower the price of yarn accordingly."

The price of the 30-carded yarn has been fixed as a benchmark as it accounts for more than 85 per cent of the total consumption of the raw material in Bangladesh.

The spinners also assured the garment

The trade bodies had also called for separate press conferences. But they cancelled the briefings and sat for talks to reach an amicable solution to the situation.

The spinners have not increased the prices since August 10 after the BTMA requested them to refrain from raising it as garment manufacturers were feeling the pinch of the higher cost of the raw material.

"We are receiving more orders as western economies have reopened. We need a lot of yarn and fabrics at affordable prices to be competitive in the international markets," Hassan said.

He said manufacturers wanted yarn from the domestic markets as local procurement gave some advantages.

"However, unusual price hikes may force us to source yarn from alternative markets."

Bangladesh imports 30 per cent of yarn from countries such as India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Turkey as local spinners do not produce specialised varieties of the raw material.

Ifad Autos' stocks jump on Tk 80cr investment plan

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Shares of Ifad Autos Ltd jumped 4.42 per cent at the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday after it announced its plan to invest Tk 80 crore in one of its sister concerns.

The board of the listed automobile company decided to make the investment to acquire 40 per cent shares of Ifad Multi Products Ltd. The fund would be mobilised from the company's own fund, Ifad Autos said in a regulatory filing.

Ifad Multi Products is one of the sister concerns of Ifad Group having common management.

The share purchase will be implemented



after securing permission from general shareholders.

"We have decided to invest in the company to ensure diversification," said a director of the company, preferring anonymity.

"Ifad Multi Products is a profitable company so shareholders will be rewarded with higher benefits."

Set up in 2003, Ifad Multi Products is a consumer food producer. It began its journey by setting up an automated flour mill.

The company has established itself as a supplier of salt, both consumer and industrial grade, according to its website.

Currently, the company is a major manufacturer and supplier of instant noodles, stick noodles, biscuits and cookies, spices, and bottled drinking water.

Ifad Autos imports finished vehicles from Ashok Leyland of India and sells them in Bangladesh. It also brings in CKD (completely knocked down) cars and assembles them locally.

READ MORE ON B3