

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
▲ 0.73%	▲ 0.99%	\$1,770.44	\$74.38	▲ 0.88%	▼ 2.17%	▲ 0.71%	▲ 0.19%	BUY TK 84.35	97.82	114.28	12.74
7,258.57	12,746.01	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	59,005.27	29,839.71	3,063.20	3,613.97	SELL TK 85.35	101.62	118.08	13.39

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 2021, ASHWIN 7, 1428 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Govt cuts interest rates of savings tools

High investment to yield low return; new rates won't affect current investment

AHSAN HABIB and REJAUl KARIM BYRON
The government has cut the interest rate on savings certificates and wage-earner bonds by 1 to 3 percentage points – a move that may help the authorities save but hurt the middle-income group dependent on the returns to make a living.
The new rates will not affect the present investment and will only be applicable for fresh investments.
According to the new rules, which

came into effect yesterday, the higher the investment amount, the lower the returns will be. If the investment amount is higher than Tk 15 lakh, investors will get a lower interest rate, according to a circular of the Internal Resources Division (IRD) of the finance ministry.
The decision will hurt middle-income savers like Rezaul Islam.
The private job-holder had planned to keep all of his retirement benefits in savings certificate as private-sector employees in Bangladesh don't get

any pension benefit.
"I'm worried."
He said an investment amount that would provide a monthly income of up to Tk 40,000 from savings certificates should not see any rate cut so that people like him could depend on them.
The five-year savings certificate will yield an interest rate of 10.30 per cent from 11.28 per cent now if the investment amount exceeds Tk 15 lakh.
READ MORE ON B3



Vehicles used for transporting goods kept off the streets in Patenga sea beach area in Chattogram yesterday during a countrywide strike of transport operators.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

NEW INTEREST RATES OF SAVINGS TOOLS

5-YEAR BANGLADESH SAVINGS CERTIFICATE

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		11.28
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	11.28	10.3
Tk 30 lakh plus		9.3

3-MONTH PROFIT BEARING SAVINGS CERTIFICATE

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		11.04
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	11.04	10
Tk 30 lakh plus		9

PENSIONERS' SAVINGS CERTIFICATE

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		11.76
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	11.76	10.75
Tk 30 lakh plus		9.75

FAMILY SAVINGS CERTIFICATE

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		11.52
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	11.52	10.5
Tk 30 lakh plus		9.5

TERM DEPOSIT AT POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		11.28
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	11.28	10.3
Tk 30 lakh plus		9.3

WAGE EARNERS' BOND

	Previous	New
Up to Tk 15 lakh		12
Tk 15 lakh plus to Tk 30 lakh	12	11
Tk 30 lakh plus to Tk 50 lakh		10

Transport strike affects export, import

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA, DWAIPIKAR BARUA and MOHSIN MILON

The transport operators' countrywide strike yesterday affected export and import of goods at a time when businesses have been attempting to make a recovery from the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Any disruption to business, including in transportation of goods,

in the time of revival will only prolong the recovery.

Almost a five-kilometre long tailback of exports-laden trucks was seen at the Benapole port.

Many exporters faced difficulties to carry goods from their factories to the Chattogram port and vice-versa.

Moreover, all types of activities at the Chattogram port almost came to a halt as a faction of owners and

workers of goods transporting vehicles enforced the countrywide 72-hour work abstention since yesterday morning over a 15-point demand.

Goods and container transport to and from the

port as well as loading and unloading of goods and containers at the vessels berthed at the jetties remained suspended yesterday as no goods-carrying vehicles like trucks, covered vans and prime-movers operated.

Activities at the 18 private inland container depots (ICDs) also were badly disrupted due to the work abstention of vehicle workers.

Bangladesh Covered-Van, Truck, Prime Mover Goods Transportation Owners Association and Bangladesh Truck Drivers Workers Federation jointly enforced the countrywide work abstention.

Some of the major demands are cancellation of the decision of hiking advance income tax imposed on the vehicle owners and removal of complications in issuing driving licences for heavy vehicles, they said.

READ MORE ON B3

E-commerce firms warned for anti-competitive practices

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC) yesterday warned e-commerce platforms that punitive measures would be taken over predatory pricing through abuse of dominant positions in the market and anti-competitive practices, including collusion.

The warning came at a meeting organised by the commission with representatives of the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB) and leading digital commerce companies including Daraz Bangladesh, Chaldal, Redx, BoomBoom, BabyNeeds BD, Aladinerprodip and Priyashop.com.

Representatives of Bangladesh Bank, Directorate of the National Consumer Rights Protection and National Security Intelligence were present at the meeting chaired by BCC Chairperson Md Mofizul Islam.

The BCC said the purpose of the meeting was to inform e-commerce platforms about competition laws and take stock of their business models.

Bangladesh Competition Commission acknowledged that anti-competitive activities of e-commerce platforms came to its notice a bit late

The initiative comes amid widespread fraud in the e-commerce sector in recent months that led thousands of customers and merchants to lose hundreds of crores of taka.

Several e-commerce platforms including Evaly, Eorange and Dhamaka Shopping are under regulatory scrutiny on allegation of embezzling money of customers and merchants.

Eorange Founder Sonia Mehjabin and several of its officials have been in jail since their arrest on August 16 on charge of embezzling Tk 1,100 crore of customers.

READ MORE ON B3

ADB embarks on \$12b lending scheme

Launches country strategy

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Asian Development Bank has launched a new country partnership strategy (CPS) for Bangladesh with a plan to accelerate lending in order to boost competitiveness, employment, green growth and social protection.

The CPS, which will continue for five years until 2025, will help Bangladesh realise its aspiration of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2031 through increased public and private investments, said the Manila-based lender in a statement yesterday.

"It will also support rapid socioeconomic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic."

The CPS is the lender's primary platform for designing operations to deliver development results at the country level.

During the five-year period, the ADB will increase its lending operations to \$10 billion–\$12 billion, from \$9.6 billion in the past five years.

"Sustained growth and appropriate policy measures have helped Bangladesh achieve good development outcomes. Moving forward, the country's industry and export base need diversification," said ADB Director General for South Asia Kenichi Yokoyama.



"Diversification in manufacturing and export items, such as agricultural products, information and communication technology, light engineering, and pharmaceuticals, together with increased competitiveness and access to new markets, will be critical in recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, sustaining rapid economic

growth, and generating substantial employment."

The lender will further expand its private sector operations and continue to leverage a high level of co-financing with other development partners.

Improving the banking sector, the ease of doing business, business environment, and investment climate will help accelerate private sector development and promote economic diversification, the statement said.

The CPS also envisages enhancing ADB operations to support climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk management to address the country's high vulnerability to climate events and other natural disasters, in line with the Paris Agreement.

A holistic approach to integrating climate change will be applied to all operations while expanding programmes to directly address climate change impacts through integrated management of water, river, and coastal areas, said the development lender.



SBAC Bank chair steps down

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

SM Amjad Hossain, chairman of South Bangla Agriculture and Commerce Bank, has expressed his intention to resign, citing illness.

On September 7, he wrote to the board of the private commercial lender expressing the intention to step down.

He also requested the board to begin the process of selecting a new chairman by October.

READ MORE ON B3



Twenty-five jute mills were shut on July 1 last year due to heavy losses and excessive production costs, laying off more than 50,000 workers.

LEASING OUT STATE JUTE MILLS

Ministry vetting 12 proposals

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Over a year past shutting down state-run jute mills, the government has made little progress in modernising and reopening them, up until now having merely selected some potential lessee proposals for ministry-level vetting.

The 25 mills were shut on July 1 last year due to heavy losses and excessive production costs, laying off more than 50,000 workers in three categories – permanent, temporary, and substitute.

At the time, the Ministry of Textiles and Jute in a press release stated that the mills would be modernised and reopened through joint venture, public-private partnership, or a government-to-government agreement.

This year, the government decided to lease them out and a nine-member inter-ministerial committee finalised the terms and conditions of the lease contracts and

international tenders.

Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) floated an international tender on April 27 to lease out the mills for a period of five to 20 years even though industrialists seem uninterested on the short-term deals.

The last date for submissions of expressions of interest was August 31 and the BJMC received around 55 proposals from home and abroad.

Of them, 12 have been selected by an evaluation committee and forwarded to the ministry for approval, said BJMC Chairman Md Abdur Rouf yesterday.

The BJMC does not want to "waste time" in signing agreements with the investors, he added.

He had earlier told The Daily Star that the government would not spend any money behind modernising the mills. At most, it could remove the old machinery if the investors wanted, he said.

READ MORE ON B3