STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▲ 0.79%	▲ 0.86%	$1,779.64 (per ounce)	$84.60 (per barrel)	▼ 0.55%	▼ 1.87%	▼ 0.03%	▲ 0.22%
7,076.23	12,433.89			60,923.50	28,708.58	3,188.50	3,594.78

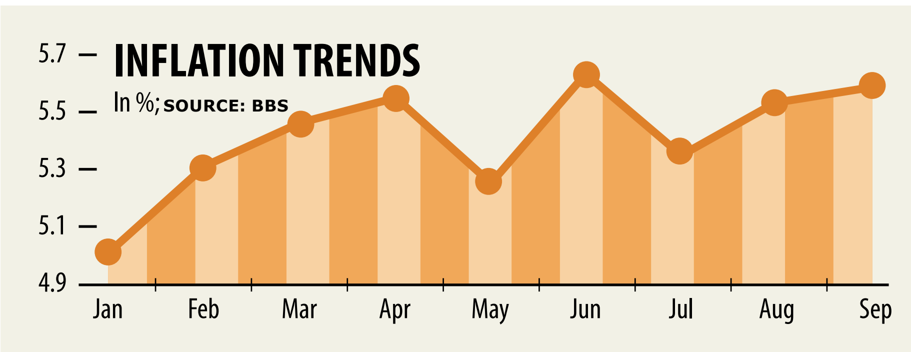
CURRENCIES — STANDARD CHARTERED BANK

	$USD	€EUR	£GBP	¥CNY
BUY TK	84.70	97.70	116.23	13.03
SELL TK	85.70	101.50	120.03	13.70

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA FRIDAY OCTOBER 22, 2021, *KARTIK 6, 1428 BS* ● starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Inflation creeping up



Rejaul Karim Byron *and* Jagaran Chakma

Inflation in Bangladesh increased for the third consecutive month in September as prices of both food and non-food items are showing upward movement, hurting the low-income people.

The general inflation rose five basis points to 5.59 per cent last month, which was 5.54 per cent in August, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Inflation is rising in Bangladesh as the prices of most of the commodities rocketed in the global markets because of demand recovery, an unprecedented level of shipping charges, and supply constraints.

Non-food inflation rose six basis points to 6.19 per cent in September. It was 6.13 per cent August. Food inflation was up five basis points to reach 5.21 per cent, which was 5.16 per cent in August.

The prices of rice, egg, wheat, garlic, onion, ginger, and turmeric went up last month, said the BBS in a press release.

In the rural areas, food inflation rose to 5.74 per cent from 5.67 per cent in August. Similarly, non-food inflation went up to 5.84 per cent from 5.79 per cent.

However, the inflation situation was slightly better in the urban area: Food inflation increased to 4.03 per cent in September from 4.02 per cent in August.

READ MORE ON B3

PRABIR DAS

Opened at Purbachal in Dhaka yesterday, Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre from now will be used to hold the month-long Dhaka International Trade Fair in January every year. The two-storey structure has 24,370 square metres of area meant for exhibitions.

EMBEZZLING FUNDS

SBAC Bank ex-chair, six others sued

Star Business Report

The Anti-Corruption Commission has filed a case against former chairman of South Bangla Agriculture and Commerce Bank SM Amzad Hossain and six others for allegedly misappropriating Tk 20.6 crore from the private lender.

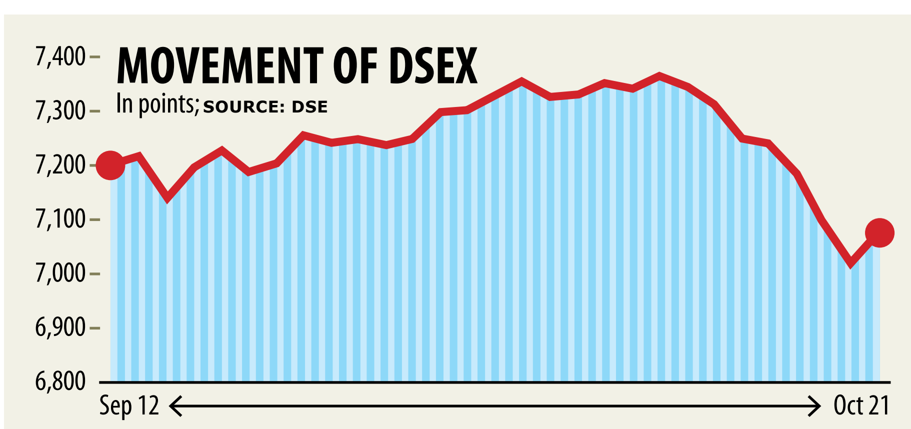
The six others are SBAC's former management trainee officer Topu Kumar Saha, senior officer Achinta Kumar Mandal, operation manager Monjurul Alam, vice-president SM Iqbal Mehedi, credit in-charge Nazrul Islam, and senior officer Maria Khatun.

ACC Deputy Director Gulshan Anowar Prodhan filed the case with its integrated district office yesterday.

According to the case statement, Amzad Hossain and his wife, who are owners of Khulna Builders Ltd, opened a current account with SBAC in 2015.

READ MORE ON B3

Stocks recover from seven-day slump



Star Business Report

Stocks bounced back yesterday, snapping a week-long losing streak as buyers outnumbered sellers for the first time in the last seven trading days.

Some institutional investors purchased shares that shed in value in the past few days, when many investors opted to book profits as the market was at a high point, according to a stock broker.

However, people now hope that the market will rise again thanks to recent moves by the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC).

On Tuesday, BSEC announced that it would allow brokerage firms and merchant banks to raise funds by issuing bonds and then reinvest in the market.

The stock market regulator also decided to allow direct and indirect investments from a market stabilisation fund worth about Tk 21,000 crore, part of which would be used to subscribe to brokerage houses' and merchant banks' bonds to indirectly support the market.

"With this, liquidity in the market will soar and so, people stopped selling their shares," the stock broker said.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), soared by 55 points, or 0.79 per cent to 7,020 yesterday.

READ MORE ON B3

Mega expo centre opens in Dhaka

From now will host Dhaka International Trade Fair

Star Business Report

The government yesterday opened the country's first and biggest multipurpose trade exhibition centre at Purbachal in Dhaka aiming to hold fairs and business-to-business matchmaking events for facilitating domestic and international trade, and thereby, advance the economy.

The "Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre" project was taken up by Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) at a cost of Tk 817 crore.

Sitting on over 26 acres, the two-storied centre has 33,000 square metres of floor space. Of it, 24,370 square metres are meant to be used for exhibitions while there were 800 booths for displaying products, said the EPB at the inauguration.

The EPB said it had 7,912 square metres of parking space apart from an open space that could accommodate 1,000 cars.

From now the annual monthlong Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF) is expected to be held at the newly built centre, said Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh.

"We will hold the DITF every year and it will take place from January next year," he said.

The first dedicated exhibition venue comes into being after nearly two and a half decades of the EPB using an empty space in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar to organise the DITF. It is beside prime commuting arteries, for which massive traffic congestion arises every year when the fair is organised in January, drawing in visitors in their droves alongside numerous vehicles.

For this, there had been a long-pending demand of the city's dweller for shifting the venue to a place where traffic can continue moving freely while visitors are entering and exiting.

The government finally took the initiative in 2015 and China State Construction Engineering Corporation Ltd started constructing the centre in October 2017.

The EPB said the new centre was more spacious compared to the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar spot.

It said of the Tk 1,300 crore construction cost, the Chinese government provided nearly Tk 526 crore as grant. There are some construction works pending which will be completed gradually, said the EPB data.

READ MORE ON B3

Ease rules for export, import

Garment exporters urge govt as orders are pouring in

Refayet Ullah Mirdha

Textile and garment makers and exporters yesterday urged the government to quickly simplify the country's export-import procedures as work orders are in a rising trend despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Besides, they aim to expand their operations in a bid to cater to the rising demand.

Garment manufacturers sought the simplification of the import of yarn, cotton, industrial raw materials and chemicals through land ports to save time and money.

"We requested the commerce minister and the commerce secretary to take immediate actions to resolve the crises as we have a lot of work orders from international retailers and brands," said Faruque Hassan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

"We need a lot of raw materials like yarn and fabrics as we are getting a lot of work orders from buyers. It is very difficult to release goods from the ports, especially from land ports and airports, to be used in the industries," he added.

READ MORE ON B3

Xiaomi opens plant to make smartphones

Star Business Report

Xiaomi has opened a plant in Bangladesh to manufacture smartphones locally, joining a growing list of producers, both global and local, that are making high-end mobile phones in the country.

The world's largest smartphone manufacturer based in Beijing disclosed it at an event in Dhaka yesterday in the presence of Salman F Rahman, adviser to the prime minister on private industry and investment, and Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT.

The plant in Gazipur has been set up with an investment of $10 million.

The plant will produce about three million mobile phones per year, said Ziauddin Chowdhury, country manager of Xiaomi Bangladesh.

"Local manufacturing shows Xiaomi's commitment to Bangladesh, and we are able to contribute to generating more jobs in the country."

The factory is situated in a four-storied building with a total area of around 55,000 square feet. Around 1,000 people will be employed initially.

READ MORE ON B3

People work at the factory of Xiaomi in Gazipur. The plant has a production capacity of about three million mobile phones per year.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

TREASURY BONDS

Guaranteed income stream with little risks

Md Abu Talha Sarker

Financially solvent people want to invest so that their funds don't remain idle as they long for a good return on their investment. For this, they always seek a secure instrument.

The government's Treasury bond is the newest investment tool for the investors in Bangladesh looking to diversify their portfolio instead of relying on only deposit schemes of banks, national savings certificates, stocks, and mutual fund units.

The opportunity came after the trading of treasury bonds in the secondary market of the Dhaka Stock Exchange made its debut on October 14, albeit on a trial basis, ending a wait of more than a decade.

Some 222 government bonds, with a combined value of Tk 55,000 crore, were listed with the premier bourse of the country between 2005 and 2011. The government borrows funds from the market by issuing bonds.

But they were not traded like shares and mutual fund units as there was no secondary market. Now they will be traded like stocks and mutual funds, and the full-fledged trading may begin in November or December.

The investment in bonds will be particularly important at a time when the deposit rate against the savings schemes at banks has slipped below the average inflation rate, making the net return on investment negative.

In another blow for the savers, the government has cut the interest rate on the national savings certificates and capped investment. Also, risk-averse investors see the stock market too unsafe.

READ MORE ON B3