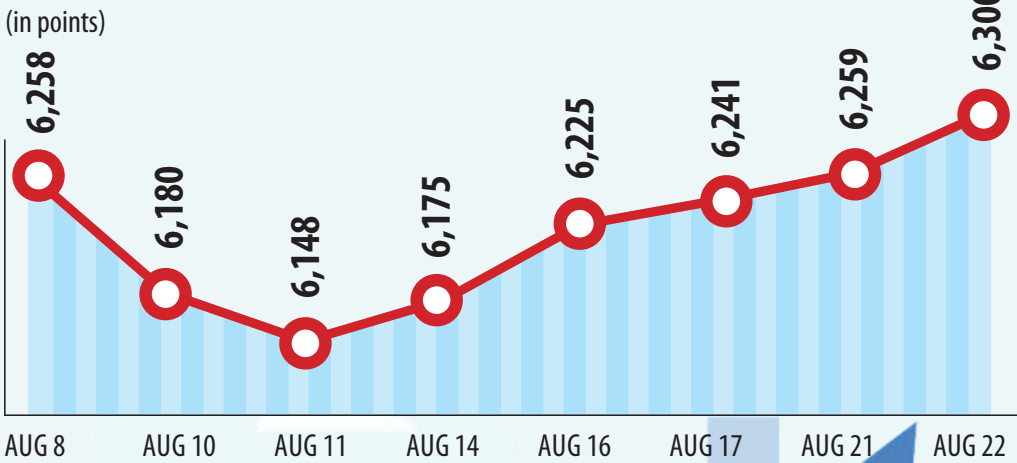
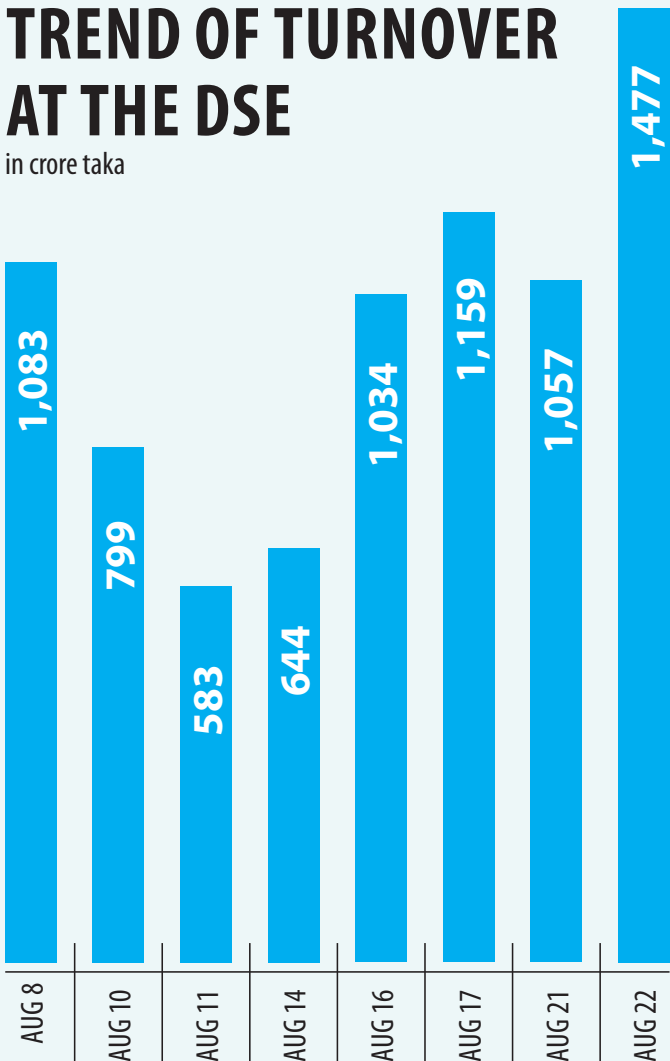


MOVEMENT OF THE DSEX OVER THE LAST TWO WEEKS



TREND OF TURNOVER AT THE DSE

in crore taka



SOURCE: DSE

Stocks turnover hits 7-month high

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Turnover on the Dhaka Stock Exchange surged by around 40 per cent to Tk 1,477 crore yesterday thanks to the increased participation of general investors, who were optimistic about a potential bull run.

The DSEX, the benchmark index of the premier bourse in Bangladesh, rose 40 points, or 0.64 per cent, to hit 6,300. With this, the index has risen by a total of 151 points in the last five trading sessions.

As the index is in a rising trend, investors started taking positions in lucrative stocks in hopes that the market will continue its upward trend, according to a stockbroker.

Besides, the government's announcement that local fuel prices would be reduced in line with their declines in the global markets has had a positive impact on investor confidence, he said.

"Fuel prices have a major impact on the operations of listed companies, so investors are hopeful that a reduction in their production cost will positively influence their performance."

The stockbroker went on to say that many shares have become lucrative amid a bear run in the market for the past few months.

On the premier bourse, 164 stocks advanced, 117 declined, and 99 remained unchanged.

Both the DS30, the blue-chip index, and the DSES, the shariah-based index, gained 21 points and 7 points respectively.

The Dhaka stocks sustained an upward rally with increased turnover for the fifth consecutive session to exceed the 6,300-mark as optimistic investors continued their buying spree amid growing confidence in the market, International Leasing Securities said in its daily market review.

The investors' confidence has received a boost after the government assured that it would adjust local fuel prices in accordance with the global market while the central bank is trying to curb the dollar price volatility.

So, investors significantly increased their participation in the market, which was reflected in the turnover, it added.

Among the sectors, ceramics gained

2.2 per cent, paper rose 2.1 per cent and life insurance advanced 1.4 per cent. Jute dropped 1.2 per cent, cement fell 1 per cent and IT shed 0.6 per cent.

Investor activity was mostly focused on the textile (17.2 per cent), miscellaneous (14 per cent), and pharmaceutical (11.8 per cent) sectors.

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A merchant banker said the main participation in the stock market still comes from general investors instead of institutional investors, who were panicked by the continuous fall in major indices in the recent past.

They sold their shares mainly due to the fear caused by weak economic indicators,

such as higher inflation and the fall of the local currency's value against the US dollar.

"The tension is not over yet though, so they are still not taking part actively," he added.

Fareast Islami Life Insurance topped the gainers' list, rising 10 per cent while Orion Infusion, Samata Leather, Metro Spinning Mills, and Union Capital also rose significantly.

First Finance shed the most, eroding 5 per cent. Kay & Que, Sunlife Insurance, Monno Fabrics, and Intech Ltd were also on the top losers' list.

Beximco Ltd became the most-traded stock with shares worth Tk 126 crore changing hands, followed by Orion Pharmaceuticals, Delta Life Insurance, LafargeHolcim Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Shipping Corporation.

The Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) also rose yesterday. The Caspi, the all-share price index of the port city bourse, added 122 points, or 0.66 per cent, to end the session at 18,512.

On the CSE, 144 stocks rose, 81 fell, and 83 did not see any price movement.

Canada-China firm to invest \$91m in Ishwardi EPZ

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Big Dipper Textile Mills, which is owned by a Canada-China enterprise, will invest \$91.15 million in the Ishwardi Export Processing Zone (IEPZ) to set up a textile factory.

The factory will annually produce 15,422 tonnes of yarn and employ around 1,209 Bangladeshi nationals, said the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) in a statement yesterday.

Ali Reza Mazid, member for investment promotion at the Bepza, and Wong Jammy Kwok Chan, chairman of Big Dipper Textile Mills, signed an agreement in this regard at the Bepza Complex in the capital.

The company has three other factories inside the Ishwardi and Dhaka EPZs.

German recession increasingly likely

REUTERS, Frankfurt

A recession in Germany, the euro zone's biggest economy, is increasingly likely and inflation will continue to accelerate and could peak at more than 10 per cent this autumn, the Bundesbank said in a monthly report on Monday.

With its oversised industry heavily exposed to Russian gas, Germany is among the most vulnerable to any cut off in energy supplies and soaring costs are already weighing on output with more pain expected.

"Declining economic output in the winter months has become much more likely," the central bank said. "The high degree of uncertainty over gas supplies this winter and the sharp price increases are likely to weigh heavily on households and companies."

Russia has been curtailing gas exports in response to Western sanctions over its war in Ukraine and many if not most economists now see a German recession as an inevitability.

High prices and a shortage of gas are already forcing Germany to curtail consumption, with energy intensive sectors from metal output to fertiliser production suffering heavily.

Turkish automotive production climbs 37.4pc in July

REUTERS, Istanbul

Production in Turkey's automotive sector jumped 37.4 per cent year-on-year in July to 93,659 vehicles, with exports climbing 16.2 per cent to 59,596, the Automotive Manufacturers Association (OSD) said on Monday.

Automotive production rose 5 per cent year-on-year in the first seven months of the year to 742,969 vehicles, while exports were up 2.7 per cent to 526,601, according to the data.

Another digital vision

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"Now we are formulating a master plan for Smart Bangladesh," he said.

He said the core vision was to develop inclusive ICT services and a knowledge and innovation-based society.

"This will eradicate the gap among academia, industry and the government."

In a gazette notification published on Saturday, the government said the taskforce would provide necessary instructions on launching "Bangabandhu Satellite 2".

It will also provide necessary guidance on the implementation of a blended education master plan and connecting the country with a 4th submarine cable if the bandwidth demand was there after the launch of 5G services.

The 30-member committee will also provide direction in setting time-bound targets for the formulation and implementation of a "Made in Bangladesh" policy to achieve desired export targets and provide necessary instruction for the digitalisation of the financial sector.

The government believes it has already achieved the goals of "Digital Bangladesh", which was declared in its December 2008 election manifesto.

Since then, Bangladesh has made

impressive strides in digitalisation with the establishment of "Union Digital Centres" to ensure online government, commerce and banking services and enabling internet connections for villages.

However, the new population census depicts a grim scenario when it comes to digital inclusion in the country with nearly half of the population not owning a mobile phone and 70 per cent not using the internet.

About three crore people of Bangladesh, aged 18 or above, do not own a mobile phone while 6.5 crore of them do not use the internet, according to the census, highlighting the unaffordability of devices and digital inclusion remaining elusive for many.

On the other hand, a recent government evaluation found that people were not getting the maximum benefit from the 761 services the state digitalised, primarily for slow servers and poor internet speeds.

A number of those services can no longer be requested online, according to the evaluation of the Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU) on 67 select digital services of 26 ministries and divisions.

AKM Fahim Mashroor, chief executive officer of bdjobs.com and AkerDeal, said there was a

strong political commitment at the policy level for developing a "Digital Bangladesh".

But there was no proper preparation and skills at the implementation level. Therefore, people have not got the proper benefits from the vision, he said.

"The same thing could happen to the Smart Bangladesh vision," said Mashroor, a former president of the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), the country's top ICT trade body.

"If the mentality of the people at the implementation levels does not change and they do not become smart, it will also fail in many aspects."

However, Syed Almas Kabir, the immediate past president of the BASIS, believes the country has achieved the goals of "Digital Bangladesh".

"This was proved during the pandemic when we ran daily life smoothly with the help of technology and this was possible only because of Digital Bangladesh," he said. He thinks that the undertaking of "Smart Bangladesh" vision was timely.

"Now we have to make the government systems smart using the infrastructure of Digital Bangladesh. There will be the use of artificial technology and blockchain-based services," he said.

action according to the prevailing law of the country, Babu added.

Taher Ahmed Siddiqui, president of the Bangladesh Egg Producers Association, said although they produce eggs, they cannot determine the price.

"We are helpless in this regard," he added.

Siddiqui claimed that the price of eggs was fixed by traders in Dhaka's Tejgaon area and increased the prices at an unprecedented rate.

Moshiur Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Poultry Industries Central Council and managing director of Paragon Poultry Ltd, said this sector is very big but there are

Prepare to gain bigger share of EU export

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which will come into force from 2024 and continue until 2034, Razzaque added.

Razzaque was speaking at a virtual discussion, styled "Towards a Transformed and Revitalised Trade and Economic Partnership with the EU", jointly organised by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, and the Research and Policy Integration for Development.

Researchers, university professors, analysts, economists, trade body leaders, government high ups and experts participated in the discussion.

Senior Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh said Bangladesh has already been enjoying the benefits of global geopolitical changes as the country is receiving more work orders, particularly in the garment sector.

For instance, Bangladesh's exports to the US crossed \$10 billion for the first time in the last fiscal year, when the industry registered 60 per cent growth, Ghosh said.

While Bangladesh's exports to the US are growing, the shipment of goods from other countries to the same market is showing a negative trend, he added.

Bangladesh has been negotiating with the EU for an extension of the trade benefits offered by the GSP

some gaps in the legislation.

"If the legislation was strong, the situation that we recently witnessed would not have happened," he added.

Quazi Abdul Hannan, editor of Voktantho, said consumers were charged an additional Tk 268 crore in the egg market and Tk 225 crore in the broiler chicken market in the last 14 days.

Recently, the price of brown chicken eggs increased to Tk 160 from Tk 125 per dozen. Farmers and traders say that people have never had to buy eggs at such a price.

But following the raids by various government agencies, eggs are now being sold at Tk 135 per dozen.

facility as the country was severely affected by the fallout of Covid-19.

Alongside Bangladesh, other least-developed countries (LDC) asked for an extension of the zero-tariff trade benefit for six more years during the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference in Geneva in June this year.

It is expected that developed and developing countries will grant at least a three-year extension of the trade benefit for graduating LDCs at the next WTO Ministerial Conference to be held next year.

"So, if the three-year extension is granted, Bangladesh may enjoy the zero-duty benefit to the EU up to 2031 or 2032, by when the country aspires to be a higher middle-income nation," Ghosh said.

If the country becomes a higher middle-income country, it will need to sign free trade agreements (FTA) with the EU as decision-makers of major trade blocs have recently hinted for these kinds of deals, he added.

Currently, seven sub-committees under the Prime Minister's Office are working to prepare the country for its graduation from an LDC by 2026.

While moderating the discussion, Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow of the Centre

for Policy Dialogue, said the EU is an enlightened partner of Bangladesh that has been supporting the country ever since it gained independence.

In different negotiations such as those under the World Trade Organisation and other platforms, the EU always stands beside Bangladesh.

The EU has long been demanding improvements in issues like child labour, labour rights, human rights and protecting the environment, which are also necessary for Bangladesh's vision.

"So, the EU-Bangladesh relations should look beyond trade and investment," he said.

Delwar Hossain, a professor of international relations at the University of Dhaka, said Bangladesh needs to maintain its current growth momentum.

Bangladesh needs to take preparation not only for LDC graduation but also for policy reforms, said Mostofa Abid Khan, a former member of the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission.

Amena Mohsin, another professor of international relations at the University of Dhaka, said Bangladesh needs to sharpen its negotiation skills considering the changing geopolitical and geostrategic relations worldwide.

Punish egg market manipulators

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to go for punitive measures against anybody found to be liable for the recent hike in egg prices.

AHM Shafiquzzaman, director-general of the DNCRP, said drives were carried out across the country for three consecutive days since August 18.

Through the three-day drives, egg prices were reduced by Tk 30 to Tk 35 per dozen, proving that manipulation had taken place.

"Several traders' groups recently manipulated the market for 8 to 10 days to make huge profits," he added.

The DNCRP chief went on to say the government has taken various

steps to improve the market situation but a few traders keep destabilising it whenever they get an opportunity.

Shafiquzzaman warned that his office would file cases against such unscrupulous traders.

Mostafa Azad Chowdhury Babu, senior vice-president of the FBCCI, said the market manipulation had distorted the image of the business community.

"If there is any breach of law and any inconsistency, the government must take punitive measures and the FBCCI would stand by its decision."

If there is any irregularity in the egg market and any activities against the law, the government will have to take

Cotton use likely to remain unchanged

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production by 3.1 million bales to 117 million bales in the marketing year 2022-23 owing to an output decline in the US. It also predicted a drop in global use, inventory stocks at the year's end as well as global trade.

It also forecast lower imports for India, Pakistan, Turkey, and Vietnam.

It said Bangladesh's import declined in the same period between 2021 and 2022 along with that of China and Pakistan. Bangladesh imported 7.9 million bales of cotton, down 9 per cent from 8.7 million

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tonnes the preceding period. A Matin Chowdhury, managing director of New Asia Group, said many buyers are adjusting their inventories.

"So, the volume of orders is reducing. Besides, many are using synthetic and blended cotton because of the higher prices of cotton."