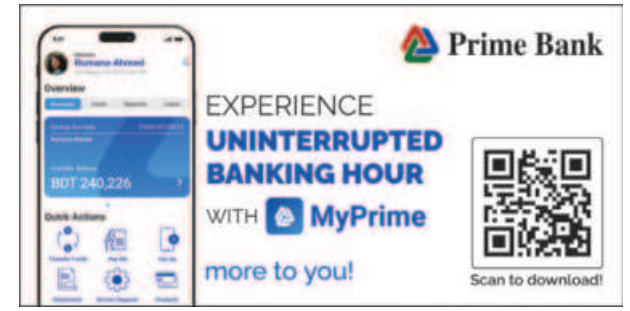


Star BUSINESS



Edible oil refiners seek to hike prices

Reduced VAT era ends
STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Edible oil refiners in Bangladesh yesterday sought to increase their prices by up to 9.62 per cent as the industry will no longer enjoy a reduced tax benefit following the completion of its one-year tenure.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) had reduced the value-added tax (VAT) on edible oil by 10 per cent to 5 per cent in March last year in a bid to provide consumers with some relief in the face of growing international prices.

More than 90 per cent of the country's demand for edible oil is currently met through imports due to insufficient domestic production.

However, the government may not accept the proposal as global prices have fallen, said an official of the commerce ministry on condition of anonymity.

READ MORE ON B3

Consider using renminbi as loan currency Chinese bank urges Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Export-Import (Exim) Bank of China has recommended that Bangladesh consider using renminbi (RMB) as a loan currency when receiving financing from the country in order to facilitate deeper bilateral cooperation and accelerate the implementation of digital connectivity projects.

"Considering the ongoing US dollar [USD] crisis and progress in establishing digital connectivity, we strongly recommend your side consider using RMB as a loan currency," said Li Qinxin, deputy general manager of the concessional loan department at Exim Bank of China.

On April 6, Qinxin had asked the Economic Relations Division about the potential use of RMB for a preferential buyer's credit (PBC) project.

In a letter, he also proposed that RMB be used for all the subsequent PBC projects.

An ERD official said although a decision is yet

READ MORE ON B2

WHY CREDIT GROWTH IS SLOWING DOWN



Slowdown in deposit growth



Feeble import financing



Liquidity stress in banks



Sluggish consumption amid high inflation



Lower new investment

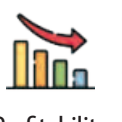
IMPACT ON ECONOMY



Employment generation to face sluggishness



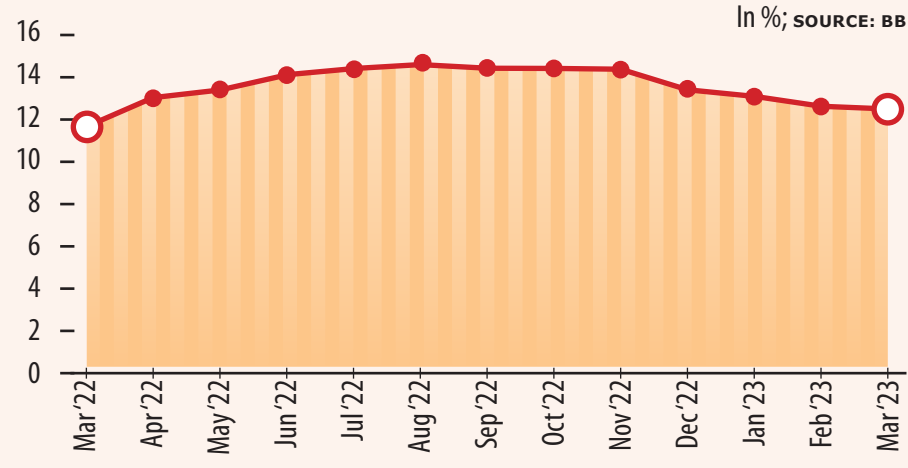
GDP growth may come down



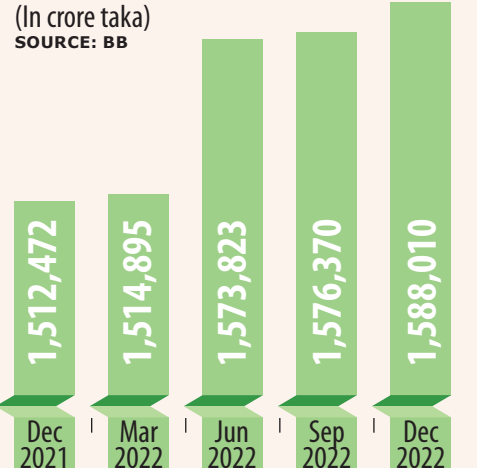
Profitability of banks to decrease

- What should be done?**
- Withdraw interest rate cap of 9pc
 - Allow floating exchange rate
 - Expand social safety net to protect the poor

PRIVATE SECTOR CREDIT GROWTH



DEPOSIT IN BANKS



Demand for loans falls to 12-month low

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Private sector credit growth in Bangladesh slipped to a 12-month low of 12.03 per cent in March, a development that may hurt GDP growth and job creation.

This was the fourth consecutive monthly decline, data from the Bangladesh Bank showed. The credit growth stood at 12.14 per cent in February.

Bankers blamed the liquidity stress in the banking system and banks' cautious approach in disbursing loans amid rising non-performing loans for the deceleration in credit growth.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, says a majority of banks are now facing liquidity stress. "So, they are struggling to give out loans."

"In addition, non-performing loans in banks are on the rise, so banks are cautious about disbursing loans. This has affected the credit growth."

Default loans in the banking sector increased 16.8 per cent year-on-year to Tk 120,656 crore last year.

A mid-level official of a private commercial bank employed in Jamalpur says his bank has been following a go-slow policy since the beginning of 2022.

"We are witnessing that some customers are failing to make

instalments regularly after one or two months of securing loans. The number of borrowers belonging to this group is going up. So, we have become careful in giving out loans," he said.

Since the country's foreign exchange market is facing a shortage of US dollars amid

director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, says if banks want to expedite their credit growth, they would have to mobilise more deposits amid the tightening of the liquidity.

"The growth of deposits has been experiencing a weak trend for several months due to

For instance, if the inflow of remittances and export earnings increases, the central bank will release more taka in the market in exchange for the US dollar.

When the inflow of US dollars goes up, the central bank purchases the surplus greenbacks from the market. But the central bank has been selling the US currency for months to help banks clear import bills, which has dried up the liquidity base of lenders.

Between July 1 and April 27 of the ongoing financial year, the central bank supplied a record \$11.79 billion to banks in contrast to \$7.62 billion provided in the entire 2021-22.

Mansur warned that the slower credit growth would squeeze the GDP growth of the country and put an adverse impact on employment generation.

The dragging impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and the severe fallout of the Russia-Ukraine war have already taken their toll on the country's economy.

The International Monetary Fund maintained that growth would be at best 5.5 per cent in 2023 and 6.5 per cent next year. The government says the economy will expand by 6.5 per cent this fiscal year, down from 7.1 per cent in 2021-22.

Mohammad Ali, managing director of Pubali Bank, says that

READ MORE ON B2



persistently higher import costs against lower-than-expected export and remittance earnings, banks are opening a lower number of letters of credit. This is expected to bring down the post-import financing of banks.

Import payments stood at \$48.79 billion in the first eight months of the ongoing financial year, down 10.27 per cent from a year ago.

The foreign exchange reserves stood at \$31.02 billion yesterday compared to \$44.01 billion a year ago, a decrease of about 30 per cent.

Ahsan H Mansur, executive

the lower interest rate and the volatility in the foreign exchange regime."

The deposit growth rose 5 per cent year-on-year to Tk 15,12,472 crore last year, according to the central bank.

"The lower deposit growth indicates that the credit growth will decrease more in the coming days," said Mansur, also a former official of the International Monetary Fund.

Besides, the inflow of the US dollar has faced a sluggish trend in recent months, hitting the liquidity level of banks as well, he said.

Govt re-imposes fumigation of US cotton

Lead time, production cost to rise for garment

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has re-imposed the provision of fumigation of US cotton at ports, official documents showed, a move that may increase the lead time and cost of production for importers.

Previously, cotton brought from the US would have to be locally fumigated even if the raw material underwent such treatment before being shipped. This created barriers to export as the extra time and costs involved led to delays in completing work orders for nearly five decades.

The government eased the rule of double fumigation and issued a circular on February 19 this year as the US is becoming an important source of cotton for local millers, traders and importers.

However, it has again imposed a similar fumigation provision, according to a gazette notification on April 25.

The new provision means sanitary and phytosanitary certificates and papers certifying that imported consignments are free from Boll Weevil, a cotton pest in North America, will have to be obtained by importers.

The rules said that the raw cotton from the US and the western hemisphere will have to be fumigated, according to Mirajul Islam Ukil, joint secretary of the commerce ministry.

READ MORE ON B2

Banks raise dollar prices for remitters, exporters

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bankers yesterday decided to pay a total of Tk 110.70 to migrant workers and non-resident Bangladeshis for a US dollar from this week in order to encourage them to send foreign currency through formal channels, according to a meeting.

Banks will offer Tk 108 for each greenback and they would quote the purchase prices by adding 2.5 per cent incentive given by the government at their exchange houses abroad.

Until yesterday, banks officially bought a greenback at Tk 107.

The new rate will be effective from the next working day, said a banker who took part in the meeting of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, and the Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association.

READ MORE ON B2

| STOCKS | |
|----------|-----------|
| DSEX ▼ | CASPI ▼ |
| 0.18% | 0.08% |
| 6,262.68 | 18,451.91 |

| COMMODITIES | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Gold ▲ | Oil ▲ |
| \$1,989.78 | \$76.67 |
| (per ounce) | (per barrel) |

| ASIAN MARKETS | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| MUMBAI ▲ | TOKYO ▲ | SINGAPORE ▼ | SHANGHAI ▲ |
| 0.76% | 1.40% | 0.35% | 1.14% |
| 61,112.44 | 28,856.44 | 3,270.51 | 3,323.27 |



With the holiday centring Eid-ul-Fitr now well and truly over, the loading and unloading of containers at Chattogram port is back in full swing. Here, empty cargo vans are seen entering the country's premier seaport through its fifth gate. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Petroleum marketers' profit rises on higher commission

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

State-run petroleum marketing companies posted higher earnings in the first three quarters of the current financial year (2022-23) thanks to the increased commission they get from the government for selling petroleum.

Of the companies, Jamuna Oil recorded a 99 per cent surge in earnings while Padma Oil and Meghna Petroleum, respectively the largest and second largest oil marketers on behalf of the government, posted 33 per cent and 31 per cent growth in profits.

Noman Ahmed Talfader, company secretary of

READ MORE ON B2

| Particulars | March 31, 2023 | | March 31, 2022 | |
|---|----------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| | Taka (Solo) | Taka (Consolidated) | Taka (Solo) | Taka (Consolidated) |
| Profit before Tax & Provision | 2,482,030,507 | 2,494,502,847 | 2,610,480,423 | 2,648,761,426 |
| Profit after Tax | 1,321,806,679 | 1,329,083,947 | 1,260,480,423 | 1,233,235,088 |
| Net Asset Value (NAV) | 28,138,644,371 | 27,960,742,702 | 26,889,582,337 | 26,710,718,054 |
| Net Asset Value (NAV) per Share | 24.13 | 23.98 | 23.06 | 22.91 |
| Earnings per Share (EPS) | 1.13 | 1.14 | 1.08 | 1.06 |
| Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS)* | 13.57 | 13.77 | 4.84 | 4.84 |

* Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS) increased due to cash inflow by way of increased in Deposit and decreased of Loans and Advances

The details of un-audited financial statements of the Bank for the first quarter ended on March 31, 2023 will also be available on the website of the Bank at www.bankasia-bd.com

Dated: Dhaka April 30, 2023

Corporate Office Bank Asia Tower 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215

Marico posts Tk 387cr profit

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Marico Bangladesh logged 9 per cent higher profits in financial year 2022-23, which ended on March 31.

The company's profits stood at Tk 387 crore in the recently concluded period while it was Tk 355 crore the year before.

Considering the higher profits, it declared 750 per cent cash dividend for the year, of which 450 per cent was declared halfway through the first quarter while another 300 per cent was declared by its end.

However, Marico did not declare any dividends for the fourth quarter.

Stocks of the multinational fast-moving consumer goods producer remains unchanged at Tk 2,421 at the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Bank Asia virtually holds AGM

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bank Asia Limited virtually organised its 24th annual general meeting (AGM) yesterday, when shareholders approved a 15 per cent cash dividend for the year 2022.

Romo Rouf Chowdhury, chairman of Bank Asia, presided over the meeting, said a press release.

In the beginning of the AGM, one minute of silence was observed to pay tribute to the bank's lead sponsor and founder late A Rouf Chowdhury, who passed away on February 18, 2023.

Mohammad Safwan Choudhury, vice chairman of the bank, Rume A Hossain, chairman of the board executive committee, Dilwar H Choudhury, chairman of the board audit committee, MA Baqui Khalily, chairman of the board risk management committee, Enam Chowdhury, Romana Rouf Chowdhury, Ashrafal Haq Chowdhury, Md Abul Quasem, Helal Ahmed Chowdhury and Nafees Khundker, directors of the bank, Adil Chowdhury, president and managing director, SM Anisuzzaman, company secretary, along with other senior officials and a large number of shareholders joined the meeting.



Romo Rouf Chowdhury, chairman of Bank Asia, presided over the bank's annual general meeting that was held virtually yesterday. Shareholders approved 15 per cent cash dividend for the year 2022 at the meeting.

PHOTO: BANK ASIA

China factory activity cools in April

REUTERS, Beijing

China's manufacturing activity unexpectedly shrank in April, official data showed on Sunday, raising pressure on policymakers seeking to boost an economy struggling for a post-Covid lift-off amid subdued global demand.

The manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) declined to 49.2 from 51.9 in March, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, below the 50-point mark that separates expansion and contraction in activity on a monthly basis.

That missed expectations of 51.4 tipped by economists in a Reuters poll and marked the first contraction since December, when the official manufacturing PMI was at 47.0.

The world's second-biggest economy grew faster than expected in the first quarter thanks to robust services consumption, but factory output has lagged amid weak global growth. Slowing prices and surging bank savings are raising doubts about demand.



Kazi Wahidul Alam, editor of The Bangladesh Monitor, and Imran Asif, chief executive officer of Air Astra, signed a sponsorship agreement at the latter's office in Dhaka yesterday to organise the 18th International Tourism Fair, also known as "Dhaka Travel Mart".

PHOTO: AIRASTRA

Air Astra joins Dhaka Travel Mart 2023 as title sponsor

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Air Astra, the youngest private airline in Bangladesh, has been designated as title sponsor for the upcoming 18th International Tourism Fair, which is also known as Dhaka Travel Mart.

Kazi Wahidul Alam, editor of The Bangladesh Monitor, and Imran Asif, chief executive officer of Air Astra, signed the sponsorship agreement at the latter's office in

Dhaka yesterday, according to a press release.

"We are delighted to have Air Astra by our side in organising the upcoming Dhaka Travel Mart," Alam said.

Organised by The Bangladesh Monitor, a travel and tourism publication, the fair will be held at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka from May 18 to 20.

"We are proud to be associated with the most popular travel and tourism extravaganza in the country," Asif said.



Farida Khanom Saki, member of the parliament (reserved woman seat-33 from Noakhali), inaugurated a Majidde Branch of Premier Bank in Noakhali yesterday. Among others, Shahed Sekander, additional managing director of the bank, Mamun Mahmud, senior executive vice-president, and Milton Roy, additional deputy commissioner (revenue) in Noakhali, were present.

PHOTO: PREMIER BANK

Govt re-imposes

FROM PAGE B1

He could not say exactly why the rule has been reimposed within a gap of two months.

The senior official said raw cotton will mean all kinds of imported cotton.

Monsoor Ahmed, additional director of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said the rule had been in place for many years.

The withdrawal of the fumigation of raw cotton from the US was a long demand from local millers and importers as the process involved a longer lead time, he said.

"This ultimately increases the cost of business."

Avoiding the double fumigation of US cotton was a major topic during bilateral trade talks between the US and Bangladesh, including the Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement.

Following the easing of the rules of fumigation, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters

Association (BGMEA) sent letters to several US senators and governors in cotton-producing states of the US, seeking duty-free access to the US market for apparel items made from American cotton.

The US suspended the generalised system of preferences (GSP) facility for Bangladesh on June 27, 2013, citing poor labour rights and poor workplace safety following two industrial disasters. Currently, the US does not provide the GSP to any country.

Even the BGMEA has started negotiations with chambers and trade associations of the US to drum up support from the American businesses in favour of its demand.

Bangladeshi apparel exporters face a 15.62 per cent tariff on shipments to the US.

At present, the US allows duty-free access to apparel items sourced from a number of African nations covered by the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Demand for loans falls

FROM PAGE B1

government borrowing from banking sources has recently increased.

"So, it has created some difficulty for banks to disburse loans to the clients in the private sector."

The government's domestic borrowing climbed 72.3 per cent year-on-year to Tk 42,717 crore in the July-January period of the current fiscal year of 2022-23, with a major portion coming from the banking system.

This has prompted the central bank to urge the government to borrow more from non-banking sources to finance its expenditures.

According to Ali, banks are also feeling encouraged to invest in treasury bills and bonds as the investment tools are risk free.

He also said if banks disburse more loans now, the rate of default loans may go up further due to the business slowdown.

Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, says that the central bank should align the lending rate and the foreign exchange rate in line with demand and supply in a bid to bring back discipline to the financial sector.

According to the economist, the purchasing power of people has decreased to a large extent owing to an elevated level of higher inflation for nearly a year, which has lowered the demand and thus production.

"New investments are not taking place to a large extent. So, new jobs are not being created much. Under such a situation, the government should expand the social safety net programmes for the underprivileged people."

He urged the government to take initiatives to reduce the cost of doing business so that businesses can invest to expand.

Banks raise dollar prices

FROM PAGE B1

At the meeting, bankers also decided to increase their purchase prices of the dollar from exporters to Tk 106, up from Tk 105 earlier, to reduce the gap in rates and arrive at a single exchange rate gradually in place of the present multiple exchange rates.

From the beginning of April,

banks have been paying Tk 104 for a dollar to exporters.

Banks in September last year decided to offer Tk 107 for a US dollar against remittances sent by Bangladeshi migrants abroad and Tk 99 for the greenback during purchase of the greenback from exporters.

Mashrur Arefin, managing

director of City Bank, said it was a prudent decision.

"The two rates are merging into one slowly and steadily, and the remittance rate is becoming more reasonable. Our decision to inform the remitters the final rate—that includes the government-given 2.5 per cent incentive—is a smart move," he added.

Consider using renminbi

FROM PAGE B1

to be taken in this regard, the finance ministry has sought opinions from Bangladesh Bank and the ERD on the issue.

But the proposal is logical considering the declining trend of the foreign exchange reserve, he added.

Bangladesh Bank officials say the government makes debt repayments to China in USD instead of RMB.

So, a logical decision will be taken on the issue in view of the current crisis.

The PBC project was one of 27 for which China assured loans of \$20 billion as per a memorandum of understanding signed during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Dhaka in October 2016.

The letter from Exim Bank of China also said that according to the priority project list provided by Bangladesh, there is still potential for more cooperation.

However, it added that given the current fluctuations in USD rates, including interest rate benchmark hikes by the US Federal Reserve, both Bangladesh and China bear significant risks such as higher financing costs.

"Apart from the exchange rate risk, the shortage of USD has been an important adversity for our cooperation," Qinxi said in the letter.

The rising cost of USD may lead to an increase in interest rates for following PBC-financed projects, he added.

Petroleum marketers' profit

FROM PAGE B1

Padma Oil Company Ltd, said the petroleum marketing companies' commission for sales rose 20 per cent to Tk 0.6 per litre at the beginning of the financial year from Tk 0.5 earlier.

Last week, Padma Oil announced its earnings per share (EPS) grew to Tk 22.4 in the July-March period of fiscal 2022-23 from Tk 16.84 a year ago.

"Our non-operating income has increased to because of the high interest rate we got from deposits in banks," he added.

Meanwhile, Jamuna Oil said its earnings doubled to Tk 20.81 in the

nine months ending with March this year from Tk 10.45 during the same period in fiscal 2021-22.

"The EPS increased due to an increase in other income," said the state oil marketer in its disclosure on the news board of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Meghna Petroleum posted EPS of Tk 24.95 in the first three quarters of the financial year compared to Tk 19.11 during the same period a year ago.

The three state oil marketing companies sold 69 lakh tonnes of petroleum on behalf of the

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation in fiscal 2021-22.

This year, two lubricant sellers — Eastern Lubricants Blenders Ltd and MJL Bangladesh Ltd — recorded higher profits as well.

Eastern Lubricants said its earnings surged more than three times to Tk 9.89 in the July-March period of financial 2022-23 from Tk 2.55 a year ago. It linked its EPS growth to increased revenue.

Similarly, MJL said its EPS rose to Tk 5.46 in the three quarters ending on March 31 from Tk 4.81 during the same period a year ago.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (EED)
SIRAJGANJ
web site: www.eed.sirajganj.gov.bd

E-TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No: 37.07.8800.004.32.001.23.15 Date: 26.04.2023.

e-Tender is invited in the National e- GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works.

| Tender ID | Lot/Package Location (Name of Institution) | Procurement Method | Document Selling Date & Time | Last Closing/Opening Date & Time |
|-----------|---|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 812104 | Repair and Renovation Work and construction of Semi Pucca Building at Gotia Somsher Ali High School, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2020-21) | LTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |
| 812105 | Electrical works at Hasna Hena and Krisnochura Building at Raseduzzoha Govt. Mohila College, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2020-21) | LTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |
| 812106 | Construction of toilet block with repair at academic building at Sirajganj Technical School and College, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2020-21) | LTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |
| 812107 | Repair and Renovation works at administrative building at Sirajganj Technical School and College, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2020-21) | LTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |
| 816867 | Earth Filling work of Sirajganj Technical School and College, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2021-22) | OTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |
| 816868 | Construction of Retaining wall and Boundary wall of Sirajganj Technical School and College, Sadar, Sirajganj. (FY-2021-22) | OTM (NCT) | 21-May-2023 16:00 | 22-May-2023 11:00 |

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Package from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branches up to the Following Date & Time. The Provisions laid down in the "PPA & PPR -2008 including latest all amendment" and STD will be Followed. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Md. Habibur Rahman)
Executive Engineer
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department,
Sirajganj.
e-mail: ee_sir@eedmoe.gov.bd

GD-754



A view of the Barishal BSCIC estate. Established in 1960, it is the largest industrial estate in Bangladesh, covering 130.31 acres of land in the city's Kawmia area. PHOTO: STAR/FILE

BSCIC Barishal project in the slow lane

Infrastructure development misses deadline amid sluggish implementation

SUKANTA HALDER and MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

A project of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) aimed at developing its industrial estate in Barishal and improving infrastructure there has again missed the deadline for completion owing to sluggish implementation, official documents showed.

As a result, the project that set out its journey in January 2017 to raise the number of factories by 100 over a two-year period, is going to take seven years to carry out the same task if it is implemented within the new deadline of December 2023.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council approved the fourth revision of the project on April 18. It has witnessed 45 per cent physical progress so far, according to a document of the planning commission.

The project to develop the Barishal

BSCIC industrial estate's underdeveloped areas and improve the infrastructure of the developed areas was estimated to cost Tk 52.20 crore initially.

The planning minister approved the first revision extending the deadline to December 2021 and raising the cost to Tk 71.54 crore. The BSCIC failed to complete the project even though the deadline was extended twice later.

About the reason for seeking the revision, the BSCIC, in its proposal, said sand-filling on 40 acres of land was ordered in 2019, but the work could not be completed on time due to various problems.

And it was not possible to float tenders for the other components of the project without completing the sand-filling, it said. The task was completed in August 2021.

The tender processes for all of the components of the project have been completed, paving the way for the construction to start.

Golam Rasul, industrial estate officer of the Barishal BSCIC, said three out of

13 components of the project have been completed. Another three components have seen around 90 per cent progress and the execution of other components is underway, he said.

Some 177 factories were set up initially. Of them, 120 are operational now, employing 6,000 people

Project Director Jalish Mahmood says entrepreneurs have become interested in setting up industries in Barishal after the government took up several mega projects in the region.

Already, the opening of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge has improved the connectivity between the southern region and other parts of the country to a greater extent.

Mahmood hopes that the project will be completed within the stipulated time.

The Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the planning ministry said the BSCIC would have to complete the project within the extended deadline.

"The deadline of the project can't be extended further."

Established in 1960, it is the largest industrial estate in Bangladesh, covering 130.31 acres of land in Barishal's Kawmia area.

The state agency has allocated 377 plots to entrepreneurs. Once the project is completed, the number of plots would go up to 470.

Some 177 factories were set up initially. Of them, 120 are operational now, employing 6,000 people.

"Once the ongoing project is implemented, 10,000 more people will be employed," said Rasul.

In Bangladesh, 4,511 factories are active in the 80 industrial estates run by the BSCIC. Collectively, they have created more than 850,000 jobs.

Beximco's profit falls for higher costs

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Beximco Ltd logged a 33 per cent year-on-year decline in profit in the July-March period of the ongoing financial year owing to the sharp depreciation of the local currency and higher energy and freight costs.

The profit of the conglomerate stood at Tk 767 crore in the first nine months of 2022-23, which was Tk 1,154 crore in the same period in 2021-22.

Its sales, however, rose 3 per cent year-on-year to Tk 5,836 crore, according to the company's financial reports.

Beximco's earnings per share fell to Tk 8.57 in July-March of FY23 from Tk 12.89 a year earlier. The EPS stood at Tk 1.22 in the third quarter of FY23, again down from Tk 4.41 registered in the identical period of FY22.

The EPS decreased as the cost of materials increased due to the depreciation of the local currency against the US dollar and the increase in gas and electricity tariffs and freight charges, said the company.

For example, the taka lost its value by 14.50 per cent against the American greenback in July-March of FY23.

Shares of Beximco were unchanged at Tk 115.6 on the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday.

Biscuit maker Olympic's profit jumps 42%

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Local biscuits manufacturing giant Olympic Industries yesterday said its profit jumped 42 per cent in the first three quarters of the current financial year of 2022-23, powered by increased sales revenue.

The biscuit maker logged Tk 145.85 crore in profit in the July-March period of the current financial year, up from Tk 102.36 crore a year ago, said Olympic in its unaudited financial statement for the period.

Olympic sold biscuits and bakery products worth Tk 1,978.85 crore in nine months to the end of March 2023, recording 24 per cent year-on-year growth.

Sales and earnings of Olympic in the January-March quarter also marked a rise.

The company said its revenue grew due to the efforts of its management to boost sales.

Olympic said its gross profit margin rose to 24.66 per cent in the current year from 24.39 per cent in the previous year.

Shares of Olympic, which rose as much as Tk 176.8 on April 26, dropped 3.04 per cent to Tk 165.90 yesterday from the previous day amid profit booking.

Edible oil refiners seek to hike prices

FROM PAGE B1

"A decision will be taken in this regard only after the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission examines the proposal in detail," he said, adding that they would meet with industry stakeholders on May 3 to discuss the next step.

In the meantime, refiners will have to pay 15 per cent VAT on imports of unrefined edible oil from today.

In a letter to the commerce ministry, millers and refiners proposed that the price of soybean oil should be increased to Tk 205 from Tk 187 per litre at the retail level.

In addition, the price of five-litre

bottles of the key cooking ingredient should be hiked to Tk 1,005 from Tk 906 while loose soybean oil should be sold at Tk 185 per litre instead of Tk 167, it said.

Similarly, they suggested raising the price of loose palm oil to Tk 129 from Tk 117 per litre as well.

However, Senior Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh said the ministry would soon write to the NBR for continuing its reduced VAT benefit.

"If the NBR follows the ministry's proposal, then prices of edible oil may be readjusted to a lower level. If not, then prices will go up," he added.

The development comes at a time when consumers are already reeling from historically high prices for another kitchen essential, namely sugar.

Ghosh said domestic prices of the sweetener have risen in line with its value at the global level.

Sugar was yesterday sold at \$680 per tonne in international markets, up from \$475 per tonne more than one month ago.

As such, the sweetener is now going for as much as Tk 135 per kilogramme in local markets compared to Tk 120 per kilogramme during Ramadan, when the price was not adjusted.

'Smart mines' show coal deeply embedded

FROM PAGE B4

Inside a control room crammed with screens displaying numbers, graphs and images, technical manager Wang Lei said he could monitor the air, temperature and other data in real time.

Digitalisation "has reduced the intensity of our work", 33-year-old electrician Ruan Banlin, who has worked in the mine for 10 years, told AFP. Huawei said the new methods had increased output per shift by

almost a third.

That's good news for China's energy grid -- but not the planet.

Greenpeace this week reported Beijing has approved a surge in coal power this year, green-lighting as much in the first three months as for the whole of 2021.

"We're seeing a decrease in the number of coal mines while the clustering of production increases along with total output," the NGO's Xie Wenwen told AFP.

Asked about smart mining, Xie said it should be scrutinised closely.

"Obviously the safest thing we can do is leave the coal in the ground. That goes for climate as well as other risks," she said.

According to official figures, China had 4,400 coal mines at the end of 2022. If it delivers on emissions pledges, those mines would be operating at minimum capacity and at a loss over coming decades, according to Greenpeace.

| CAPM IBBL Islamic Mutual Fund | | Islami Bank (Bangladesh) Limited | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Registered Address: Rupsha Tower, Flat - C4, Plot - 07, Road - 17, Banani C/A, Dhaka-1213, Phone: 022222-91611, 82269 | | | | | |
| Third Quarter Financial Statement (Unaudited) | | | | | |
| Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023 | | | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | | | |
| | 31-Mar-23 | 30-Jun-22 | | | |
| ASSETS | | | | | |
| Investments | 625,667,567 | 676,152,654 | | | |
| Advance, Deposit and prepayments | 1,684,566 | 16,596,693 | | | |
| Accounts Receivable | 2,136,939 | 4,854,029 | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 140,339,307 | 138,248,831 | | | |
| TOTAL ASSETS (A) | 769,828,642 | 835,952,207 | | | |
| LIABILITIES | | | | | |
| Accounts Payable | 3,963,203 | 7,449,661 | | | |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES (B) | 3,963,203 | 7,449,661 | | | |
| NET ASSETS (A-B) | 765,865,439 | 828,502,546 | | | |
| OWNERS' EQUITY | | | | | |
| Unit Capital | 668,535,000 | 668,535,000 | | | |
| Reserve Pre-Operating Income | 3,107,984 | 3,107,984 | | | |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | 43,022,798 | 85,685,518 | | | |
| Retained Earnings | 50,299,656 | 71,174,044 | | | |
| TOTAL OWNERS' EQUITY | 765,865,439 | 828,502,546 | | | |
| Net Asset Value (NAV) per unit: | | | | | |
| At cost | 10.80 | 11.11 | | | |
| At market price | 11.46 | 12.39 | | | |
| Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 March 2023 | | | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | | | |
| | 01.01.23 to 31.03.23 | 01.01.22 to 31.03.22 | | | |
| INCOME | | | | | |
| Profit from bank deposits | 5,554,684 | 9,035,554 | | | |
| Net gain on sale of marketable securities | 32,249,566 | 21,010,267 | | | |
| Dividend Income | 5,838,821 | 11,585,717 | | | |
| Income from Islamic Bond/Sukuk | 1,553,000 | - | | | |
| Total | 45,296,065 | 41,631,538 | | | |
| EXPENSES | | | | | |
| Management fee | 9,013,200 | 9,570,273 | | | |
| Annual fees | 581,377 | 585,725 | | | |
| Trustee fee | 934,952 | 933,836 | | | |
| BSEC Annual fee | 501,859 | 501,859 | | | |
| Custodian fee | 810,589 | 837,219 | | | |
| BDL & BO Charge | 110,667 | 195,631 | | | |
| Brokerage fee | 273,204 | 957,440 | | | |
| Bank charge, TDS and excise duty | 170,405 | 292,979 | | | |
| Advertisement & publicity expenses | 235,400 | 592,975 | | | |
| Bidding fee (Book-Building) | 11,000 | 14,000 | | | |
| Other operating expenses | 35,000 | 35,000 | | | |
| Total Expenses | 12,657,653 | 14,498,937 | | | |
| Net profit before provision for the period | 32,638,412 | 27,132,601 | | | |
| Provision for unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Marketable securities write back/(made) during the period | - | - | | | |
| Net profit after provision for the period | 32,638,412 | 27,132,601 | | | |
| Other Comprehensive Income | | | | | |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | (41,767,720) | 86,095,476 | | | |
| Total Comprehensive Income for the period | (9,129,308) | 113,228,077 | | | |
| EPU after Considering Provision | 0.49 | 0.41 | | | |
| Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 March 2023 | | | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | | | |
| | 01.01.23 to 31.03.23 | 01.01.22 to 31.03.22 | | | |
| INCOME | | | | | |
| Profit from bank deposits | 1,915,209 | 2,953,136 | | | |
| Net gain on sale of marketable securities | 2,504,111 | 4,182,018 | | | |
| Dividend Income | 502,348 | 1,034,587 | | | |
| Total | 4,921,758 | 7,219,741 | | | |
| EXPENSES | | | | | |
| Management fee | 2,974,048 | 3,079,306 | | | |
| Annual fees | 190,926 | 191,898 | | | |
| Trustee fee | 293,575 | 313,681 | | | |
| BSEC Annual fee | 164,844 | 164,844 | | | |
| Custodian fee | 267,796 | 273,582 | | | |
| BDL & BO Charge | 114,946 | 195,631 | | | |
| Brokerage fee | 33,585 | 525,265 | | | |
| Bank charge, TDS and excise duty | 16,495 | 85,575 | | | |
| Advertisement & publicity expenses | 77,400 | 58,000 | | | |
| Bidding fee (Book-Building) | - | 5,000 | | | |
| Other operating expenses | - | 35,000 | | | |
| Total Expenses | 4,074,525 | 4,847,099 | | | |
| Net profit before provision for the period | 847,233 | 2,372,641 | | | |
| Provision for unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Marketable securities write back/(made) during the period | - | - | | | |
| Net profit after provision for the period | 847,233 | 2,372,641 | | | |
| Other Comprehensive Income | | | | | |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | (61,327,099) | (20,319,772) | | | |
| Total Comprehensive Income for the period | (60,479,866) | (17,947,131) | | | |
| EPU after Considering Provision | 0.01 | 0.04 | | | |
| Statement of Cash Flows for the period from 01 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 | | | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | | | |
| | 01.07.22 to 31.03.23 | 01.07.21 to 31.03.22 | | | |
| A. Cash flows from operating activities | | | | | |
| Profit income realized | 6,026,290 | 8,144,162 | | | |
| Dividend income received | 9,707,319 | 12,166,044 | | | |
| Gain on sale of investment | 32,249,566 | 21,010,267 | | | |
| Advance & Prepayments | (1,986,375) | (2,005,538) | | | |
| Payment made for expenses | (13,901,496) | (14,220,409) | | | |
| Net cash flows from operating activities | 32,095,347 | 25,094,526 | | | |
| B. Cash flows from investing activities | | | | | |
| Acquisition of shares from secondary market | (60,912,974) | (434,931,424) | | | |
| Investment in IPO Application | (6,048,590) | (82,187,500) | | | |
| Investment returned from IPO Application | 15,627,770 | 72,910,530 | | | |
| Proceeds from sale of shares in secondary market | 74,782,943 | 388,902,449 | | | |
| Net cash flows from investing activities | (23,449,150) | (155,305,955) | | | |
| C. Cash flows from financing activities | | | | | |
| Dividend paid | (53,454,021) | (90,252,225) | | | |
| Net cash flows from / (used in) financing activities | (53,454,021) | (90,252,225) | | | |
| Net cash flows (A+B+C) | 2,090,476 | (120,468,654) | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period | 138,248,831 | 284,770,114 | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period | 140,339,307 | 164,301,460 | | | |
| Net operating cash flows | 32,095,347 | 25,094,526 | | | |
| Number of outstanding units | 66,865,500 | 66,865,500 | | | |
| Net operating cash flows per unit | 0.48 | 0.38 | | | |
| Statement of Changes in Shareholder's Equity for the period from 01 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 | | | | | |
| Particulars | Unit Capital | Reserve Pre-Operating Income | Investment Diminution Reserve | Retained Earnings | Total Equity |
| Opening Balance 01 July 2022 | 668,535,000 | 3,107,984 | 85,685,518 | 73,174,044 | 828,502,546 |
| Net profit for the period | - | - | - | 32,638,412 | 32,638,412 |
| Dividend Paid | - | - | - | (53,454,021) | (53,454,021) |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | - | - | (41,767,720) | - | (41,767,720) |
| Balance as at 31 Mar 2023 | 668,535,000 | 3,107,984 | 43,917,798 | 52,359,435 | 765,920,217 |
| For the period from 01 July 2021 to 31 March 2022 | | | | | |
| Particulars | Unit Capital | Reserve Pre-Operating Income | Investment Diminution Reserve | Retained Earnings | Total Equity |
| Opening Balance 01 July 2021 | 668,535,000 | 3,107,984 | 85,685,518 | 73,174,044 | 828,502,546 |
| Net profit for the period | - | - | - | 2,372,641 | 2,372,641 |
| Dividend Paid | - | - | - | (90,252,225) | (90,252,225) |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | - | - | (61,327,099) | - | (61,327,099) |
| Balance as at 31 Mar 2022 | 668,535,000 | 3,107,984 | 24,358,419 | 85,294,420 | 781,295,823 |
| Sd/- | Sd/- | Sd/- | Sd/- | Sd/- | Sd/- |
| MD & CEO Asset Manager | Compliance Officer Asset Manager | Chairman Trustee | Member Trustee | | |
| Notes: 1. Earning per unit for both the periods have been calculated based on the number of outstanding shares for the period ended 31 March 2023. 2. The full version of the unaudited financial statement is available in the office as well as website of CAPM Company Limited (www.capmbd.com). | | | | | |

| CAPM BDBL Mutual Fund 01 | | BDBL | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| Registered Address: Rupsha Tower, Flat - C4, Plot - 07, Road - 17, Banani C/A, Dhaka-1213, Phone: 022222-91611, 82269 | | | |
| Third Quarter Financial Statement (Unaudited) | | | |
| Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023 | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | |
| | 31-Mar-23 | 30-Jun-22 | |
| ASSETS | | | |
| Non-Current Assets | | | |
| Preliminary and issue expenses | 2,108,076 | 2,531,864 | |
| TOTAL ASSETS (A) | 2,108,076 | 2,531,864 | |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| Accounts Payable | 3,726,015 | 6,473,853 | |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES (B) | 3,726,015 | 6,473,853 | |
| NET ASSETS (A-B) | (1,617,939) | (3,941,989) | |
| OWNERS' EQUITY | | | |
| Unit Capital | 501,310,000 | 501,310,000 | |
| Investment Diminution Reserve | 35,400,065 | 74,150,535 | |
| Retained Earnings | 45,928,903 | 61,877,773 | |
| NET ASSETS (A+B) | 582,638,967 | 637,338,308 | |
| Net Asset Value (NAV) per unit: | | | |
| At cost | 10.92 | 11.23 | |
| At market price | 11.62 | 12.71 | |
| Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the period from 01 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 | | | |
| | Taka | Taka | |
| | 01.07.22 to 31.03.23 | 01.07.21 to 31.03.22 | |
| INCOME | | | |
| Interest Income | 4,749,129 | 5,456,831 | |
| Net gain on sale of marketable securities | 24,172,902 | 36,894,652 | |
| Dividend Income | 5,158,688 | 9,809,640 | |
| Bond Coupon Income | 1,082,636 | - | |
| Total | 35,163,355 | 32,161,124 | |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Management fee | 7,623,631 | 7,917,805 | |
| Amortization of preliminary and issue expenses | 423,788 | 434,654 | |
| Trustee fee | 703,925 | 673,903 | |
| Annual fee | 799,953 | 833,217 | |
| Custodian fee | 564,652 | 633,074 | |
| BDL & BO charges | 119,331 | 119,597 | |
| Brokerage fee | 300,776 | 456,989 | |
| Bank charge, TDS and excise duty | 87,172 | 97,431 | |
| Advertisement & Publicity expenses | 267,000 | 270,400 | |
| Bidding Fees | 20,000 | 23,000 | |
| Other operating expenses | 35,000 | 35,000 | |
| Total Expenses | 11,007,426 | 13,495,070 | |
| Net profit before provision for the period | 24,155,930 | 20,666,054 | |
| Provision Write back/(Made) during the period | - | - | |
| Net profit after provision for the period | 24,155,930 | 20,666,054 | |
| Other Comprehensive Income | | | |



Workers are seen melting iron before reshaping it for use in building agricultural machinery. Many foundries in Bogura have been fitted with latest induction furnaces and computerised numerical control machines to ensure that the quality of their products can rival that of any imported alternatives.



PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Islami Bank registers dip in profit

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited's profit slumped 32.70 per cent year-on-year to Tk 56.35 crore in the first quarter of 2023.

The country's largest Shariah-based bank in terms of deposits made a profit of Tk 83.72 crore in the January-March quarter of 2022.

The bank, thus, recorded Tk 0.35 earnings per share in January-March, down from Tk 0.52 in the same period a year ago, according to a disclosure on the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

The net operating cash flow per share became negative in the first quarter.

IBBL said its net operating cash flow per share decreased significantly due to an increase in net cash outflows against investments to customers and lower deposits mobilisation from customers.

Its shares closed unchanged at Tk 32.80 on the DSE yesterday.

The bank saw its EPS grow 28 per cent year-on-year to Tk 3.83 in 2022 from Tk 2.99 a year ago. It declared a 10 per cent cash dividend for the year that ended on December 31.

Bogura's foundry industry almost future-proof

Factory owners say

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

The agriculture-based foundry and light engineering industry of Bogura is all set to face any challenge that may arise amid the fourth industrial revolution, according to market players.

The district's foundry and light engineering units, which help meet 70 per cent of the country's demand for agricultural machinery and spare parts, had long been missing modern technology.

Now though, manufacturers have installed the latest equipment to ensure that their products can compete with foreign alternatives.

There are 10 foundries, 800 manufacturing facilities and 745 workshops that produce agricultural machinery inside an estate of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation in Bogura.

Meanwhile, there are another 60 foundries and 1,000 light engineering units in other places of the district, said Razedur Rahman Raju, secretary of the Bangladesh Agricultural Machinery Merchant Association's Bogura unit.

According to data from the Bogura Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the district's light engineering and foundry industry has been exporting finished products worth around Tk 300 annually for the last five years.

Abdul Malek Akanda, owner of Al-Madina Metal Works and president of the Foundry Owners' Association of Bangladesh, said he installed modern induction furnaces and computerised numerical control machines at his unit for Tk 6 crore during this period.

"We installed the new equipment to produce quality products and thereby retain

our markets. Or else, we are going to lose our business to Chinese products," he added.

Malek went on to say that three foundries in Bogura received certification from the International Organization for Standardization about a month ago.

Rezaul Karim, owner of Reza Engineering and Metals, said they would previously produce just 70 types of agricultural machinery, including centrifugal pumps and threshers.

Now manufacturers are installing the latest equipment to ensure that their products can compete with foreign alternatives

"But now we can produce around 200 types of products to compete with Chinese and Japanese agricultural machinery makers," he added.

Karim went on to say they plan to start manufacturing small vehicles such as mini trucks within a year.

"We lacked training and technological support but a foreign NGO, called the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center [CIMMYT], has been inspiring us to modernise our equipment since last year," he said.

Asked how workers will be able to adapt to the new technology, Karim said more support is required in this regard as they are given just 15 days training after the equipment is purchased.

He then informed that the CIMMYT has already arranged a three-month training

programme to this end in Dhaka with help of the Bangladesh Industrial Technical Assistance Center.

PVL Bharathi, lead training coordinator of the CIMMYT, said the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia - Mechanization and Extension Activity (CSISA-MEA) being funded by USAID is facilitating the development of agriculture-based light engineering small- and medium enterprises.

The initiative aims to provide the necessary skills to manufacture quality and competitively priced agricultural machinery and spare parts.

"It also recognises that the scope for women to be engaged in the sector has not been explored thoroughly," Bharathi added.

The CIMMYT lead training coordinator then said the owners of various enterprises were interviewed under the initiative in order to identify the potential of women as skilled or semi-skilled workers in their industries.

"Some 228 women workers in Bogura were trained to improve their career prospects in the past two years, taking the total number to undergo such programmes up to 840 so far," Bharathi added.

AKM Mahfuzur Rahman, acting superintendent of the Bogura BSCIC industrial area, said the CIMMYT is providing training to upskill foundry and light engineering workers in the district.

The agriculture-based foundry and light engineering industry of Bogura began its journey in the 1960s and now produces more than 3,000 types of products worth of Tk 500 crore each year.

The industry employs around 15,000 people, of which 25 per cent are women, according to factory owners.

Five key factors to consider before investing

JASIM UDDIN RASEL

Your savings need to be invested to grow your money. So, the main target is the rate of return. But sometimes, a higher return involves risks and you may even lose your money.

So, what important things should you consider before investing your savings?

The following key five factors will help you fix your investment plans to achieve your goal.

Return from investment

Your first target from investments is the return. How much profit we will get from our investment is the main factor to make decisions before investment.

In Bangladesh, a high rate of return you can avail by investing in savings certificates and bonds.

Nearly 10 per cent of profit is available from these government-issued certificates or bonds.

Timeframe

The timeframe is an important consideration because the rate of return depends on the duration of investments. If you invest for the long run, your rate of return will be higher.

If you think that you do not need your savings for the next five years, it is perfect to go for long-term investments and you will get a higher return.

But if you require the money within one or two years, you will have to go for short-term investments and your return will be less than long-term investments.

Safe investment

Sometimes we tend to achieve a higher profit from investments to reach our target quickly. But such a decision may not be a safe investment option. So, while considering the investment option, you have to enquire about the organisation's reputation with the existing customers and the years of dealings with customers' money.



Risk control

Determine your investment tolerance. If you are able to take a high risk, the amount of return will also be higher. But if you are a new investor and the amount of savings is small, it is better to avoid the high risk.

Savings certificates and bonds issued by the government carry a lower risk compared to investments made into the shares of companies listed on the stock exchanges.

However, if you prefer to invest in shares, you will have to invest for a longer period considering the current condition of the market.

Tax benefits

Your return will be affected due to taxes. The tax shall be deducted at the time of profit disbursement on your investments. This means a lower return. So, consider where the tax rate is low so that you can avail the maximum return.

If you are a taxpayer, you should consider whether the investment will be considered for the tax rebate. Then, it will give you the maximum tax benefit as well as return.

The writer is the author of Smart Money Hacks

'Smart mines' show coal deeply embedded in China's future

AFP, Shennu

One hundred metres underground inside a pit in northern China, miners extract lumps of coal with the flick of a finger on a smartphone, as the country tries to drag the traditionally dangerous and dirty work into the digital era.

The Hongliulin "intelligent mine" in coal-belt Shaanxi province is a flagship facility in a drive to modernise China's thousands of coal mines, even as the nation pledges to peak greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

China is the world's biggest emitter of the pollutants driving climate change, and its promises to curb them are essential to keeping global temperature rises below two degrees Celsius.

But mine digitalisation – which aims to improve safety and productivity – shows the continued importance of coal in a country that last year produced nearly 60 per cent of its electricity from the fossil fuel.

Smart mines are common in other coal-producing nations like Canada, but China has lagged and now the government is aiming to achieve basic digitalisation of all mines by 2035.

On a tour organised by telecoms giant Huawei – whose technology underpins the changes at Hongliulin – AFP journalists saw sensors, smart cameras and 5G relay boxes criss-crossing the facility.

READ MORE ON B3



This photo taken on April 26 shows employees working at the dispatch command centre at the Xiaobaodang coal mine near Yulin, in China's northern Shaanxi province, during a media tour organised by Chinese telecoms giant Huawei. The Hongliulin "intelligent mine" in coal-belt Shaanxi province is a flagship facility in a drive to modernise China's thousands of coal mines.

PHOTO: AFP

Heidelberg Cement shares jump as it returns to profit

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Heidelberg Cement Bangladesh Ltd, the maker of Scan-branded cement, returned to profit in the first quarter of 2023, buoyed by higher net sales and lower costs of raw materials, plant repair and maintenance.

The cement manufacturer registered Tk 38.19 crore in net profit in the three months ending on March 31 from a loss of Tk 16.77 crore in the same period a year ago, it said in a filing on the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday.

Shares of Heidelberg soared 22.60 per cent to Tk 303.80 from Thursday's closing price of Tk 247.80.

The multinational company said its earnings per share surged to Tk 6.85 in the January-March quarter of 2023 against a loss of Tk 2.97 year-on-year. It also recorded increased net operating cash flow per share during the period.

The first-quarter earnings results come after Heidelberg Cement suffered Tk 23.34 crore net loss in 2022. It declared a 10 per cent cash dividend for the financial year.