

## UK retail sales stumble again

REUTERS, London

British retailers suffered another bad month in July and expect further weakness in August as poor weather and generally weak trading conditions continued to hamper demand, the Confederation of British Industry said on Monday.

The CBI said its monthly retail sales balance sank to -43 in July from June's reading of -24, its lowest since April.

Retailers forecast the index would improve to -32 in August, but that was still the weakest outlook since February.

"July marked a disappointing month for the distribution sector, with retailers feeling the sting from a harsh mix of unfavourable weather conditions and ongoing market uncertainty," CBI principal economist Martin Sartorius said.

"While the downturn in sales volumes is set to continue next month, some firms expressed hope for an improvement in market conditions post general election," he added.

Official retail sales data showed that sales volumes dropped by 1.2 percent in June from their level in May, hampered by unseasonably cool weather.

However, high inflation has also been a major factor eating into shoppers' purchasing power until recently, and overall sales volumes in June were still below where they were just before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020.

## Stocks fall as large-cap scrips take a blow

DSEX declines 0.99% to end the day at 5,330

### STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stocks in Bangladesh fell for the second consecutive day yesterday mainly because of a price fall in large-cap scrips.

The engineering sector experienced the highest loss of 1.74 percent followed by telecommunication 1.49 percent, non-bank financial institutions 1.28 percent and fuel & power 1.12 percent.

The banking sector also logged a loss of 0.89 percent followed by pharmaceuticals 0.52 percent and food and allied 0.45 percent.

As a result, the DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), went down 53 points, or 0.99 percent from the previous day to end the day at 5,330.

Likewise, the DSES, the index for the shariah-based companies, decreased 11 points, or 0.78 percent, to 1,166 while the DS30, the index for blue-chip stocks, slumped 18 points, or 0.96 percent, to 1,902.

However, the turnover, which indicates the total value of the day's trading, hit Tk

450 crore yesterday, which was around 7.82 percent lower than that of the previous trading session.

The daily trade of the block market, meaning high volume transactions of privately negotiated securities outside the open market, contributed 3.5 percent of the overall market turnover.

Agni Systems was the most traded share with a turnover of Tk 27.6 crore.

Of the issues that traded on the country's premier bourse, 27 advanced, 332 declined and 33 remained unchanged. Almost all the sectors closed in the negative territory, according to the daily market update by UCB Stock Brokerage.

The information technology, services & real estate and paper & printing were the top three sectors that closed on a negative note.

The pharmaceuticals sector dominated the turnover chart covering 20.99 percent of the day's total turnover.

TechnoDrug topped the gainers' list with a rise of 9.89 percent followed by Renwick Jaineswar & Company Bangladesh, Libra

Infusions, United Finance and Rupali Life Insurance Company.

Fareast Finance & Investment, Meghna Condensed Milk Industries, Esquire Knit Composite, Gemini Sea Food and Saiham Textile Mills were also on the gainers' chart.

Phoenix Insurance Company shed the most, losing by 3 percent, followed by Bangladesh Autocars, HR Textile, Rangpur Foundry and Janata Insurance Company with a close margin of over 2 percent.

Standard Insurance, Phoenix Finance and Investments, Sonargaon Textiles, Standard Ceramic Industries and Al-Haj Textile Mills also suffered losses.

Trust Islami Life Insurance, Legacy Footwear, National Tea Company and Bangladesh Lamps were also on the losers' list.

The Chattogram Stock Exchange witnessed a downward trend as the Caspi, the key index of the port city bourse, slipped by 113 points, or 0.73 percent, before getting settled at 15,273.

## Standard Bank declares 5% dividends

### STAR BUSINESS DESK

Standard Bank yesterday declared 5 percent dividends, including 2.5 percent cash dividend, for the year that ended on December 31, 2023.

The declaration came at the bank's 25th annual general meeting (AGM), which was held at the Police Convention Hall on Eskaton Garden Road in the capital's Ramna, the bank said in a press release.

Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed, chairman of the bank, presided over the meeting and presented the "Annual Report 2023" and "Directors' Report" of the bank.

He congratulated the shareholders, guests and employees of the bank and thanked them for their active participation, commitment and contribution to the bank.

Md Ali Reza, company secretary (acting) of the Shariah-based bank, conducted the meeting.



PHOTO: STANDARD BANK

Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed, chairman of Standard Bank, presides over the bank's 25th annual general meeting at the Police Convention Hall on Eskaton Garden Road yesterday.

Md Manjur Alam, vice-chairman of the bank, Kamal Mostafa Chowdhury, Ashok Kumar Saha, Ferouz Rahman, SAM Hossain, Mohammed Abdul Aziz, Mohammed Shamsul Alam, Gulzar Ahmed, Md Zahedul Hoque, Ferdous Ali Khan, Kazi Khurram Ahmed, AKM Abdul Alim and Md Abul

Hossain, directors, attended the event.

Najmul Huq Chaudhury, Golam Hafiz Ahmed and AKM Delwer Hussain, independent directors of the bank, Muhammad Saifullah, chairman of the Shariah supervisory committee, and Saidur Rahman and Alamgir Kabir, observers, were present.

## Rupee hits record low

REUTERS, Mumbai

The Indian rupee fell to a record low on Monday, pressured by month-end corporate dollar demand, although likely intervention from the Reserve Bank of India helped avert further losses.

The rupee closed at 83.7275 against the US dollar, unchanged from its close on Friday, after hitting an all-time low of 83.74 earlier in the session.

Factors such as outflows from local equities, volatility in the Chinese yuan and tepid risk appetite have contributed to weakness in the rupee in recent sessions. The currency has hit all-time lows in five out of the last six trading sessions.

The dollar index was up slightly at 104.5 while most Asian currencies gained between 0.1 percent and 0.8 percent.

The RBI likely sold dollars via state-run banks, in order to cap weakness in the rupee, traders said.

While the central bank has been intervening to support the rupee, the dollar sales have been "passive," suggesting that it wants depreciation to occur gradually instead of pushing the currency higher, a foreign exchange salesperson at a private bank said.

Meanwhile, dollar-rupee forward premiums jumped, with the 1-year implied yield up 5 basis points (bps) at 1.83 percent, its highest level since February, aided by the decline in US bond yields.

The 1-year US Treasury yield was little changed at 4.81 percent in Asia trading, after falling 4 basis points on Friday in light of data that signalled inflationary pressures in the US are moderating.

## Oil prices stabilise

REUTERS, London

Oil prices were stable on Monday as fears of a widening conflict in the Middle East after a rocket strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights put a floor under last week's price losses.

Brent crude futures gained 7 cents, or 0.09 percent, to \$81.20 a barrel at 1007 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures rose by 1 cent, or 0.01 percent, to \$77.17.

The Brent and WTI benchmarks lost 1.8 percent and 3.7 percent respectively last week on sagging Chinese demand and hopes of a Gaza ceasefire agreement.

"A rather muted opening greets oil prices after Middle East tension is back on the menu due to a reported Hezbollah attack," said PVM analyst John Evans, referring to the strike on Golan Heights.

On Sunday Israel's security cabinet authorised Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to decide on the "manner and timing" of a response to the attack that killed 12 teenagers and children.

Israel vowed retaliation in Lebanon against Iran-backed Hezbollah, which denied responsibility for the attack. Israeli jets hit targets in southern Lebanon on Sunday.

The tensions have spread to several fronts and are in danger of spilling into a wider regional conflict, sparking investor concerns about the potential impact on crude output from the world's largest oil-producing region.

<div> <b>Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA)</b> <b>WASA Bhaban, Dampara, Chattogram, Bangladesh</b></div> <div><b>Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)</b> for <b>Selection of Engineering Consultants for "Engineering Design &amp; Construction Supervision of Chattogram Sewerage System Development Project (Catchment-2 &amp; 4) Under Chattogram WASA".</b></div> <div>Memo No. 46.06.0000.304.95.08.2023-35<span style="float:right">Date: 29/07/2024</span></div> <table><tr><td>1. Ministry/Division</td><td>Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development &amp; Co-operatives/ Local Government Division</td></tr><tr><td>2. Agency</td><td>Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA)</td></tr><tr><td>3. Procuring Entity Name</td><td>Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (CWASA)</td></tr><tr><td>4. 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The objective of the consulting services is to achieve the efficient and proper preparation and implementation of the Project through the following works:  a) Detailed design b) Tender Assistance c) Construction supervision for CP-1, CP-2 and CP-3 d) Supervision of CWASA's entire process of implementing environmental assessment to develop an EIA report and obtaining an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) in accordance with the Bangladesh laws and regulations  e) Facilitation of Implementation of Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Environmental and Monitoring Plan (EMoP) and Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP) f) Technology transfer g) Support for CWASA's public activity for sewerage service and promotion of house connection  Project Components related to this Consulting services are outline below: ➤ Land Development for STP site ➤ Construction of Sewage Treatment Facility (60,000 m3/day) ➤ Construction of Trunk Sewer (L=11km &amp; Dia=600-2200 mm) ➤ Construction of Branch Sewer (L=70km &amp; Dia=200-900 mm) ➤ Installation of Connection Pipe (L=70km &amp; Dia=150-200 mm) ➤ Installation of Catch Pit (14000Nos) ➤ Installation of Manhole (932Nos)  <b>Scope of Consulting Services:</b> The scope of this Consultancy services to be undertaken shall cover all but not limited to: a) Review and verify all available primary and secondary data b) Carry out all the required engineering surveys and investigations c) Prepare and negotiate the permission for construction works d) Prepare detailed work plan, progress reports and implementation schedule e) Prepare Project Definition Report f) Finalize design sewage flow, design pollution load, basic design g) Prepare the detailed design of the Project h) Define technical and financial requirements, capacity and/or experience for PQ criteria i) Prepare PQ documents &amp; Assist CWASA in PQ announcement, addendum/corrigendum, and clarifications j) Evaluate PQ applications &amp; prepare a PQ evaluation report</td></tr></table>						1. 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Experience, Resources & Delivery Capacity Required	The Consultant must have the experience of providing Consultancy Services for preparation of detailed engineering design and procurement documents complying with "Guidelines for Employment of Consultants under Japanese ODA Loans (October 2023)" in Design, Build, Construction Supervision and Contract Management; and successful commissioning of similar type of facilities and services as mentioned in serial 16.
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18. Other Details (if applicable)		The expression of interest must include the following information that would lead in preparing short listing:  1) Background of the Firm(s) with brochures etc. 2) General and Overall experience of the Firm(s) 3) Experience in similar projects of comparable size, complexity and technical specialty of firms in the required area 4) Experience in developing countries under same environmental and geographical conditions 5) Experience with Japanese ODA projects. 6) Annual Turnover of the firms for the last five years along with audit report 7) Nature, total cost, total inputs in terms of man-month indicating area of expertise, employer, and location of the similar works in hand, if any 8) Summary of permanent professionals and technical employees with key qualifications (in tabular form) in the fields of major components of the project as well as scope of work as mentioned in serial 16 9) While indicating information relating to above serial 18 (3), it shall be made clear whether the responsibility of the firm was in the capacity of a principal firm or as one associated with a principal firm. 10) The EOI shall be submitted in one (1) original, two (2) copies, and one soft copy in USB in a sealed envelope.  <b>Additional information:</b> Consultant may associate with other Consultants to enhance their qualifications, but should mention whether the association is in form of "joint venture" or "sub-consultancy". The consulting firm(s), which (are) "solely" or "jointly" and "severally" liable for the entire performance under the contract, shall not be allowed to participate in more than one proposal in any capacity including sub-consulting or association. A consultant, if acting in the capacity of sub-consultant or association member (not liable for the entire contract) in any proposal, may participate in more than one proposal, but only in that capacity. Consultant without having eligible criteria should not apply for EOI. Interested Consultants may obtain further information at the address of the undersigned during normal office hours. Expressions of Interest shall be submitted in sealed envelope, delivered to the address of the undersigned and be clearly marked "Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Engineering Consultants for Engineering Design & Construction Supervision of Chattogram Sewerage System Development (Catchment-2 & 4) Project Under Chattogram WASA".																																					
19. Association with foreign firms is	Encouraged																																						
20.	Ref. No.	Phasing of Services	Location	Start Date	Completion Date																																		
	46.06.0000.304.95.08.2023-35	Design & Bidding process including PQ  Construction Supervision including DLP	Chattogram City Corporation, Chandgaon, Panchlaish	Nov/2025	Nov/2028																																		
21.	Name of the Official Inviting EOI																																						
22.	Designation of the Official Inviting EOI																																						
23.	Address of Official Inviting EOI																																						
24.	Contact details of Official Inviting EOI																																						
25.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or rejects all EOI's.																																						

Muhammad Nurul Amin

Project Director, Chattogram Sewerage System Development Project (Catchment-2 & 4)

Superintending Engineer, MOD Circle, Chattogram WASA, Chattogram

Tel: +880-2333-353571

Email: ratanbd@gmail.com

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