



Farmers await wholesalers at a floating guava market on Kirtipasha canal at Nesarabad upazila in the southern district of Pirojpur. The guavas are harvested from orchards in adjoining districts from July to September and sold for Tk 400 to Tk 500 per maund (around 37.6 kilogrammes). The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: TITU DAS

## National Bank sees no end to losses

The bank's half yearly loss soars 71% year-on-year

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

National Bank Ltd (NBL) has continued bleeding although the country's oldest private bank was somehow able to curb its losses in the just-concluded April-June quarter.

The bank suffered a loss of Tk 298 crore in the three-month period ending on June 30 this year, down 4.18 percent year-on-year.

But its total losses soared 71 percent year-on-year to Tk 1,063 crore in the six months to June this year because of high default loans, according to the bank's unaudited financial statement.

However, NBL Managing Director and CEO Md Touhidul Alam Khan said the bank made an unaudited monthly profit in June.

"This achievement is particularly significant, as the bank last recorded a monthly profit in December 2021, and since then, the bank has been facing substantial losses month after month," he said.

"The key factor contributing to this profit is the robust recovery drive from nonperforming loans."

The bank recovered around Tk 600 crore in cash from default loans over the last six months.

"We are committed to striving for a brighter future for the bank in the days ahead."

This is the fourth consecutive year of losses for the private bank, which saw changes in its boards several times over the past year with the Sikder family apparently losing control of the financial institution.

NBL could trim its losses by more than half to Tk 1,497 crore in 2023 after posting the highest-ever loss of Tk 3,285 crore in the previous year.

The bank said it could not book interest on loans and advances due to failure to recover funds from the defaulters in the April-June quarter this year.

"Furthermore, the bank incurred higher interest expenses on deposits and borrowings," it said in a filing on the website of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Although the bank was able to reduce its losses per share to Tk 0.93 in the April-June quarter this year from Tk 0.98 a year ago, its half-yearly losses per share rose to Tk 3.31 this year, up from Tk 1.95 previous year.

The bank's net operating cash flow per share also worsened further during the period.

# Islami Bank's profit rises 7% in second quarter

FEDA AL HOSSAIN

Islami Bank Bangladesh has reported a 7.2 percent increase in profit for the April-June quarter of 2024.

The profit amounted to Tk 307 crore whereas it was Tk 286.22 crore in the same period last year.

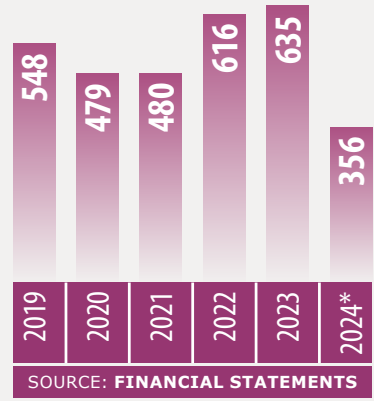
For the first half of the year, the bank's profit rose to Tk 356.92 crore from Tk 343.34 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to its unaudited financial statements.

Thus, consolidated earnings per share for the January-June period of 2024 stood at Tk 2.22, compared to Tk 2.13 in the same period last year.

Islami Bank's consolidated net operating cash flow per share registered a significant improvement, reaching Tk 54.79 from Tk 39.21 in the negative a year ago.

### PROFIT OF ISLAMI BANK BANGLADESH

In crore taka  
\*As of June 30, 2024



Additionally, the bank's consolidated net asset value per share was Tk 46.06 in the first six months this year.

The latest data highlights its sustained profitability, following a profit of Tk 635.33 crore in 2023, its highest since 2019.

Islami Bank achieved a significant milestone last year by becoming the largest lender in the country by total deposits surpassing Sonali Bank, despite recent loan scandals.

The Shariah-compliant bank attracted deposits totalling Tk 153,456 crore in 2023, reflecting a 9 percent year-on-year increase.

In comparison, Sonali Bank, the largest state-run lender, mobilised deposits worth Tk 150,606 crore, an increase of 6 percent.

This development positioned Islami Bank as the largest bank in Bangladesh in

terms of deposits and loans (investments).

Islami Bank's lending activity has consistently outpaced that of the state-run Sonali Bank for several years.

However, the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio of Islami Bank stood at 3.3 percent in 2022.

The Shariah-based lender has recently come under scrutiny due to widespread financial scams. For example, the bank allegedly disbursed Tk 7,246 crore in loans to nine companies in 2022 violating banking norms.

Established in 1983, Islami Bank Bangladesh has grown substantially, with a paid-up capital of Tk 1,609.99 crore. The bank operates 394 branches, 249 sub-branches, and 2,771 agent banking outlets across the country.

Shares of the bank were unchanged at Tk 32.6 on Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday.

STOCKS	
DSEX ▲	CASPI ▼
0.20%	0.31%
5,280.47	15,039.13

COMMODITIES	
Gold ▲	Oil ▲
\$2,420.61	\$76.71
(per ounce)	(per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS			
MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▲ 0.44%	▲ 1.49%	▲ 0.41%	▲ 2.06%
81,814.33	39,101.82	3,455.94	2,938.75

## HSBC records \$21.6b pre-tax profit in first half

AFP, Hong Kong

Banking giant HSBC said Wednesday that pre-tax profits in the first half of 2024 came in at \$21.6 billion, slightly lower than last year's record performance.

"After delivering record profits in 2023, we had another strong profit performance in the first half of 2024, which is further evidence that our strategy is working," said Noel Quinn, the group's outgoing chief executive.

The bank also doubled down on its share buyback, announcing a further three-month repurchase of up to \$3 billion, following the completed \$3 billion buyback announced last quarter.

The buyback and approval of an interim

dividend of \$0.1 per share would bring shareholders a total of \$4.8 billion, taking the total amount of capital distributed since 2023 to \$34.4 billion, Quinn said in the statement.

"We remain confident that we can deliver attractive returns, even in a lower interest rate environment," he added.

"As a result, we are providing new guidance of a mid-teens return on average tangible equity, excluding the impact of notable items, in 2025."

The Asia-focused lender and its peers were buoyed by rising interest rates earlier this year.

It achieved record profit in 2023, but was followed by an almost 2 percent dip in pre-tax profit to \$12.7 billion.

The bank generates most of its revenue in Asia and has spent several years pivoting to the region, vowing to develop its wealth business and target fast-growing markets.

A \$400 million increase in revenue over the first half of 2024 was mainly driven by higher banking net interest income, as well as the disposal of the bank's businesses in Canada, Argentina and France and the acquisition of the Silicon Valley Bank's UK arm.

"As we look ahead, the path of interest rates and the outcomes of elections are amongst the factors that will shape the global operating environment," Quinn noted.

"Although we expect a cautious approach, we have reduced our sensitivity to interest rates."

## USD turns 5% costlier

FROM PAGE B1

"Usually, we buy US dollars from the people who return to the country and then sell those to people who are going abroad. If people can't come back home, then who will we buy dollars from?" he asked.

Zaman said they had also issued a press release asking their association members to sell each US dollar at Tk 119 and that the association would take "necessary measures" against anyone not doing so.

Meanwhile, banks continue to sell each US

dollar at the previous price of Tk 118.

A student scheduled to go to the US next week to pursue a master's programme said he struggled to manage dollars yesterday as some banks expressed unwillingness to provide it.

"Finally, I managed some dollars from a private bank with the help of one of my relatives, who has good relations with the high-ups of the bank, at Tk 119 per US dollar," he said. According to Bangladesh Bank, only \$13.8 million in remittance came to the country

through formal channels in the seven days since July 21, with banks staying closed for the first three days for a general holiday declared by the government.

Apart from this, there was no broadband internet service for five consecutive days and mobile internet service for 10 days.

Besides, the government enforced a curfew from the night of July 19 amidst violence centring the students' movement for amendment to the country's quota system for government jobs.

## Multinationals' profits

FROM PAGE B1

Likewise, finance costs of four other MNCs increased by 47 percent year-on-year to Tk 268 crore in total during the three-month period.

Bangladesh Bank has allowed banks in the country to determine their interest rates for loans and deposits based on market demand since May. The move came about four years after the central bank introduced a ceiling to keep interest rates within single digit.

Singer Bangladesh saw its profits fall 47 percent year-on-year to Tk 25 crore during the April-June period even though its sales edged up 9 percent at the same time.

Bata Shoe Bangladesh saw its profits fall 40 percent to Tk 18 crore while its sales declined 18 percent to Tk 261 crore. On the other hand, Marico, Linde Bangladesh and Robi Axiata saw a rise in profit and sales. Marico's profits surged

30 percent to Tk 172 crore as the company reduced its cost of sales. Also, the hike in interest rates helped the company register higher net finance income.

Meanwhile, Linde's profits grew 42 percent to Tk 10 crore while that of Robi Axiata ballooned by 345 percent to Tk 107 crore. The country's second largest mobile network operator also saw its overall revenue increase by 2.5 percent to Tk 2,603 crore during the April-June quarter.

VIPB's Islam, also a former president of the CFA Society, said the telecom sector is in a comparatively better position considering their individual revenue.

However, Greenphone struggled with higher taxes as its turnover advanced by 5.5 percent to Tk 4,223 crore in the April-June quarter while its profits fell 27 percent to Tk 861 crore.

Unilever Consumer Care's profits rose slightly even though its sales

dropped. The company's profits increased 12 percent to Tk 18 crore while its sales fell 6 percent to Tk 77 crore.

## IT firms suffer


FROM PAGE B1

"Nowadays, we cannot use WhatsApp, an important medium for communication, using mobile internet," he said.

"Even though we could use VPN (virtual private network) or broadband internet, file sharing is not possible and as a result, we are facing embarrassing situations with our foreign clients," Kabir added.

"Above all, there are more than 15 lakh people who use Facebook for their e-commerce business," he said.

The daily income of these people is now being seriously hampered because of the shutdown of Facebook and slow internet connection, added Kabir, also a former director of the BASIS.



**এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড**  
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা,  
ঢাকা-১২০৮।

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

ইউসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমগুলি প্রকৃত স্থানীয় প্রস্তুতকারী/ সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করছেঃ-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	আর্নেট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরৎযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
০১।	ইউসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/ ২০২৪/৩১৪ তারিখঃ ৩১/০৭/২০২৪ইং	০৭(সাত) প্রকার প্রিন্টেড ইনার বক্স {07(seven) kinds of Printed Inner Box} (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৬,৩৮,৩০০ পিস	২.৫%	টাকা ১,৫০০.০০ প্রতি সেট	১৪/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা	১৪/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকা
০২।	ইউসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/ ২০২৪/৩১৫ তারিখঃ ৩১/০৭/২০২৪ইং	০৯(নয়) প্রকার প্রিন্টেড ইনার বক্স {09(nine) kinds of Printed Inner Box} (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৯,২৭,২০০ পিস	২.৫%	টাকা ১,৫০০.০০ প্রতি সেট	১৪/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা	১৪/০৮/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র শিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাদের ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাদের দরপত্র অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই। দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না। কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(৫ কলাম x৫ ইঞ্চি)

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট  
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।