

Stocks rally for third day

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The indices of the stock market in Bangladesh rose for the third consecutive trading day yesterday, with turnover also increasing compared to the previous session.

The DSEX, the key index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), gained 10.57 points, or 0.20 percent, before closing at 5,234 yesterday.

The other two indices of the country's premier bourse also witnessed a similar rising trend, with the DSES index for Shariah-based firms gaining 0.25 percent to reach 1,169 points, and the DS30 index for blue-chip stocks going up by 0.28 percent to 1,926.

Among the traded securities, 173 saw an increase in prices, 153 closed lower, and the remaining scripts showed no price movement.

The day's turnover increased by 11.63 percent to Tk 544 crore compared to the previous trading session. The textile sector dominated the market activities, accounting for 20.13 percent of the total turnover.

In the individual company category, Kattali Textile topped the gainers' list, rising by 9 percent, while Khulna Printing & Packaging saw the largest drop, falling by 5 percent.

Orion Infusion Limited emerged as the most-traded share, with a turnover of Tk 16.7 crore.

The non-bank financial institutions (NBFI), paper and printing, and textile sectors were the top three sectors that closed in positive territory, according to UCB Stock Brokerage's daily market update.

Life insurance, mutual funds, and telecom were the top three sectors that closed in the negative.

RMG exports grow 18% in Oct-Dec

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's readymade garments (RMG) industry has continued to expand despite global economic challenges and domestic labour unrest following the fall of the Awami League government last August, according to the latest Bangladesh Bank (BB) report.

Export earnings for the October-December period of fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25) stood at \$10.36 billion, marking a 9 percent increase from the previous quarter.

Year-on-year, it was a growth of 18.6 percent.

"This growth was attributed to the rebound of economic activities in advanced economies along with the peak holiday shopping season in Western markets," said the central bank's quarterly review of RMG released yesterday.

Major US and European retailers typically increase their orders to meet consumer demand, it said.

The report said the apparel sector faced inflationary pressure, disruptions to supply chains, fluctuating fuel prices, and rising transportation costs. However, demand from key export markets remained strong.

Last year, the local garment sector witnessed demonstrations, national election-related movements, factory closures and production halts amid massive labour unrest after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led administration on August 5.

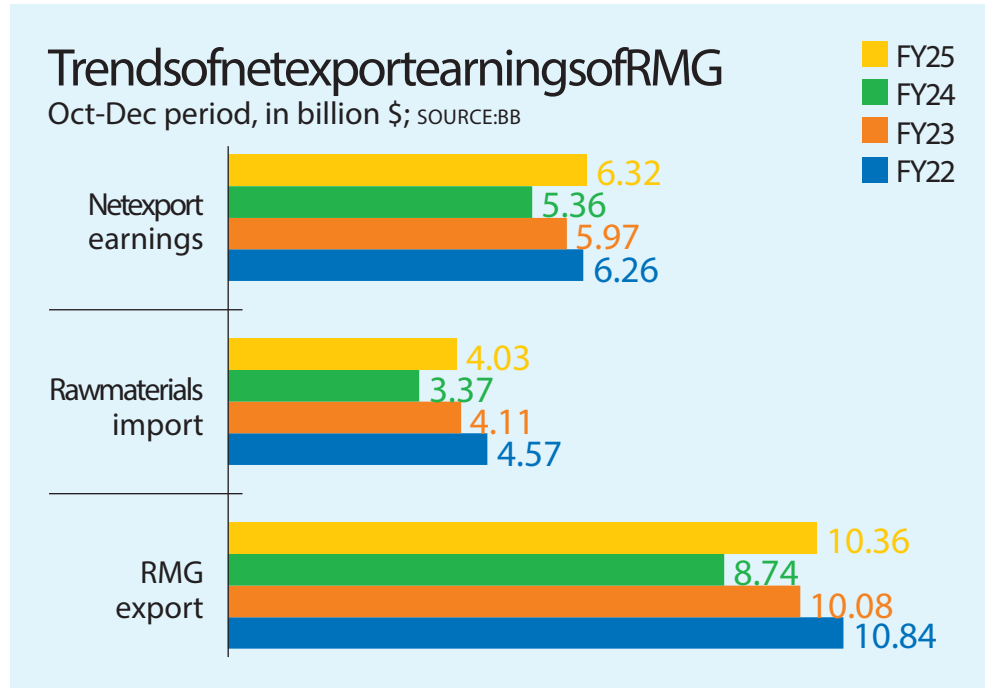
Goods shipment was severely affected in July, August, September and October due to a student-led mass movement culminating in Awami League's ouster and widespread labour unrest demanding wage hikes and an end to workplace discrimination.

On the international front, high inflation has persisted over the past few years because of the far-reaching implications of the Russia-Ukraine war that began just after the pandemic, affecting consumer demand.

But Western economies have been rebounding gradually with rising demand, for which retail sales have also been growing with the clearance of inventories of previous years in Europe and the US.

"Over the years, Bangladesh has established itself as one of the world's leading apparel manufacturers," it said.

"The growth of this sector can be attributed to competitive labour costs and a robust supply chain network," the report



added. The RMG sector contributed 11.68 percent to the gross domestic product (GDP) during the quarter.

The BB report said nine countries -- namely the US, Germany, the UK, Spain, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Canada, and Belgium -- were the primary destinations for Bangladesh's RMG exports.

These countries enabled roughly 70 percent of total RMG earnings in the second quarter of FY25.

Earnings from these markets increased by 7.13 percent compared to the preceding quarter.

Of the shipments, knitwear exports grew by 2.61 percent quarter-on-quarter to \$5.48 billion.

The growth was 18 percent compared to the same quarter of the previous year, driven by strong demand from the US and European Union.

Woven garment exports rose by 17.23 percent to \$4.88 billion, supported by increased consumer spending in the European and US markets.

The BB report said woven garment exports experienced notable growth, leading to a resurgence in consumer spending in major

markets, particularly in Europe and the US.

"This uptick was influenced by economic recoveries and a renewed interest in apparel. Moreover, a competitive edge through cost-effective production has been maintained, offering quality woven garments at attractive prices," it said.

The report said the RMG sector continues to be affected by supply chain disruptions and increased raw material costs.

The import value of raw materials such as cotton, synthetic fibres, yarn, and textile fabrics reached \$4.03 billion in the second quarter of FY25, accounting for 39 percent of total RMG export earnings.

Net export earnings stood at \$6.32 billion, a 12.67 percent rise from the previous quarter.

The BB report said Bangladesh's RMG sector demonstrated strong resilience and steady growth during the October-December period of FY25, driven by increased global demand and production efficiency.

"Looking ahead, the significant performance of the RMG sector will be reaffirmed during the whole of FY25, setting a positive outlook for the coming years and positioning Bangladesh as a leading apparel exporter on the global stage," the report said.

CPA threatens hiking storage charge fourfold if yards are not cleared of Ramadan imports

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has threatened hiking fourfold its container storage charge if consignees do not speed up the rate at which they take away imports by March 9.

The announcement came after the CPA found around 78 percent of its storage capacity occupied by import-laden containers just days ahead of Ramadan.

CPA Secretary Md Omar Faruk said the decision was taken to change the practices of some importers who take a lot of time in receiving their import-laden containers from the port yard.

A notice regarding the move was issued by the CPA director (traffic) on February 20 highlighting issues faced at the Chattogram port's yards and Kamalapur inland container depot (ICD) in Dhaka.

In the notice, the port authority urged importers to hasten taking deliveries of containers, otherwise the higher rates would be slapped from March 10.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior official of the port's traffic department said some fully loaded containers, meaning those occupied by a single importer's goods, had been lying at the port for more than 21 days after being unloaded from ships.

"Every year ahead of Ramadan, many importers who bring in large amounts of essentials keep their imports at the port for extended periods eyeing the Ramadan market. They use the port yards as warehouses," he said.

"They try to take delivery of imports after finding the market prices favourable," he also said.

However, such piling up of import containers disrupts regular port operations and leads to congestion, the official added.

Meanwhile, berth operators said the port has seen a rise in commodity imports ahead of Ramadan, while daily deliveries of a portion of import-laden containers have slowed over the past few weeks.

This has led to an increase in such containers at designated storage spaces.

The number of fully loaded containers at the port has reached 31,384 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), nearly 78 percent of the port's storage capacity of 40,368 TEUs.

For smooth operations, berth operators usually prefer that 40 percent of the yard capacity remain vacant. To avoid congestion, the CPA in its notice urged importers to collect their imports quickly.

Failure to do so would result in storage rents four times higher than usual, starting from the fifth day after unloading, following the first four-day free period, said the port authority.

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Company Name	Grand Prix	Gold	Silver	Bronze
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Asiatic Marketing Communications Limited		3		
Asiatic Marketing Communications Limited and Asiatic Mindshare Limited	1			
Asiatic Mindshare Limited		2	7	
bKash Limited				6
bKash Limited X FCB Bitopi			1	
Bread and Butter		1	2	
Dot Birth Limited		1	1	
Duckpeon Digital				1
FCB Bitopi		1	4	
Grey Advertising Bangladesh Limited			2	4
Lie To Eye			3	1
Madmen Digital				1
Mediacom Limited			4	6
Mpower Bangladesh				1
Starcom Bangladesh		1	2	3
Starcom Bangladesh and Backpage PR				2
The Bridge Interactive Limited				1
Walton Hi-Tech Industries PLC				1
Wavemaker Bangladesh			1	
Webable Digital		1	1	2

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