

Dollar set for second weekly gain

REUTERS, New York

The dollar gained on Friday after data showed slower than expected US jobs growth, suggesting the Federal Reserve could leave interest rates unchanged later this month.

The unemployment rate fell to 4.4 percent last month from a revised 4.5 percent in November, the US Labor Department reported on Friday, even as employers added 50,000 jobs in the month. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast a gain of 60,000.

The latest job market data appears to give the central bank a bit of breathing room to leave short-term borrowing costs where they are, as Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell last month signaled policymakers are inclined to do at least in the near term.

Financial markets had been bracing for a possible Supreme Court decision that could strike down President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs.

BD domain fees reduced by 36%

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL) has announced a reduction in registration and renewal fees for two categories of .bd domain names to encourage local use.

According to a statement issued yesterday, the price cut applies to .bd third-level domains and .bd second-level domains, both with names longer than two characters. The company said fees for these categories have been reduced by 36 percent.

For a .bd Third-Level Domain, such as abc.com.bd, the registration fee has been reduced from Tk 1,100 to Tk 700, while the renewal fee has fallen from Tk 1,600 to Tk 1,020.

For a .bd Second-Level Domain, such as abc.bd, the registration fee has been reduced from Tk 2,000 to Tk 1,280, and the renewal fee from Tk 2,500 to Tk 1,600.

Compared with .com domains, .bd domains are generally easier to obtain and more readily available. They also offer greater credibility for Bangladesh-based individuals and organisations, making them particularly suitable for government bodies and established institutions.

A .bd domain helps build a professional and trustworthy image in the local market and enhances acceptance among domestic users. It can improve rankings in Bangladesh-focused search results, and due to local registration policies, .bd domains are considered comparatively more secure.

Value added tax (VAT) will apply at the prescribed rate. All registrations and usage must comply with guidelines issued by the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), as well as tariff-related decisions approved by BTCL authorities.

The offer will remain valid for a limited period.

BTCL expects the price incentive to encourage wider adoption of .bd domains among individuals and organisations, contributing to the strengthening of the country's domestic digital ecosystem.

Garment accessories and packaging expo begins in Dhaka on Jan 14

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The 15th edition of the "Garments Accessories and Packaging Expo 2026 (GAPEXPO)" is going to be held in Dhaka between January 14 and 17 to showcase garment accessories, fabrics, yarn, and textile machinery from home and abroad.

The exposition will take place at the International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka, along with another expo, "Garment Technology Bangladesh 2026," said Md Shahriar, president of the Bangladesh Garments Accessories and Packaging Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGAPMEA), at a press conference at La Vinci Hotel Dhaka yesterday.

BGAPMEA will organise the fair jointly with ASK Trade & Exhibition Pvt Ltd, positioning the expo as a comprehensive meeting platform for the promotion, expansion, buyer sourcing, and networking of all stakeholders related to garment accessories and packaging products, raw materials, used and new machinery, apparel, yarn, fabrics, and related items.

In 2006, BGAPMEA organised the first GAPEXPO, where the number of exhibitors was only 36.

Like previous years, this year's fair will be organised across a total of 10 halls, including 4 main halls and additional half halls combined. Approximately 350 exhibitors will participate with 1,500 stalls.

Among them, exhibitors from more than 18 countries will take part, including companies from India, Japan, Vietnam, China, South Korea, Germany, and many others.

For the promotion of GAPEXPO, invitations have been extended

With the objective of ensuring an uninterrupted supply of accessories and packaging products to the ready-made garments export sector, and to safeguard, develop, and expand the interests of accessories and packaging manufacturing industries as exporters, BGAPMEA was established in 1991.

Initially, around 1989, the number of enterprises in this sector was fewer than 50. At present, BGAPMEA has more than 2,100 member companies.

Due to buyers' demand, a wide variety of products are now manufactured in this sector, and currently more than 62 types of products are being produced.

Total investment in the sector exceeds Tk 40,000 crore, which employs more than 700,000 people.

The Silicon Declaration isn't just a diplomatic communiqué," Helberg said. "It's meant to be an operational document for a new economic security consensus."

The programme, dubbed Pax Silica, seeks to safeguard the full technology supply chain, including critical minerals, advanced manufacturing, computing and data infrastructure. It is a key pillar of the Trump administration's economic statecraft strategy to reduce dependence on rival nations and strengthen cooperation among allied partners.

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The moves come against the backdrop of The Future Minerals Forum, a government-led global minerals and supply chain conference hosted by Saudi Arabia that will bring together senior officials, industry leaders and investors in Riyadh from January 13-15.

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