

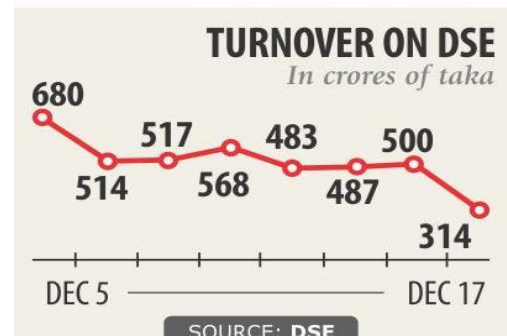
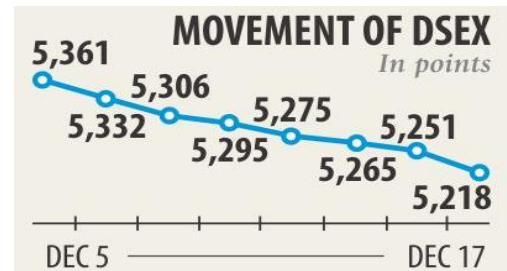
Stock Market

Political jitters sink stocks

BDT 6,134cr vanishes in seven days

The Daily Star, December 18, 2018

- The stockmarket is feeling the pinch of rising political tension centring the upcoming parliamentary election, stakeholders and investors said yesterday. They apprehend that if the fear intensifies, the market indicators would fall further and burn down investors' money.
- The benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, DSEX, has been falling for seven consecutive days. It dented investors' confidence and was well-reflected in the turnover. Turnover came down to a nine-month low of BDT 314 crore, down 37 % from that of the previous day. On March 27, the turnover stood at BDT 311 crore.
- The market lost nearly BDT 6,134 crore, or 1.60 %, of its value, in the last seven working days. The benchmark index of the premier bourse dropped 33 points, or 0.62 %, finishing the day at 5,218.01. The index fell 143.1 points, or 2.67 %, in the last seven trading days, according to the DSE.
- DSE data showed that stocks of Paramount Insurance rose 44.78 % to BDT 19.4, Sunlife Insurance was up 43 % to BDT 28.7 and JMI Syringes advanced 28 % to 256 BDT in the last two weeks. Yesterday Square Pharmaceuticals dominated the turnover chart with 4.07 lakh shares worth BDT 10.18 crore changing hands, followed by JMI Syringes, United Power, Brac Bank and Anlima Yarn Dyeing.
- Of the traded issues, 61 advanced and 231 declined while 47 securities closed unchanged. Sunlife Insurance was the day's best performer with a 9.96 % gain while Jute Spinners was the worst loser, shedding 9.88 %. Chittagong stocks also fell with the bourse's benchmark index, CSCX, declining 56.51 points, or 0.57 %, to finish the day at 9,697.83.



<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/political-jitters-sink-stocks-1675132>

Fire at Saiham Textile cost BDT 700 mn

The Financial Express, December 17, 2018

- Saiham Textile Mills informed that fire at warehouse at Noyapara area in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj district losses approximately BDT 700 mn on December 11. Fire had been broken out in the mill stock godown at about 1:30am on the day, said the company in a disclosure posted on Dhaka Stock Exchange website on Monday.
- The fire quickly spread through raw material and engulf the whole warehouse. Teams of fire brigades from three districts relentlessly tried to bring the fire under control and it was under controlled after 20 hours, it said. The insurance is fully industrial all risk policy (I.A.R) covered of the warehouse including entire stock.
- Immediately the insurance company was informed to enquire and ascertain the losses incurred due to fire and they have already visited the site on the day of occurrence to ascertain the quantum of loss and it is under process. Production, delivery and other activities of the factory is absolutely normal and there is no impact of the operation of the mill due to the fire incident.

- The local administration and many other senior officials visited the spot and extended all co-operations. Saiham Textile, which was listed on the Dhaka bourse in 1988, closed at BDT 55.90 each on December 13 last.

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/fire-at-saiham-textile-cost-BDT-700-mn-1545029398>

JMI Syringes share price soaring sans PSI

The Financial Express, December 17, 2018

- The share price of JMI Syringes & Medical Devices is soaring without having any undisclosed price sensitive information. Within a week, the company's share price jumped more than 28 % or BDT 55 each to close at BDT 255.20 on December 13. Its share price was BDT 201 a week ago on December 05.
- The company's share traded between BDT 67.10 and BDT 270.50 each in the last one year. Following the 'abnormal' price hike, the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) served show-cause notice on the company on December 13. The company, however, informed the DSE that there was no undisclosed price sensitive information for 'unusual' price hike of its shares.
- The company has also requested the investors not to consider any rumors related to the company and take their investment decisions prudently. JMI Syringes, which was listed on the Dhaka bourse in 2013, recommended 30 % cash dividend for the year ended on June 30, 2018.
- In 2017, the company also paid 30 % cash dividend. The company's earnings per share (EPS) was BDT 1.00 for July-September 2018 as against BDT 0.78 for July-September 2017. The net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS) was BDT 5.00 for July-September 2018 as against negative BDT 3.91 for July-September 2017.
- The net asset value (NAV) per share was BDT 72.22 as on September 30, 2018 and BDT 68.39 as on September 30, 2017. The company's paid-up capital is BDT 110 mn and authorised capital is BDT 1.0 bn, while the total number of securities is 11 mn. The sponsor-directors own 49.31 % stake in the company while the institutional investors own 14.63 %, foreign investors 11.82 % and the general public 24.24 % as on November 30, 2018, the DSE data shows.

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/jmi-syringes-share-price-soaring-sans-psi-1545025733>

Teletalk finally launches 4G

The Daily Star, December 18, 2018

- State-owned mobile operator Teletalk finally launched 4G (fourth generation) mobile data services commercially in the capital, some 10 months behind the market's remaining three private wireless carriers. Teletalk's managing director, Shahab Uddin, expects to reach all of Dhaka by December while expanding to Chattogram within the next couple of weeks.
- The service has initially been made available in Gulshan, Niketan, Baridhara, Banani, the University of Dhaka, the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Ramna, Motijheel, Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Shyamoli and Farmgate.
- The private entities have already commenced the services across the country. This stands in stark contrast to the launch of 3G, which was led by Teletalk with much hype in 2012, around a year ahead of its competitors. The telecom regulator has fixed 7 Mbps as the minimum speed the mobile operators have to offer for 4G. However the obligation is not met all the time.
- Existing 3G users of Teletalk can automatically migrate to the service by sending "4G" as a text to 111, said the officials. Shahab Uddin informed that they would not go for any advertisement campaign as they were already late in arrival.

- The operator has taken up a BDT 987 crore project using its own funds for the 4G network. Under it, 550 towers have already been established, mostly in big cities, and the process to set up another 550 in district headquarters is ongoing, according to the officials. Teletalk currently has 34.93 lakh active connections, which is around 2 % of the market share. Only a few of those are regularly active.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/online/teletalk-4g-internet-service-launches-in-dhaka-bangladesh-1674880>

Economy

Convert school banking accounts to savings accounts when students turn 18

New Age, December 18, 2018

- Bangladesh Bank on Monday asked all the scheduled banks to convert existing school banking accounts to general savings account when owners of the accounts would turn 18 years old. To this end, the central bank on Monday issued a circular asking all the banks to follow the BB stipulated format to report BB regarding the progress on school banking.
- BB on November 2, 2010 asked banks to launch the deposit product for students to infuse them with the urge to save up. Afterwards, the central bank issued full guidelines on school banking in 2013 and asked the banks to report on its progress in April, 2015.
- Fifty-six of the country's 57 scheduled banks are now implementing the programme. Under the programme, students below the age of 18 are allowed to open bank accounts by keeping a minimum balance. The minimum balance ranges between BDT 100 and BDT 500 depending on bank.
- As of September this year, total deposit in the school banking accounts increased to BDT 1,428.14 crore from BDT 1,254.23 crore as of September 30 last year. The number of bank accounts opened by schoolchildren rose to 16.10 lakh as of September 30 this year from 13.87 lakh as of September 30 last year. As of September 30, 2018, the amount of schoolchildren's deposits in the private commercial banks stood at BDT 1,196.65 crore, which is 83.79 % of the total deposit amount.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/59105/convert-school-banking-accounts-to-savings-accounts-when-students-turn-18>

Bangladesh Bank eases farm loan policy

The Financial Express, December 18, 2018

- Bangladesh Bank (BB) issued a fresh rescheduled policy on short-term agriculture loans on Monday aiming to boost production through facilitating farmers across the country, officials said. Under the policy, the banks are allowed to reschedule such agriculture loans under 'banker-client' relationship through relaxation of down payment.
- In some cases, such loans can be rescheduled even without any down payment, according to a notification, issued by the central bank of Bangladesh. The farmers will be eligible for getting fresh agriculture loans without depositing any compromised amount after rescheduling such loans.
- Similar rescheduled policy on short-term agriculture loans was announced on February 23, 2015 that was continuing until December, 2015. It will also help creating employment opportunities across the country, the BB official added. The BB's latest move came against the backdrop of falling trend in the disbursement of farm credit during the July-October period of the current fiscal year (FY).
- Meanwhile, agriculture loans disbursement dropped by nearly 14 % or BDT 8.53 bn in the four months of the FY 2018-19, despite the central bank's close monitoring. Disbursement of farm credit came down to BDT 53.52 bn during the period under review from BDT 62.05 bn in the same period of the previous fiscal, the BB data showed.

- Of the BDT 53.52 bn, eight public banks disbursed BDT 26.08 bn, and the remaining BDT 27.44 bn was disbursed by the private commercial banks (PCBs) and foreign commercial banks (FCBs). The recovery of farm loans, however, rose to BDT 65.56 bn during the July-October period of FY 19 from BDT 61.78 bn in the same period of the previous fiscal.
- The volume of classified loans of farmers increased by nearly 5.0 % or BDT 2.53 bn to BDT 53.96 bn during the July-October period of the FY 19 from BDT 51.43 bn in the same period last fiscal.

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh-bank-eases-farm-loan-policy-1545105114>

Import growth moderate

The Daily Star, December 18, 2018

- Bangladesh's import maintained moderate growth of 9 % between July and October in the current fiscal year, giving some respite to balance of payments which was under pressure. According to data from the central bank, letters of credit settlement stood at \$17.64 bn in the first four months of 2018-19, up from \$16.19 bn in the same period a year ago.
- The BoP breathed a sigh of relief as the moderate import growth has already narrowed the trade deficit, Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, told The Daily Star on Sunday. In 2017-18, import payment surpassed \$58 bn, the highest in the country's history. The higher import created a major crisis for the BoP as both the trade balance and the current account posted a record deficit.
- Between July and October, import of petroleum products, however, swelled 62.91 % to \$1.42 bn as power plants' demand for fuel oil increased for the generation of electricity. The country will benefit from the current oil price, now standing at nearly \$60 per barrel, which had been hovering around \$81 a few months ago, Mansur said.
- Import of industrial raw materials was ramped up nearly 12 % year-on-year to \$6.38 bn during the four-month period. From July to October, import of capital machinery amounted to \$1.64 bn, down from \$1.74 bn in the same period last fiscal year.
- The bumper production of rice in recent seasons also played an important role in bringing down the import of food grains to \$446 mn, down from \$875 mn during the same period last fiscal year, central bank data showed.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/import-growth-moderate-1675117>

BD decides to cancel Dhk-Ctg rail project

The Financial Express, December 18, 2018

- The government has decided to scrap the Dhaka-Chattogram high speed rail line project as China complained that the signing of a MoU on the scheme between Bangladesh Railway (BR) and a Chinese company was illegal and invalid.
- In a rare incident, China has expressed its shock over the signing of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the state-owned BR and China Railway Construction Cooperation, International (CRCCI) on the Dhaka-Chattogram high speed rail line construction project.
- According to the regulations, it said, no Chinese company is allowed to sign any international documents with the line ministry or the owner before the project is put into storage by the government of China. Earlier in June this year, BR signed a contract to appoint consultancy services for carrying out a feasibility study and detailed design for the construction of Dhaka-Chattogram via Cumilla/Laksam high speed railway project.

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bd-decides-to-cancel-dhk-ctg-rail-project-1545105494>

International

Singapore's non-oil domestic exports down 2.6pc in Nov

The Financial Express, December 17, 2018

- The total non-oil domestic exports (NODX) of Singapore declined by 2.6 % in November from the high base a year ago, after the recalculated 8.2 % year-on-year growth in October.
- According to a media release, issued by government agency Enterprise Singapore on Monday, on a month-on-month seasonally adjusted basis, the NODX decreased by 4.2 % in November to 14.9 bn Singapore dollars (about 10.83 bn US dollars), due to the decline in non-electronic NODX which outweighed the rise in electronics.
- In a breakdown of Singapore's total NODX, Singapore's electronic exports grew by 4.5 % year on year in November, after the 3.6 % decrease in the previous month. Meanwhile, Singapore's non-electronic exports declined by 5.2 % year on year, after the 12.7 % increase in October, reports Xinhua. Among Singapore's top 10 NODX markets, six markets saw Singapore's NODX to them decreased in November.

<http://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/global/singapores-non-oil-domestic-exports-down-26pc-in-nov-1545031325>

Google to spend \$1 bn on new campus in New York

New Age, December 18, 2018

- Alphabet Inc's Google is investing more than \$1 bn on a new campus in New York, becoming the second major technology company after Amazon to pick America's financial capital to expand and create thousands of jobs. The 1.7 mn square-foot campus, called Google Hudson Square, will include leased properties at Hudson Street and Washington Street, the company said in a blog post on Monday. Google hopes to start moving into the building by 2022.
- The plan to invest outside its home base mirror those of other US tech giants such as Apple Inc, which said last week it would spend \$1 bn to build a new campus in Austin, Texas. Last month, Amazon.com Inc said it would open offices in New York and the Washington, DC area, creating more than 25,000 jobs.
- Mountain View, California-based Google's move to invest in prime real estate on the Lower West Side of Manhattan also underscores the growing importance of New York as a hub for innovation and an incubator for technology companies. With a plethora of white-collar workers and good infrastructure, the city provides a better option to other places that would require more investment.
- Google's first New York office at 111 Eighth Avenue is one of the city's largest buildings that it bought in 2010 for \$1.77 bn. Earlier this year, the company announced a \$2.4 bn purchase of the Manhattan Chelsea Market. It also has leased space on Pier 57 jutting into the Hudson, which will create a four-block campus.

<http://www.newagebd.net/article/59115/google-to-spend-1-bn-on-new-campus-in-new-york>

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