

Key News

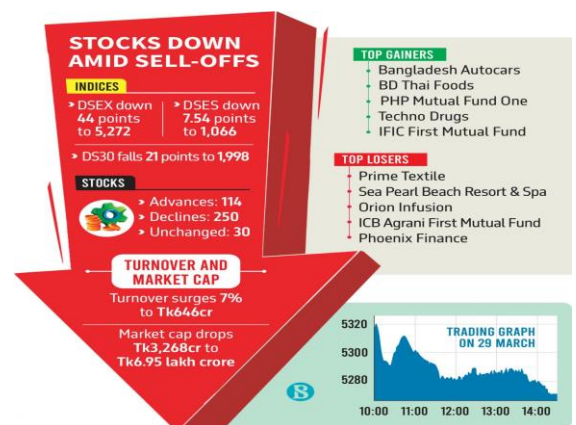
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Stock Market & Company

Stocks slide further amid escalating Middle East war

The Business Standard, Mar 29, 2026

- Stocks at the Dhaka bourse declined further today (29 March) as investor sentiment weakened amid the escalating US-Israeli war on Iran.
- Since the war began on 28 February, most trading sessions have witnessed sell-offs, dragging down share prices and overall market capitalisation, although a brief rebound was recorded in the first session after the Eid holiday on 25 March when the benchmark index gained 31 points.
- Yesterday, the DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, fell by 44 points to close at 5,272, as investors adopted a cautious stance, leading to declines in 63% of traded stocks.
- Besides that, DSES, the Shariah index declined 7 points to 1,066, and DS30, the blue-chip index, fell 21 points to 1,998.
- Despite cautious sentiment in the market, turnover on the DSE surged 7% to Tk646 crore, while market capitalisation – the total value of companies' outstanding shares – dropped by Tk3,268 crore to Tk6.95 lakh crore.



<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/stocks-slide-further-amid-escalating-middle-east-war-1397141>

Runner Automobiles yet to finalise investment, financial impact of BYD deal

The Business Standard, Mar 29, 2026

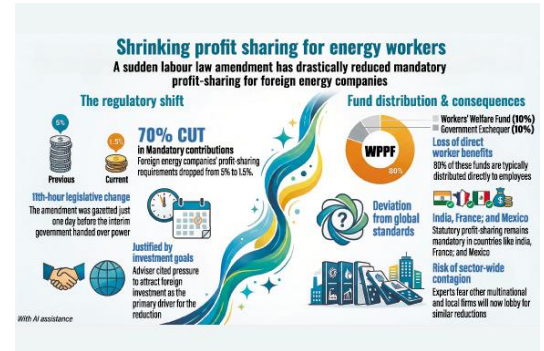
- The final investment size and financial implications of the agreement between Runner Automobiles PLC and Chinese electric vehicle maker BYD have yet to be determined, the company said in a disclosure to investors.
- In response to a query from the Dhaka Stock Exchange, Runner Automobiles stated that the Master Supply and Manufacturing Agreement (MSMA) currently serves as a preliminary framework to assess the project's feasibility, implementation timeline and expected financial outcomes.
- The company's share price closed at Tk40.30 on the Dhaka bourse today (29 March).
- Earlier, Runner informed the DSE that it would assemble and supply electric vehicles of BYD, following the signing of an agreement with BYD Auto Industry Company.
- The board of directors approved the MSMA on 20 March, prompting the DSE to seek further clarification, including details of the agreement and its potential financial impact.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/stocks/runner-automobiles-yet-finalise-investment-financial-impact-byd-deal-1397151>

Interim gov't's rushed move risks depriving workers

The Business Standard, Mar 29, 2026

- Foreign energy companies' mandatory contribution to workers' profit-sharing funds has been reduced from 5 per cent to 1.5 per cent ahead of the elected government assuming power, raising concerns that other firms may follow suit and deprive workers.
- The interim government issued a gazette notification amending the labour law just a day before handing over power to the elected government on February 17.
- Experts and workers' leaders have questioned the haste behind the move, saying it allows companies such as Chevron Bangladesh and Tullow Bangladesh to get away with sharing a smaller slice of their profits with workers.
- Labour leaders say the interim government proceeded with the revision of the law targeting the Workers' Profit Participation Fund (WPPF) despite objections raised during meetings organised to discuss the issue.
- "The interim government should not have taken such a decision. The elected government should reconsider it," said Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a non-government think tank in Bangladesh.



<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/interim-govts-rushed-move-risks-depriving-workers>

Bank Asia to buy Bank Alfalah's Bangladesh operations at Tk 580cr

The Daily Star, Mar 29, 2026

- Bank Asia PLC, a listed private bank, is set to acquire the Bangladesh operations of Bank Alfalah in a deal valued at Tk 580 crore, equivalent to approximately \$47.5 million.
- According to a disclosure published by Bank Alfalah at the Pakistan Stock Exchange, the decision was approved by 96.5 percent of its shareholders at the annual general meeting held on March 26.
- The acquisition is contingent upon approval from the Bangladesh Bank, the State Bank of Pakistan, and other relevant regulatory bodies, as well as consent from Bank Asia's shareholders. To this end, Bank Asia will hold an extraordinary general meeting on April 12.
- In May last year, Bank Asia signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bank Alfalah to acquire its Bangladesh operations, subject to regulatory approval and completion of legal formalities.
- The sale process began in April last year. Legal formalities for the transfer of assets and liabilities are still pending, while core banking system migration must also be aligned.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bank-asia-buy-bank-alfalabs-bangladesh-operations-tk-580cr-4138651>

Economy & Industry

Stagnant Saarc exports reveal Bangladesh's trade risks

The Daily Star, Mar 30, 2026

- Bangladesh's exports have become a powerhouse for its economy, increasing by some \$10 billion over the last six years. But when it comes to its immediate South Asian neighbours, the outward trade has remained trapped in a narrow range, failing to grow by even a billion dollars throughout.
- Total global export earnings reached \$43.6 billion in fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25), up from \$33 billion six years ago, Bangladesh Bank (BB) data shows.
- Meanwhile, exports to seven member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) stood at just \$1.9 billion in FY25, a mere 4.4 percent of the total. The figure was \$1.4 billion in FY19.
- A recent report by the central bank on the country's economic engagement points out that while Bangladesh's relationships with major partners in the European Union, the United States and the Middle East are well documented, "its economic linkages within Saarc remain surprisingly underexplored yet vitally important."
- Experts identify persistent non-tariff barriers, limited connectivity, logistical bottlenecks and weak regional cooperation frameworks as major constraints to expansion.

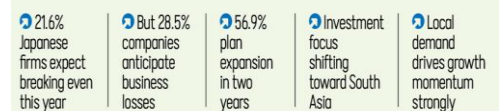


<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/stagnant-saarc-exports-reveal-bangladeshs-trade-risks-4138761>

Half of Japanese firms in Bangladesh expect profits in 2026

The Daily Star, Mar 30, 2026

- Nearly half of Japanese firms doing business in Bangladesh are expecting to post operating profits this year, thanks to rebounding business confidence after national polls, strong domestic demand and cost competitiveness, according to a survey.
- The number is up by more than 8 percentage points from 2024 and stands at the highest level since 2019.
- "Profit growth is expected to be driven mainly by three factors: greater political and social stability after the election, rising expansion plans among Japanese firms, and growing opportunities in non-manufacturing sectors," said Kazuiki Kataoka, country representative of Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro).
- The Japanese government-backed agency promoting trade and investment conducted the survey titled "Business Conditions Survey 2025". The report will be officially released by Jetro's Dhaka office today.
- Currently, around 340 to 350 Japanese companies operate in Bangladesh, and the number is gradually increasing.



<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/half-japanese-firms-bangladesh-expect-profits-2026-4138666>

Pharma sector faces supply risks amid Iran war fallout

The Daily Star, Mar 30, 2026

- Bangladesh's pharmaceutical industry is facing mounting pressure as the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran disrupts global supply chains, threatening the availability of raw materials, pushing up freight costs and raising concerns over production stability.

- The issue was highlighted at the inaugural session of the 17th Asia Pharma Expo 2026 and Asia Lab Expo 2026, held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center in Dhaka's Purbachal yesterday.
- Health Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Hossain, who inaugurated the three-day exposition as the chief guest, said the government is closely monitoring the evolving situation and stressed that ensuring access to quality medicines remains a top priority.
- He also reiterated a zero-tolerance stance on corruption and irregularities in the sector. Industry leaders said the Gulf region unrest has already started to affect the import of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and other essential inputs, many of which rely on complex shipping routes through the Middle East.
- "The war has disrupted logistics, increased freight costs and caused shipment delays," said Abdul Muktedir, president of the Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI). "Rerouting of sea and air cargo is making imports more expensive and unpredictable."

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/pharma-sector-faces-supply-risks-amid-iran-war-fallout-4138721>

International

Ship insurers juggle war risks for perilous Gulf route

The Daily Star, Mar 30, 2026

- Iranian forces' threat to ships in the crucial Strait of Hormuz has driven up payments for the insurance that underpins the world freight industry.
- Here are facts and figures about how maritime insurance works -- and the impact from the war sparked by US-Israeli strikes on Iran, which has virtually cut off shipping in the strait.
- After the fighting broke out on February 28, some insurers served so-called cancellation notices for war risk policies to "reassess... and then reinstate that cover at adjusted terms", the International Union of Marine Insurance said in a statement.
- Despite the name, "a 'Notice of Cancellation' does not, necessarily, end the cover. War cover remains available for owners and operators wishing to take it."
- Executives in London -- the world's top shipping insurance market -- insisted captains were avoiding the route to protect their crews, not because they could not get insured. "Safety concerns, not insurance availability, (are) driving reduced vessel traffic," headlined the Lloyd's Market Association (LMA), a trade body for the London ship insurance industry, in a report.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/ship-insurers-juggle-war-risks-perilous-gulf-route-4138751>

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Bank Asia Securities Limited (BASL) is one of the leading full-service brokerage companies in Bangladesh. The company was formed in 2009 and running its operation as a majority owned subsidiary of Bank Asia Limited. BASL offers full-fledged standard brokerage services for retail, institutional and foreign clients with a dedicated team of skilled professionals. The company is currently providing the brokerage services under the membership of Dhaka Stock Exchange Limited (DSE).

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