

DSEX	6,192.57	▲	34.49	Gold (Ounce)	\$1,280.70	▲	Dollar	81.25 (Buy)	▲	82.25 (Sell)	REPO Rate (16/10/2017)	3.44%
DSE30	2,244.10	▲	14.22	Oil (Barrel)	\$54.30	▲	Euro	93.52 (Buy)	▼	97.88 (Sell)	REPO Rate (15/10/2017)	3.46%
Source: DSE				Source: Yahoo Finance				Source: One Bank Limited				Source: Bangladesh Bank (W AV)

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National News

China to set up technical institute in Bangladesh

The Chinese government is keen to set up a modern technical institute in Bangladesh to create world standard skilled human resources to mitigate the current demand of skillful manpower for sustaining the country's fast growing development, reports BSS.

"There is a lot of demand of skilled manpower in the country's technical sector. The Chinese assistance will play a vital role to mitigate the current demand," said Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, media affairs adviser to the Prime Minister, while meeting with a seven-member Chinese team at DBC News office in the capital on Wednesday, said a press release on Thursday.

Deputy Director General, Foreign Affairs Office of Gansu Province of China Yang Yonggang led the Chinese delegation that included President of Lanzhou Jiaotong University of China Yang Zijiang.

Yang Zijiang said Bangladesh power sector is growing in a very fast pace and most of the power plants here are being installed by the foreign companies, including big Chinese enterprises.

"But Bangladesh doesn't have that much local skilled human resources to meet the demand," he added.

Keeping this in mind, he said, they come here to provide technical supports to build a technical institute here for creating high skilled international standard manpower to sustain Bangladesh's fast growing development.

The technical institute, with special focus on power engineering courses, will be set up under the supervision of Bangladesh China Institute of Technology (BCIT).

BCIT Chairman Masum M Moshin and Managing Director Charlie Cha and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DBC News M Monzurul Islam were also present at the meeting.

As piloting of the technical institute, the BCIT, with collaboration of Lanzhou Jiaotong University of China, is going to initiate a four-year undergraduate Power Engineering degree at Stamford University here from January. The power engineering course, following Chinese curriculum, will be started at Stamford University from January next year with several numbers of chances professors.

Source: <http://www.theindependentbd.com/post/123144>

Chief justice steps down

Resignation letter sent to the Bangabhaban, will be placed to the president today

Amid flak from the ruling quarters over different issues including the 16th amendment verdict, Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha resigned yesterday.

Now abroad, he sent his resignation letter to the Bangabhaban, the official residence of President Abdul Hamid, in the morning, President's Press Secretary Md Joynal Abedin told The Daily Star.

What reason Justice Sinha cited in the letter was yet to be known as the press secretary could not give details or say how it was sent.

The resignation letter will be placed before the president tomorrow (today) as Saturday is weekly holiday, said Joynal Abedin yesterday afternoon.

Talking to this correspondent, Law Minister Anisul Huq said he was yet to talk to the president over the issue and he did not know who will be the new chief justice.

“The appointment of the chief justice is an absolute prerogative of the president under the constitution. It is not my responsibility,” he said yesterday afternoon.

The minister said Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, the senior most judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court after Sinha, will continue to carry out the responsibility of the chief justice, under Article 97 of the constitution until a new chief justice is appointed.

Article 97 states, "If the office of the chief justice becomes vacant, or if the president is satisfied that the chief justice is, on account of absence, illness, or any other cause, unable to perform the functions of his office, those functions shall, until some other person has entered upon that office, or until the chief justice has resumed his duties, as the case may be, be performed by the next most senior Judge of the Appellate Division."

Contacted yesterday, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said there is no provision of dismissing the resignation letter.

Justice Sinha left Singapore for Canada on Friday to see his ailing daughter when his 39-day leave on "health grounds" expired, said a close aide to him. He flew to Singapore from Australia for treatment on November 6.

He went on leave from October 3.

On October 12, a gazette notification issued by the law ministry said Justice Wahhab will carry out the duties of the chief justice till November 10 or until Sinha rejoins office.

Justice Sinha left for Australia the following night, months before the date of his retirement on January 31.

Just before leaving the capital, he said he was not sick, contradicting the government's claim that he went on leave on health grounds earlier this month.

"I'm not sick. I'm not fleeing. I'll come back. I'm a little embarrassed. I'm the guardian of the judiciary. I'm leaving for a brief period in the interest of the judiciary, and so that the judiciary is not polluted," he told reporters.

"I've no antipathy to anybody. It's my firm belief that the government has been misled. This is my statement [the written statement]. I won't say anything more."

In a written statement, he said, "I'm fully well, but the way a political quarter, lawyers, and especially some honourable ministers of the government and the honourable prime minister are criticising me recently over a verdict made me embarrassed."

Some people within the government have wrongly interpreted the verdict in the 16th amendment case and then presented it to the prime minister, making her upset, he said.

Sinha said he was a "bit worried about the independence of the judiciary".

"Because citing the senior most judge [of the Supreme Court] who is now acting as the chief justice, the law minister yesterday [on October 12] said that the judge acting as the chief justice will bring changes to the Supreme Court administration soon."

He further said, "There is no precedence of interference in the administration of the chief justice by the judge acting as the chief justice or the government. He [the judge acting as the CJ] will only discharge daily work as per the routine. It has always been like this."

"If any interference is made in the chief justice's administration, it can be easily assumed that the government is interfering in the higher court and this will lead to further deterioration of relationship between the judiciary and the government. It would not bring any good to the state."

The BNP and the Supreme Court Bar Association, which is dominated by pro-BNP lawyers, have been alleging that the government forced Justice SK Sinha to go on leave, but the law minister and the attorney general dismissed it.

On October 14, a day after Sinha left for Australia, the SC said Sinha is facing 11 charges, including money laundering and corruption.

The same day, the attorney general said Sinha's rejoining the office of the CJ after his return from abroad is "a far cry."

TIME LINE

August 18, 2014: Cabinet approved a proposal on amending the constitution to restore parliament's authority to impeach Supreme Court judges on grounds of misconduct or incapacity by abolishing the Supreme Judicial Council.

Sept 17, 2014: Parliament unanimously passed the 16th constitutional amendment bill, empowering itself to remove SC judges for misbehaviour and incapacity.

May 5, 2016: High Court declared the amendment illegal, unconstitutional and against the principles of the separation of state powers and the independence of the judiciary.

May 5, 2016: Three ministers and several treasury and opposition bench MPs lambasted a High Court verdict that scrapped the 16th amendment to the constitution.

July 3, 2017: The Supreme Court upheld the HC verdict, rejecting the government appeal against the HC verdict.

July 9, 2017: Senior ministers and MPs from the treasury and opposition benches launched a blistering attack on the High Court and the Supreme Court for judgments against the Jatiya Sangsad's power to remove judges for incapacity or misconduct.

On August 1, 2017: The full text of the SC verdict was released with some critical observation on governance, political culture and parliament.

On August 7, 2017: Some senior ministers at cabinet meeting expressed strong disagreement with the SC over the restoration of Supreme Judicial Council for removal of SC judges on grounds of gross misconduct or incapacity.

August 9, 2017: Food Minister Qamrul Islam if the chief justice doesn't step down by this month, lawyers would launch a vigorous movement next month to remove him.

August 18, 2017: Liberation Wars Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq Chief Justice SK Sinha has breached his oath of office by making unnecessary and irrelevant observations on the verdict and, therefore, lost the right to continue as chief justice.

On August 22, 2017: Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, member secretary of Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad, demanded resignation of Chief Justice SK Sinha and scrapping of the SC verdict and threatened of a movement otherwise.

On September 13, 2017: Parliament unanimously passed a resolution for taking "proper" legal steps towards cancellation of the 16th amendment verdict and expunction of the chief justice's "unconstitutional, objectionable and irrelevant" observations in the verdict.

On October 2, 2017: Law Minister said the CJ will go on a month's leave from October 3 on health grounds.

On October 13, 2017: Justice Sinha said he was not sick as he left the country for Australia.

On October 14, 2017: SC in a statement said Justice Sinha was facing 11 charges including "graft and money laundering".

November 11, 2017: CJ Sinha resigned from his office.

Talking to The Daily yesterday, he said the government will now look into the 11 allegations. Justice Sinha, appointed 21st chief justice of the country in January 2015, came under fire ever since the SC on August 1 this year released the full text of the verdict, scrapping the 16th amendment to the constitution. The amendment had empowered parliament to remove judges for misconduct or incapacity. Following the verdict, the prime minister and senior ministers came down heavily on the CJ, with many of them calling for his resignation. Some pro-AL organisations, including Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad, held protest programmes against him. Parishad leaders threatened to launch a tougher agitation if he didn't step down. On September 13, the Jatiya Sangsad passed a resolution calling for legal steps to nullify the SC verdict. The law minister on several occasions said the government would seek review of the judgment. In its full verdict, the SC made some observations, which were critical of the country's present political culture. Talking to the media on August 13, the law minister was particularly critical of the CJ's observation that "no nation, no country is made of or by one person". This was irrelevant in the case at hand and also contrary to history, he said. "There is no doubt that history has been distorted here." The minister also said neither the country's independence nor its declaration happened overnight. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared it after earning the people's mandate through a political movement. "It will be a crime if I distort it." While presiding over the Appellate Division bench, Justice Sinha had expressed annoyance and dissatisfaction several times at the government's failure to issue a gazette notification on the rules determining the discipline of lower court judges. On April 4 this year, he said they (judges) were hurt when the government referred to the president, who is respected and acceptable, regarding the issuance of the gazette notification. On March 28, he expressed discontent with the government for seeking more time for issuing the gazette notification. On December 12 last year, Sinha said the president was misinformed about the issuance of the gazette. He came up with the observation a day after the law ministry had issued a notification saying that the president decided not to issue a separate gazette notification on the conduct rules. at the programme.

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/chief-justice-steps-down-1489819>

BTRC likely to lose rights over unused balance in blocked SIMs

Mobile phone operators are likely to get relief from paying the government the unused balance in the SIM cards that would be blocked by the telecom regulator for various reasons, especially for illegal voice-over internet protocol calls. Mobile operators, however, will have to return the unused balance to its owner if claimed, said officials of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission. They said that a proposed amendment to the 4G licencing guidelines that would be passed by the telecom regulator in the upcoming commission meeting following instruction from prime minister's ICT advisor, and posts and telecommunication ministry. The instruction was made based on a meeting between the mobile phone operators and the government high officials on the proposed 4G licencing guidelines, they said. As per the BTRC approved draft 4G licencing guidelines, that would be revised, it was mandatory for all the operators to pay the BTRC the remaining balance amount of the identified illegal prepaid VoIP callers and unsuccessful or fake SIM registration of service connection fund at the time of deactivating them. It was also mentioned in the guidelines drafted earlier that there would not be any rights of the mobile network operators over the forfeited account balance of the illegal VoIP callers. Whereas, it was also mandatory for the operators to pay the remaining balance of such SIM cards within ten days of the following month. In case of deactivation of SIM cards for illegal VoIP calls, mobile operators would keep the remaining balance, while operators would have to pay the balance to its owner, if claimed, for deactivation of SIM cards for any other reason. Such specification about the unused balance would help the operators, while the government would lose its rights over the forfeited fund, BTRC officials said. Such initiative might foil another BTRC move to take stand against the mobile phone operators for non-payment of unused balance in the SIM cards which were blocked by the telecom regulator for various reasons. Country's leading mobile phone operator Grameenphone, in February this year, deposited Tk 7.33 crore to the telecom

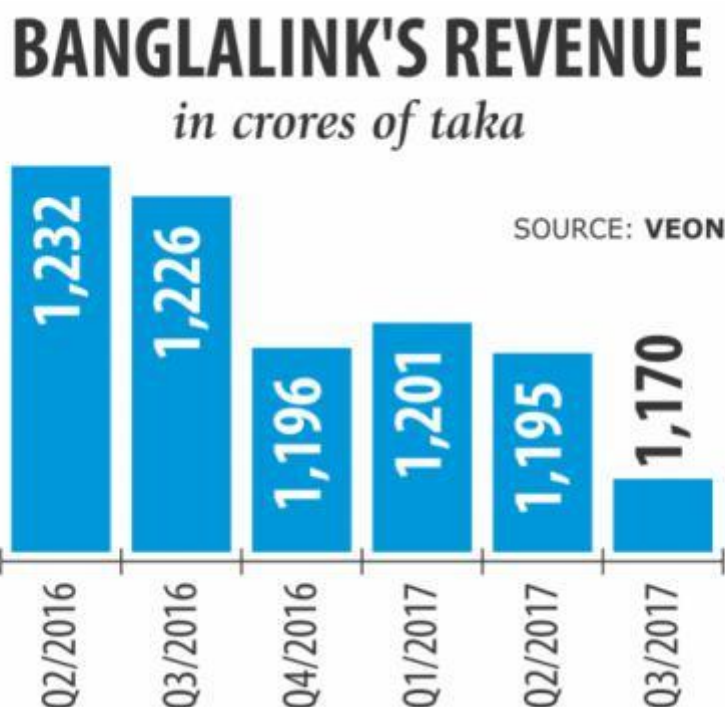
regulator against the unused balance in the connections that were blocked between 2008 and 2014. While other operators— Banglalink, Robi, Airtel, Citycell and Teletalk — were yet to pay any fund to the commission in this regard.

Airtel, formerly known as Warid Telecom, has already merged with Robi in November, 2016.

Apart from the unused balance issued, the government acknowledged almost all the issues raised by the mobile phone operators about the 4G licencing guidelines, BTRC officials said.

Source: <http://www.newagebd.net/article/28107/btrc-likely-to-lose-rights-over-unused-balance-in-blocked-sims>

Banglalink's revenue falls 4.57pc in Q3



Banglalink's revenue in the third quarter of the year declined 4.57 percent to Tk 1,170 crore -- the lowest in nine quarters -- due to stiff competition and the growing tendency among subscribers to use multiple connections.

But it was not disclosed if the operator made any profit during the quarter in the financial report released by its parent company Veon on Thursday.

Banglalink's data revenue rose 28 percent to Tk 170 crore in the third quarter of the year on the back of acceleration of active data customer growth of 17.1 percent year-on-year.

Customer per data usage more than doubled to 523 megabytes a month.

Fuelled by aggressive customer acquisition campaigns, Bangla-link's subscriber base widened 8.4 percent year-on-year in the quarter, taking the total tally to 3.14 crore and reversing the negative trend of the previous quarter. Banglalink's gross income decreased and customer base shrank, meaning its average revenue per user declined 8.6 percent year-on-year to Tk 121.

The operator lost 38 lakh connections during last year's SIM re-verification process. As a result, its earnings dropped, said a senior official of the operator.

The report also said Banglalink is exploring alternatives to improve its capital structure ahead of 4G spectrum auction likely to take place in the first half next year, as the operator would have to spend heavily to buy spectrum and roll out 4G service.

Veon, a multinational telecom company headquartered in Amsterdam, said it is evaluating all options to improve Banglalink's capital structures.

"The proceeds from any such activity may be used for refinancing of existing debt and general corporate purposes (including capital expenditures)," said the financial statement without giving any specifics.

Jean-Yves Charlier, chief executive officer of Veon, had told reporters in Dhaka in July that Banglalink is ready to sell all of its 9,000 towers to third parties in order to pool resources to invest to improve network quality.

The intention was made clear after Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission decided to award three licences to manage mobile towers and separate telecom business from operators' network infrastructure.

Banglalink is keen to invest \$1 billion over the next three years to improve its service quality as well as support the government's Digital Bangladesh vision.

Since inception, the country's third largest mobile operator by subscriber base has invested over \$2.51 billion in Bangladesh and contributed \$2.4 billion to the national exchequer.

The operator's 3G coverage reached 70 percent population.

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/banglalinks-revenue-falls-457pc-q3-1489996>

Govt moves to boost remittance inflow

Inter-ministerial panel comes up with 18 proposals

An inter-ministerial committee has come up with 18 proposals to boost the remittance inflow through the formal channel and ward off the rising menace of digital hundi.

The development comes after the government formed a committee to investigate the shrinking inflow of remittance, a major source of foreign currency for Bangladesh, since fiscal 2015-16.

Remittance inflow in fiscal 2016-17 was the lowest in six years, which plunged the country's current account balance in the deficit zone for the first time in five years, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

The committee, headed by Md Fazlul Haque, additional secretary of the finance ministry's bank and financial institutions division, has submitted its report on September 10.

The proposals include taking legal action against the vested quarters involved in digital hundi, an illegal transfer of funds from abroad.

Under the system, the remitter deposits the amount to a vendor in his/her host country, who then instructs his network in Bangladesh to deposit the sum to the mobile financial service accounts of the remitter's relative.

The government should also take cooperation from the concerned law enforcement agencies of the host countries to prevent digital hundi.

Action should also be taken against the expatriate Bangladeshis with illegal assets abroad with the view to wiping out the local hundi cartel. The other proposals include opening booths and help desks at airports such that remitters can deposit their hard-earned money securely just after arriving in Bangladesh.

The large network of post office and non-governmental organisations should be used to disburse remittance to the beneficiaries, the committee suggested.

Another proposal is the introduction of a remittance card that would carry privileges such as priority services from high commissions and embassies, hospitals and schools.

The number of amenities would increase progressively with the amount of remittance sent home.

The government should also hold talks with the host countries such that the migrant workers can send any income earned outside of their employment contracts through the banking channel.

The finance ministry has forwarded the report to the BB and the ministry of expatriates' welfare and overseas employment on October 4 asking them to take the required measures.

The BB issued letters to all banks on October 4 instructing them to implement the recommendations.

Migrant workers sent home \$1.16 billion last month, up 14.85 percent from a year earlier and 35.83 percent from the previous month.

Remittance inflow in fiscal 2016-17 was \$12.77 billion, down 14.47 percent year-on-year.

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/govt-moves-boost-remittance-inflow-1489990>

Taking Bangladesh's success story to the world

Grameenphone CEO Michael Foley focuses on Bangladesh's investment prospects based on his experience in the

Before moving to Bangladesh in May, among the known business challenges, I was well aware of the opportunities and the positive energy for which Grameenphone is legendary in the Telenor Group.

I was not sure of what we would find in Bangladesh as a country, but it has been an incredible experience so far.

Sure, there are issues to be addressed, problems to be solved, but that is the truth for any market.

In my view, the glass is far more than half full: the opportunities far outweigh the challenges.

The country is experiencing stable macroeconomic indicators over the last 7 or 8 years with a growing middle-class, a strong impetus to create economic zones, new infrastructure and a couple of very large bridges to change the flow of traffic in the country.

Bangladesh is a fantastic opportunity for investors. And there needs to be a concerted effort from the business community to recapture the narrative about what it means to operate here.

As a major player in the economy and a company listed on the Dhaka Stock Market, Grameenphone too has a role to play in promoting and investing in South Asia -- and Bangladesh in particular.

More pertinently, Grameenphone is a great example of a Bangladeshi business success story.

In the last 20 years, mobile communications have greatly accelerated change in our culture.

Everybody who gets a phone here gets access to information, communication, security and education, among other things. Unarguably, mobile is a big equaliser.

It brings education where education did not exist before; it brings trade where trade is difficult; it brings access to information and the democratisation of information where it was not available before. It even brings avenues of entertainment into people's lives.

As the largest operator in Bangladesh, Grameenphone has a profound responsibility to be sustainable and profitable and to invest in the society that it serves with a view to bringing about progress and respectful socioeconomic change.

I strongly feel that one of Grameenphone's key objectives is to make the Bangladesh economy more digital and more competitive.

The importance of 4G for the dream of a digital Bangladesh cannot be understated. But in order to realise the true experience, much more spectrum should be made available at affordable prices.

Grameenphone's number one chosen role is to allow Bangladesh to continue to be an international competitor and to grow as well as diversify its exports.

There is incredible entrepreneurial and business talent in this market. Their desire to build a better Bangladesh is matched to our desire to facilitate the same by providing services and infrastructure that make a difference.

Grameenphone is challenging the existing business models in order to provide customers the best tools, allowing them to act on their environment, interact with each other and transact in the marketplace.

Enabling these "moments" where customers act, interact and transact is at the very core of the growth opportunity for mobile operators globally, and Bangladesh is no different.

This does not mean we do everything. It means that we enable economic growth and digitalisation.

We create opportunities for others to use networks to build a digital economy that creates value for our customers and grows our own business.

In addition to providing telecom services, the way we do things makes a difference.

The way we apply our sense of ethics, the way we apply our governance, the way we apply our code of conduct or our way of work are humble examples of how business can be done. We believe these are important contributors to the society that we serve.

As a corporate citizen of Bangladesh, it is on us to contribute to the fabric of the nation.

We think there is an opportunity for Grameenphone as part of the greater business community to recapture the narrative and play a more active role in promoting the country for foreign investment; to stop worrying about things that are going wrong and think about things that are going right.

With all due respect to our politicians who are expected to extol the virtues of investing in this market, when business leaders and foreign investors carry the message that this is a great place to invest, it builds greater credibility.

Grameenphone understands this and we carry and will continue to carry that message everywhere we go.

I think that as we head into 2018 and beyond, there is huge potential still to grow the market and the business.

Bangladesh is investment-ready and investment-worthy.

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/taking-bangladeshs-success-story-the-world-1489999>

NBR plans to lower flat registration cost

The tax administrator plans to reduce the flat registration cost and ease the complexities related to value added tax to give a boost to the real estate sector.

The National Board of Revenue is also finding ways to lessen the pressure on the realtors at the time of enforcing the new VAT law in July 2019, said Md Nojibur Rahman, chairman of NBR.

Rahman spoke in a meeting with the leaders of the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) at Hotel Purbani in Dhaka yesterday.

At the meeting, the realtors proposed NBR reduce the flat registration cost to 6.5 percent from the existing 15.5 percent. The government should introduce a secondary market to change the ownership of flats like the market for used cars, said Alamgir Shamsul Alamin, president of REHAB.

There should be no registration fee for secondhand or used flats, he said. The ownership of such flats should be changed hands with only 3 percent tax like the used cars, Alamin said.

He said the registration cost is the highest in Bangladesh among the Saarc countries.

The NBR is now giving emphasis on the housing sector to remove the barriers the realtors have long been facing at the time of selling flats, he said.

Currently, buyers have to spend 15.5 percent of a flat's cost for registration, which includes 4 percent gain tax, 3 percent stamp fee, 2 percent registration fee, 2 percent local government fee and 4.5 percent VAT.

Flat sales have decreased by 60 percent in recent times due to high registration costs while the rate of launching new projects has declined by 75 percent, Alamin said.

The association also proposed a cut in the existing 35 percent corporate tax for developer companies to help them raise their paid-up capital, he said.

The REHAB has recently increased the paid-up capital ceiling to Tk 1 crore from Tk 10 lakh for a developer to get a membership of the association, Alamin said.

The higher paid-up capital will increase investment in the sector, he said.

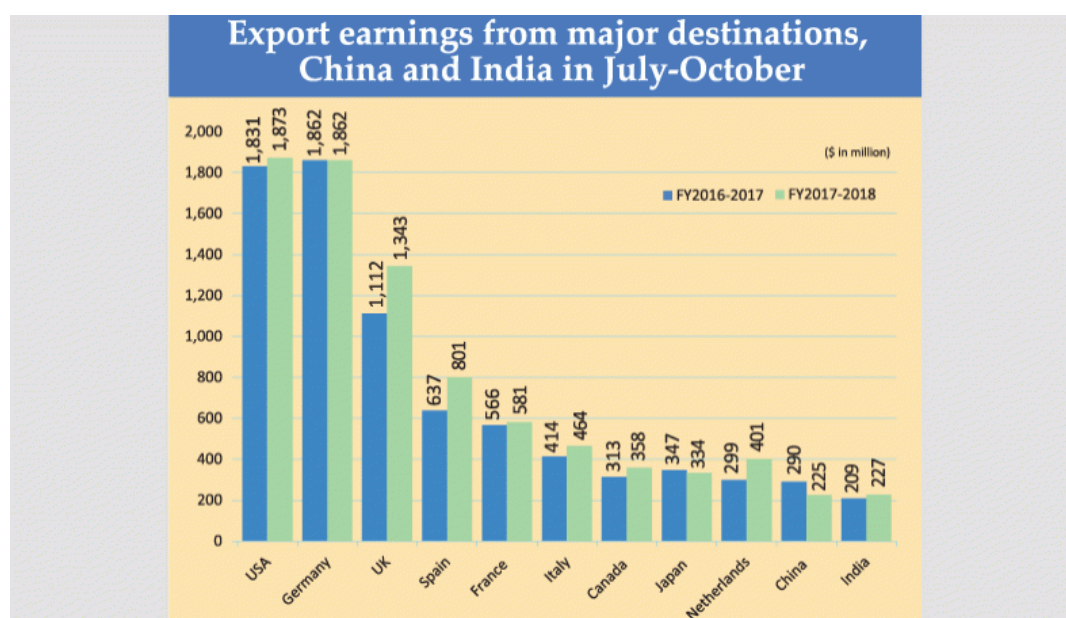
The finance minister has asked the revenue authority to work on how to reduce the flat registration cost, said Jahangir Hossain, a member of the NBR.

A panel has also been formed to work on it, he said.

Currently, REHAB members are building around 15,000 to 17,000 flats every year, according to the organisation.

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/nbr-plans-lower-flat-registration-cost-1489987>

Exports to EU states but Germany post encouraging growth



Bangladesh's export earnings from European countries except Germany registered a significant growth in the July-October period of this financial year 2017-18, riding on an excellent performance of readymade garment products. According to the Export Promotion Bureau data, exports to major European countries registered double digit growth in the four months of FY18 while the RMG export to Germany fell in the period compared with that in the same period of last fiscal year.

The EPB data showed that Bangladesh suffered a negative export growth in two promising markets — Japan and China — in the July-October period of FY18.

Exporters said that earnings growth in the EU markets increased in recent months as the euro appreciated against the dollar.

They also said that buyers and brands cut import orders from Bangladesh for their Chinese stores that caused the negative growth.

Export earnings from the UK, the second largest export destination for Bangladesh in the EU, grew by 20.84 per cent to \$1.34 billion in the four months of FY18 from \$1.11 billion in the same period of FY17.

Earnings from apparel products fetched \$1.25 billion with 22.27 per cent growth in the period.

Export earnings from Spain in July-October in FY18 grew by 25.81 per cent to \$801.02 million from \$636.70 million in the same period of FY17.

Export earnings from the Netherlands rose by 34.16 per cent to \$401.08 million in the four months of FY18.

Bangladesh earned \$580.97 million from France with 2.70 per cent growth and \$463.74 million from Italy with 12.06

per cent growth.

Exports to Germany, the second largest export destination for Bangladesh, in the July-October period of FY18 stood at \$1.86 billion, the same amount earned in the July-October period of FY17.

Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said exports depend on season and the earnings from Germany would increase from November.

RMG export earnings fell by 0.39 per cent to \$1.73 billion from \$1.74 billion in the market, data showed.

‘We have to wait to identify the reasons for the stagnancy of growth in the German market. Hopefully the export would rebound in the market in the coming months,’ Md Fazlul Haque, former president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, told New Age on Saturday.

Export earnings from the US, the largest destination for Bangladesh’s exports, in the July-October period of FY18 grew by 2.28 per cent to \$1.87 billion from \$1.83 billion in the same period of FY17.

Apparel export to the market grew by 2.44 per cent to \$1.68 billion from \$1.64 billion.

The EPB data showed that the country’s export earnings from Japan in the July-October period of FY18 fell by 3.94 per cent to \$333.90 million from \$347.60 million in the same period of FY17.

Export earnings from China in the four months of the FY18 decreased by 22.42 per cent to \$224.75 million from \$289.71 million in the corresponding period of last fiscal year.

Parvez said that the domestic consumption in China slightly decreased in recent times and global retailers also cut import orders from Bangladesh for their Chinese stores due to congestions in the Chittagong port.

‘We are losing many orders from global brands as we have been failing to meet lead time due to the problem in the port,’ he said.

Source: <http://www.newagebd.net/article/28200/exports-to-eu-states-but-germany-post-encouraging-growth>

Stocks rise for 2nd week riding on banks, GP

stocks advanced last week, for the second week in a row, despite a fall in share prices of two-thirds of the traded scrips as banks and Grameenphone soared on better financial results.

DSEX, the key index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, advanced by 1.55 per cent, or 94.54 points, over the week to close at 6,193 points on Thursday after gaining 80 points in the previous week.

Although the equity market opened negative on Sunday, it rebounded in the next session that sustained till the end of the week as investors remained on buying binge for sector specific scrips, market operators said.

Despite a decline in share prices of most of the scrips, the core index advanced in the week due mainly to the surge in share prices of banks and some of the other large capitalised scrips including GP, Beximco Pharmaceuticals and British American Tobacco, they said.

Investors regained confidence over the market after most of the companies declared strong earnings and better dividends.

Banks have been the catalyst for the recent market surge with an increase in their average share price by 4.45 per cent last week following their better profit growth for the third quarter.

Out of the 30 traded banks scrips, share prices of all of them except three advanced over the week.

Besides banks, Grameenphone continued drawing attention of many investors as the company reported better earnings for the third quarter.

With the highest market capitalisation of the market, the share prices of the mobile operator surged by 4 per cent that contributed most to the index’s rise in last week.

The surge in share prices of Beximco Pharmaceuticals, BATBC and Square Pharmaceuticals helped the market gain for the second week.

On the other hand, the share prices of Oimex Electrode plunged by 12 per cent after shooting up by 1,047 per cent on its debut on November 6.

Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Lafarge Surma and Olympic Industries faced corrections, declining by more than 2 per cent each.

Cement, energy and pharmaceuticals declined by 1.3 per cent, 1.0 per cent and 0.8 per cent respectively.

The daily average turnover on the bourse advanced by 18.61 per cent to Tk 718.22 crore last week compared with that of Tk 605.52 crore in the previous week.

‘Some recent positive news like many European investors are keen to invest in Bangladesh expecting Bangladesh to be one of the fastest growing economies within next few years, acted as building block behind this confidence among investors,’ said EBL Securities.

Of the 336 companies and mutual funds traded, 207 declined, 116 advanced and 13 remained unchanged.

DS30, the blue chip index of the DSE, however, soared by 1.94 per cent, or 42.64 points, to close at 2,244.10 points

over the week.

The Shariah index of the bourse, DSES, gained 0.92 per cent, or 12.18 points, to close at 1,341.29 points.

City Bank led the turnover chart in the week with its shares worth Tk 184.25 crore changing hands.

IFAD Autos, BRAC Bank, LankaBangla Finance, Dhaka Bank, Bangladesh Export Import Company, BBS Cables, United Commercial Bank, Grameenphone and Shahjalal islami Bank were the others turnover leaders.

Reckitt Benckiser gained the most in the week with 19.25 per cent increase in its share price, while Stylecraft was the worst loser, shedding 33.22 per cent.

Source: <http://www.newagebd.net/article/28204/stocks-rise-for-2nd-week-riding-on-banks-gp>

Mutual funds fare better amid market surge

Most of the mutual funds listed with the country's capital market have declared higher dividends for the year ended on June 30, 2017 compared with what they gave in the previous year and cash dividend got preference in declaring dividend in the wake of widespread criticisms of declaration of only re-investment units (stock dividend) by the funds. Of the 30 funds that announced dividends so far for the year 2017, 19 of them declared higher dividends, seven maintained their last year's rates and four declared less dividends.

Of them, 17 announced dividends at the rate of 10 per cent or more and the rest 13 declared dividends at the rate of less than 10 per cent for the year 2017.

Of the 35 listed mutual funds, five did not declare dividend recently as they maintain different accounting year.

Asset & Investment Management Services managing director Yawer Sayeed told New Age that mutual funds provided better dividends this year due mainly to an upward movement of the stock prices from January this year.

The mutual funds that could not gain profit during the bullish period at the market and declared no dividend for more than two years need to be monitored by the stock market regulator, he said.

He also said that widespread criticisms of declaration of only re-investment units as dividend were another reason for the increase in the number of cash-dividend declaring mutual funds this year.

The declaration of cash dividend increased as all the mutual funds declared cash dividends while 10 mutual funds under RACE Asset Management Company declared re-investment units along with cash dividends.

The number of only RIU issuing MFs was 12 in the previous year.

CAPM BDBL Mutual fund 01, which was listed with the Dhaka and Chittagong bourses in January this year, declared dividend for the first time after its listing.

Market operators said that as the market started to move upward from November, 2016 and the bullishness got strength with the time amid several record-breaking sessions, the mutual funds made better profits this year compared with what they made in last year.

The prices of the units of mutual funds also increased to the edge of their issue prices recently while those were traded far below their issue prices before December, 2016.

All the mutual funds under RACE Asset Management Company declared higher dividends.

A number of mutual funds under ICB Asset Management Company maintained the same dividend rates they gave last year.

ICB 2nd NRB, ICB AMCL 2nd and ICB Employees Provident mutual funds declared higher dividends while the rests maintained the last year's rates.

Green Delta Mutual Fund and DBH First Mutual Fund under LR Global Bangladesh Management and Reliance One under Asset & Investment Management Services declared dividends at the same rates they gave in the previous year.

Of the 30 mutual funds, Asian Tiger Sandhani Life Growth Fund Two announced the highest dividend among the funds for its investors. The trustee of the MF announced 15.50 per cent cash dividend for the year ended on June 30, 2017 against 13 per cent cash dividend given in the previous year.

Grameen One: Scheme Two and Southeast Bank 1st Mutual Fund issued second and third highest dividends for the year as the funds announced 14 per cent dividend (11 per cent cash and 4 per cent re-investment unit) and 13.5 per cent cash dividend respectively.

Better dividend announcements also helped the mutual funds see a rise in their unit prices as cash dividends pulled investments to the funds.

Source: <http://www.newagebd.net/article/28108/mutual-funds-fare-better-amid-market-surge>

Pak fan-business gets a boost in Bangladesh

The director of General Fan Company (GFC) of Pakistan, Mobin Ilyas, on Saturday said that the business of exporting fans of the country gets a boost in Bangladesh.

The Director came up with the remark during a meeting with Bangladeshi delegates comprising the Commercial Secretary of Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka as a part of the largest trade event of Pakistan, Expo-2017.

Mobin said GFC exports their products to UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and some other countries but Bangladesh is the largest export market for them.

Mentioning the huge demand for their fans in Bangladesh, the director expressed his concern over fake versions of their product being produced in the country.

Fake GFC fans have been brought to the market with same packaging and logo, he said, adding that GFC's business went down in the last year because of the piracy.

“We are discussing to reach a solution to the problem. As legal procedure takes too long, we are thinking about different market strategies so that the consumers can distinguish the real products,” said the GFC boss.

Hearing about the problems, Md Suleman Khan, the commerce secretary of Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, assured the director and the distributor that he will provide his assistance to solve this problem on their behalf.

During the meeting, Md Nurul Islam, managing director of GFC Ltd Bangladesh, said he is the sole distributor of GFC fans in the country and is willing to set up a factory of the company in Bangladesh for its manufacture so that the cost can be lessened.

Replying to this, Mobin Ilyas said they cannot send managers for weekly visit for monitoring a factory in Bangladesh due to visa complexities. That is also why the proposal of having a joint venture is not possible right now.

Another fan company Starco Fans also told UNB that they have good business relationship with Bangladesh having exported fans to the country for five years.

Fayyaz Butt, Business Development Manager, also said they are facing the same visa-related problem. Even two years ago, it was easy to get the visa but now it has become difficult, he added.

However, the 10th arrangement of Expo Pakistan has provided a platform to exporters to showcase their products and build trade relations with other countries through business-to-business meetings with relevant delegates.

Some 775 delegates have come to the four-day event to visit the relevant stalls and meet the exporters of Pakistan and some other countries while 70 countries in total are participating in the expo this year.

Source: <http://www.theindependentbd.com/post/123274>

International News

Adidas leaps to higher profits on strong own-brand sales

AFP, FRANKFURT AM MAIN: German sports gear group Adidas yesterday reported a jump in third-quarter profits, lifted by strong demand for its own-brand trainers and apparel in China and North America. The Bavarian company, which sponsors English Premier League giants Manchester United, said net profit soared to 526 million (\$611 million) between July and September, up 36 per cent on the same period last year.

Group revenues grew by nearly nine percent to 5.7 billion euros, driven by online sales and the success of Adidas' retro-inspired Originals trainers and its adidas neo urban fashion line.

Demand was especially robust in the key markets of China and North America, where sales of the three-striped brand increased by around a third, Adidas said in a statement.

Chief executive Kasper Rorsted said he was pleased “with the quality of our growth” as he reaffirmed the group's 2017 outlook.

“We delivered another set of strong results and are fully on track to achieve our ambitious 2017 financial targets,” he said in a statement.

Adidas said it continues to expect group sales to grow by 17 to 19 per cent in 2017 to achieve a net profit between 1.36 and 1.39 billion euros.

Source: <http://www.theindependentbd.com/post/122992>

Trump defiant on trade, vows to put ‘America First’

US President Donald Trump and China's Xi Jinping spoke moment apart at the APEC summit in Vietnam. Photo Courtesy: Yahoo

AFP, DANANG: President Donald Trump gave a spirited airing of his “America First” doctrine in a speech to Asia-Pacific leaders yesterday, vowing his country will “no longer tolerate” unfair trade, closed markets and intellectual property theft, as he seeks to rewrite the rules of global commerce.

In a speech that by turns lavished praise on Asia-Pacific nations and accused them of undercutting the world’s largest economy, he said US interests had been ill-served by the architecture of global trade.

America “will not tolerate... chronic trade abuses” he said as he took aim at the World Trade Organisation for failing to police free trade infringements.

“We are not going to let the United States be taken advantage of any more. I am always going to put America first the same way I expect all of you in this room to put your countries first.”

In a day bringing together the big hitters of politics and business, Trump will share the venue with world leaders including Russia’s Vladimir Putin, Japan’s Shinzo Abe and China’s Xi Jinping.

Xi is also set to deliver a speech, likely to present a competing narrative casting China as the leader of global free trade, a role vacated by America.

China announced yesterday it will further open the country’s financial markets to foreign firms, a key demand from the US and other global investors who have long complained about strict limits on access to the giant economy.

Trump arrives fresh from trips to Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing, where he sought to build a consensus against North Korea’s nuclear ambitions.

In China he was gushing in his praise of Xi, calling his host “a very special man” in a trip rich with photo opportunities but lacking concrete outcomes on tackling key issues such as North Korea.

As the US retreats behind “economic nationalism”, China will take a stride forward, said Ian Bremmer of the political consultancy Eurasia.

The White House ruled out any meeting between Trump and Putin, a potential box office event with Russia accused of interfering in the US election last year that brought the billionaire one-time reality TV star to power.

Trump election campaign aides are under intense legal scrutiny in the US over possible ties to the Kremlin, but Russia denies any chicanery linked to his astonishing political ascent.

The rise of Trump as leader of the world’s biggest economy risks unpicking decades of US-led economic diplomacy that webbed global economies together with free trade and low tariff pacts.

He has pledged to wring a better deal from countries the US has large trade deficits with—including China—and bring jobs back to the hollowed out industrial heartland that voted for him.

But proponents of free trade, including many allies, have looked on aghast as Trump tears up the rule book and anti-globalisation arguments ricochet through the US and Europe.

Trump has already pulled Washington’s support from the sprawling 12-nation Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact and vowed to renegotiate NAFTA, a trade deal between the US, Canada and Mexico.

On Friday, Asia-Pacific ministers were struggling to salvage the TPP deal, with Canada denying reports that an agreement had been struck among the remaining 11 members to press ahead without the US.

Malaysian premier Najib Razak, whose country is among the so-called TPP-11 nations, lamented the wider change of “tone” towards globalisation.

“I see the rise of anti-globalisation, I see the rise of more inward looking (nations)... there’s a lot of soul-searching we have to do during this APEC,” he told a room packed with CEOs on the sidelines of the forum.

The annual APEC summit is one of the largest gatherings on the annual diplomatic calendar, bringing together scores of world leaders and more than 2,000 CEOs.

APEC represents 21 Pacific Rim economies, the equivalent of 60 percent of global GDP and covering nearly three billion people, and has pushed for freer trade since its inception in 1989.

Source: <http://www.theindependentbd.com/post/123142>