


Summary of Business News – 55

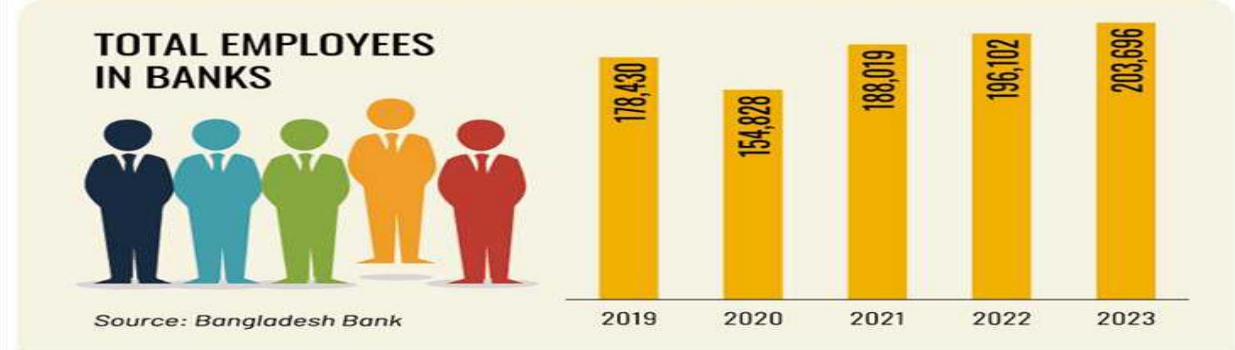
Important Trade and Economic News Published on Various Newspapers during 11 - 24 March 2024

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|---|---------|
| 01 | <p>Export diversification overriding priority Leather export source tax getting halved Exporters must play by book for LWG compliance</p> <p>Source taxes on leather-and leather-goods exports are going to be halved to help the sector meet high-cost compliance precondition of buyers, as export diversification comes under government's top priorities. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) may cut the tax to 0.5 per cent from the existing 1.0 per cent on export earnings from leather and leather goods. The pared-down taxing rate will remain valid until June 30, 2025, sources said. Already, the revenue board has received the go-ahead from the Finance Minister to cut the tax rate only for leather-and leather-goods exporters. They have said the decision has been taken following directive of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to facilitate export diversification-one of priority tasks in the agenda for facing Bangladesh's post-graduation challenges.</p> | 11 March 2024 | <p>The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/leather-export-source-tax-getting-halved-1710094663?date=11-03-2024</p> | |
| 02 | <p>Infrastructure boom positions BD as Bay of Bengal powerhouse Foreign development partners tell CPD seminar</p> <p>Investments in deep-sea ports, airports and rail and road connections to land ports have positioned Bangladesh as a key player in the South Asian region, according to foreign development partners, as the country now offers more trade and investment opportunities. According to them, the infrastructural investments, plus the country's multilayered connectivity in the Bay of Bengal, also make Bangladesh a potential candidate to become a hub for global value chains. The discussants, at a seminar on Sunday, called for identifying potential trade and investment corridors and opportunities in Bangladesh, Northeast India, Bhutan and Nepal. The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), in collaboration with the Japanese Embassy in Bangladesh, organised the seminar titled 'Multilayered Connectivity in the Bay of Bengal: Positioning Bangladesh as an Economic Hub' at the embassy's conference room.</p> | 11 March 2024 | <p>The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/last-page/infrastructure-boom-positions-bd-as-bay-of-bengal-powerhouse-1710094954?date=11-03-2024</p> | |
| 03 | <p>BTRC to award 'unified' licences to telcos</p> <p>The telecom regulator is awarding cellular mobile service operator licences to mobile network operators, unifying the existing licences and setting the groundwork for the launch of 5G technology in the country. Until now, there were separate licences and guidelines for 2G, 3G and 4G technology in Bangladesh. Now, all of them have been brought under one licence. For the new licence, the BTRC introduced "Regulatory and Licensing Guidelines for Cellular Mobile Services in Bangladesh", terming it as a "unified guideline".</p> | 11 March 2024 | <p>The Daily Star https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/btrc-award-unified-licences-telcos-3563796</p> | |
| 04 | <p>BB introduces counter-trade to ease forex pressure</p> <p>The Bangladesh Bank has unveiled the counter-trade policy, an arrangement that promotes direct exchanges of goods and services without cash, with a view to reducing pressure on dwindling foreign currency reserves. In a notice yesterday, the central bank said exporters, importers and traders may voluntarily enter into counter-trade deals with counterparts abroad.</p> | 11 March 2024 | <p>The Daily Star https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bb-introduces-counter-trade-ease-forex-pressure-3563781</p> | |


| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|--|---------|
| 05 | <p>পাইপলাইনে মহেশখালী থেকে জ্বালানি তেল পৌঁছাল ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারিতে</p> <p>কক্সবাজারের মহেশখালীর কালমারছড়ায় ট্যাংক টার্মিনাল থেকে পাইপলাইনের মাধ্যমে অপরিশোধিত জ্বালানি তেল চট্টগ্রামের পতেঙ্গায় তেল শোধনাগার ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারির ট্যাংক টার্মিনালে পৌঁছেছে। গতকাল রোববার বেলা একটায় এই তেল আসা শুরু হয়েছে। প্রথম দফায় গত ৩০ নভেম্বর জাহাজ থেকে সাগরের তলদেশে পাইপলাইনের মাধ্যমে এই অপরিশোধিত জ্বালানি তেল মহেশখালীর ট্যাংক টার্মিনালে নেওয়া হয়েছিল। সেখান থেকে গতকাল শনিবার সকাল আটটায় ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারিতে তেল পাঠানো শুরু হয়, যা গতকাল দুপুরে এসে পৌঁছায়। এর মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষামূলকভাবে সাগরের তলদেশে ও স্থলপথে ১১০ কিলোমিটার পাইপলাইনে অপরিশোধিত জ্বালানি তেল পরিবহন শুরু হলো।</p> | 11 March 2024 | Prothom Alo (https://www.prothomalo.com/business/industry/1ggh4auzc) | |
| 06 | <p><u>Economists warn against expansionary budget amid wealth constraint</u></p> <p>They also advocate for prioritising macro stability over growth</p> <p>The country's top economists have advised the government against preparing an expansionary budget for the next fiscal year, citing external and internal economic stresses. They also suggested prioritising macroeconomic stability over growth and taking effective measures to achieve it. The economists made the suggestions at a pre-budget consultation with Finance Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali. The meeting was held at the State Guest House Padma on Sunday night.</p> <p>The economists further recommended that the government avoid mega-projects with long payback periods. Besides, they emphasised raising direct taxes instead of relying heavily on value-added tax (VAT) - which disproportionately burdens the poor. As key priorities, expansion of the tax net and reduction of non-performing loans in the banking system were also highlighted. The economists also urged the government to take immediate steps to contain inflation, which has been putting tremendous pressure on people for a long time.</p> | 12 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/latest-page/economists-warn-against-expansionary-budget-amid-wealth-constraint-1710180418?date=12-03-2024) | |
| 07 | <p><u>Bangladesh, Netherlands update double taxation avoidance agreement</u></p> <p>Bangladesh and the Netherlands have renewed their agreement to avoid double taxation and prevent revenue evasion by incorporating necessary changes and eliminating inconsistencies. Finance Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, representing Bangladesh, and Minister for Tax Affairs and Tax Administration MLA van Rij, representing the Netherlands, signed the deal at the finance ministry in Dhaka today. Officials at the finance ministry say the agreement was signed in 1993. Since then, numerous changes have occurred in international norms related to the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of revenue evasion. Additionally, Bangladesh is currently undergoing a transition period from being a least developed country to a developing one.</p> | 12 March 2024 | The Business Standard (TBS) (https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bangladesh-netherlands-sign-new-agreement-avoid-double-taxation-808154) | |
| 08 | <p><u>Merge by yearend or face forced mergers</u></p> <p>BB gives weak banks cutoff time to mend</p> <p>Commercial banks are given until this yearend for voluntary merger through choosing partners on their own or face forced amalgamation under Bangladesh Bank move on reforms. In a press briefing to dispel speculations centering round the central bank's possible steps on mergers and acquisitions as part of its financial- sector reform recipe, BB spokesperson Md Mezbaul Haque Tuesday said the banking regulator would execute the amalgamation initiatives with utmost priority given to interests of the depositors.</p> <p>"There are two options now remaining open for the banks-either get merged within themselves voluntarily or face forced merger by the BB," he said to clear the mist. The central bank's spokesperson said the BB had already circulated the PCA (prompt corrective action) framework through which each bank can know financial health of the bank by putting the fundamentals into the framework.</p> | 13 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/merge-by-yearend-or-face-forced-mergers-1710266789) | |

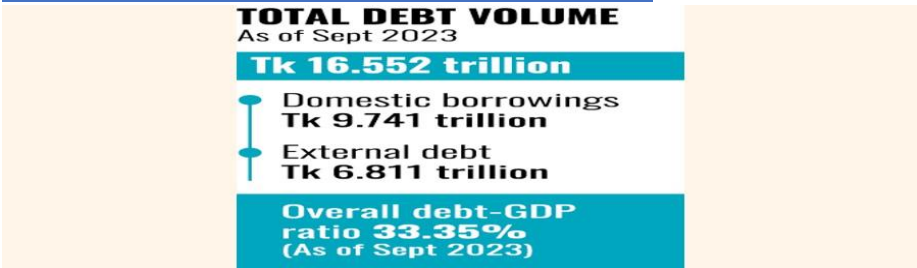
| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|--|---------|
| 09 | <p><u>Govt revises ADP down to Tk 2.45t</u> Edn, health getting deepest fund cuts Education and health-two vital sectors -- are getting deepest fund cuts as the government Tuesday revised down the current annual development programme (ADP) outlay to Tk 2.45 trillion. Officials cited "weak project-implementation capacity" for massive cuts in the development budget for education and health, for which there have been wide-scale suggestions for increasing spending. The allocation for the health sector has been slashed by 25.53 per cent and for the education sector by 42.35 per cent, Planning Commission officials said. The National Economic Council (NEC) in a meeting, presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, trimmed the ADP for the current fiscal year (FY) 2023-24, following lower rates of project implementation also for one major reason that it's election year-apart from capacity lacking. According to sources, there are also shortages in mobilising funds largely because of gaps between revenue-collection target and real receipts that may cause budget downsizing. The overall Revised Annual Development Programme (RADP) is down by Tk 180 billion or 6.84 per cent from the original Tk 2.63-trillion outlay, Planning Minister Abdus Salam told journalists while emerging from the NEC meeting. He said out of the Tk2.45 trillion worth of RADP outlay, Tk 1.61 trillion will be financed from government's own resources and the remaining Tk835 billion from the external sources as project aid (PA).</p> | 13 March 2024 | The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/govt-revises-adp-down-to-tk-245t-1710266853 | |
| 10 | <p>Half a dozen new plants <u>Gas shortage, unmet power demand seem twin pains</u> Arranging sufficient gas for running half a dozen new power plants with a total generation capacity of around 3,510 megawatts appears uncertain while some others shut for this fuel crisis, sources say. And such uncertainties stalk over the energy sector at a time when high-electricity-demand dry summer season approaches, experts note and regret domestic gas-exploration delays. To rub salt into the wound is government's power-purchase deals with the private power-plant entrepreneurs from home and abroad that provides for capacity payment. Three of such power plants, owned by private sector, have already completed construction and are on test run or being readied for operation on a test basis, while another, owned by public sector, will be readied for electricity generation by end of 2024, market-insiders said. The government runs the risk of providing billions of taka as capacity payments to the plant owners in failure of purchasing electricity from these power plants after their commissioning, they added.</p> | 13 March 2024 | The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/gas-shortage-unmet-power-demand-seem-twin-pains-1710266739 | |
| 11 | <p><u>Costlier power fuels cost of living</u> CPD says electricity price hike increases monthly family expenses 9.50pc, gives breakdown of hikers People's cost of living rises further as the latest power-tariff hike increased monthly expenditure of a family by around 9.50 per cent as per finding by a leading think-tank. The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Wednesday revealed the findings backed up with a breakdown of the hikers. It shows the fuel-rate raise fired up cost by 9.12 per cent for small industries, 9.71 per cent for businesses and offices, 10 per cent for industries and 11.02 per cent for irrigation. "Commoners are shouldering the burdens with increased expenditures for government's mistakes in policymaking, which is fuelling inflation," the CPD points out in critical appraisal of steps taken on Bangladesh's energy front in particular. It deplores that the government is raising tariffs instead of going for alternatives.</p> | 14 March 2024 | The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/costlier-power-fuels-cost-of-living-1710353520 | |

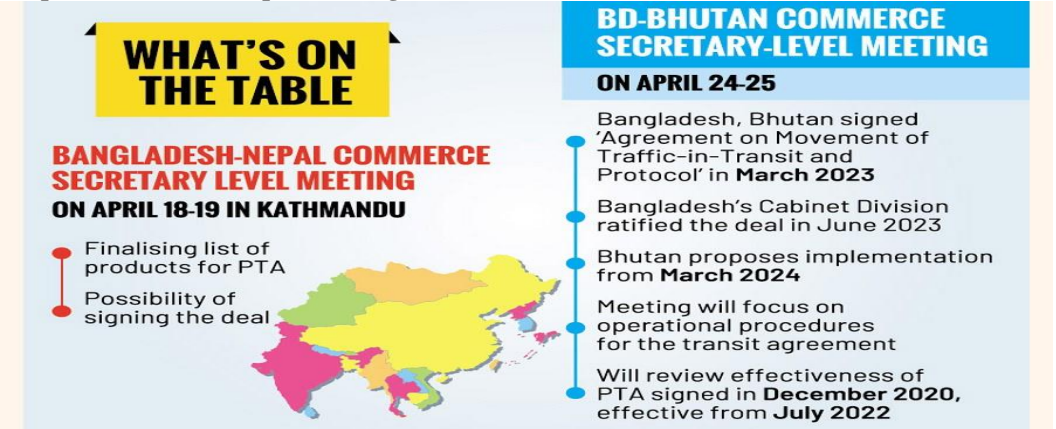
| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|---|---------------|--|---------|
| 12 | <p>Automatic inclusion in Universal Pension Scheme for those joining from July 1 All employees who will join self-regulated, autonomous, state-run, statutory organisations or their affiliated companies on July 1 and later will automatically come under the Universal Pension Scheme. The finance ministry published a notice to this effect yesterday. Launched in August, the scheme aims at bringing the growing elderly population of the country under a well-organised social safety net and providing them with a monthly stipend so that they can meet expenses. All citizens aged between 18 and 50 years, including expatriate Bangladeshis, are eligible.</p> | 14 March 2024 | The Daily Star (https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/automatic-inclusion-universal-pension-scheme-those-joining-july-1-3566621) | |
| 13 | <p>Recipe for rescue of weak banks in motion Exim Bank embraces troubled Padma in maiden merger</p>  <p>Mergers and acquisitions in Bangladesh's banking industry get going with the maiden merger of crisis-ridden Padma Bank with EXIM Bank under a deal, sources concerned said. Hot on the heels of central bank's forewarning -- just two days before -- about forced mergers unless voluntary mergers within banks take place by coming December, the news broke Thursday on coupling of the two private-sector banks. Members of the board of directors of EXIM Bank in a board meeting held at the bank's headquarters in Dhaka Thursday made the decision on amalgamation of the banks.</p> | 15 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/exim-bank-embraces-troubled-padma-in-maiden-merger-1710439307?date=15-03-2024) | |
| 14 | <p>IMF suggests raising tax-free income limit to Tk 5 lakh The International Monetary Fund has suggested the National Board of Revenue (NBR) restructure the personal income tax slabs and increase the tax-free income limit to Tk 5 lakh from the existing Tk 3.5 lakh. The visiting tax policy mission of the Washington-based lender recommended abolishing the lower slab of 5 percent, saying the marginal tax rate should be 10 percent on income between Tk 5 lakh and Tk 8 lakh. It also called for repealing the provisions that permit the NBR to grant tax exemptions and urged the tax authority not to extend the concessions after the expiry of the existing benefits.</p> | 15 March 2024 | The Daily Star (https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/imf-suggests-raising-tax-free-income-limit-tk-5-lakh-3566886) | |





| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|--|---------|
| 15 | <p>শিশুশ্রমিক বেড়েছে সাড়ে ৮৬ হাজার</p> <p>গত ১০ বছরে দেশে শিশুশ্রম কমেনি, বরং বেড়েছে। এ সময়ে দেশে প্রায় এক লাখ শিশুশ্রমিক বেড়েছে। সর্বশেষ হিসাবে, দেশে এখন ৩৫ লাখ ৩৬ হাজার ৯২৭ জন শিশুশ্রমিক আছে। ২০১৩ সালে এই সংখ্যা ছিল ৩৪ লাখ ৫০ হাজার ৩৬৯। এ ছাড়া বর্তমান শিশুশ্রমিকদের মধ্যে ১০ লাখ ৭০ হাজার ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ কাজ করে। তবে ১০ বছরের ব্যবধানে ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ কাজে নিয়োজিত শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা দুই লাখের মতো কমেছে। বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যা ব্যুরো (বিবিএস) গতকাল বৃহস্পতিবার জাতীয় শিশুশ্রম জরিপ ২০২২-এর প্রতিবেদন প্রকাশ করেছে। এ উপলক্ষে বিবিএস আগারগাঁওয়ের নিজ কার্যালয়ে এক আলোচনা অনুষ্ঠানেরও আয়োজন করে।</p> | 15 March 2024 | Prothom Alo (https://www.prothomalo.com/business/economics/rqb0c4pp8f) | |
| 16 | <p>Banking sector employment rise 4.0pc in 2023</p> <p>The number of bank employees increased by nearly 4.0 per cent in 2023 from 2022, according to the latest Bangladesh Bank report. The employees working in 61 commercial banks at the end of December 2023 stood at 203,696, which is 3.9 per cent higher than that of 2022 and 25,266 people more than 178,430 employees in 2019. Of the total employees, 83.6 per cent is male and the rest female.</p>  <p>Source: Bangladesh Bank</p> <p>Six state-owned commercial banks have a total of 50,285 employees or nearly 25 per cent of total banking industry, data showed, while nearly 67 per cent of the employment belongs to the 43 private commercial banks. Nine foreign commercial banks employ 4,057 people. Three specialised scheduled banks' employment was recorded at 13,039 at the end of December 2023.</p> | 16 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/banking-sector-employment-rise-40pc-in-2023-1710608959?date=16-03-2024) | |
| 17 | <p>Bangladesh lags behind peer nations in ICT development</p> <p>Bangladesh, which has spent tens of thousands of crore taka for ICT development in the last 15 years, lags behind its peer economies in a key ICT global index. Bangladesh scored only 61.1 in the ICT Development Index (IDI) 2023 of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialised United Nations agency for information and communication technologies (ICT). The 2023 edition of the index includes 169 economies. Bangladesh trails neighbouring economies, with Sri Lanka registering a score of 69.9, Bhutan 76.5, Vietnam 80.6, Maldives 79 and Cambodia 68.5. And while the report lacks data on India, Pakistan and Afghanistan scored 48.7 and 28.9 respectively. Only 38.9 percent of the individuals in Bangladesh were using the internet last year while 38.1 percent households had internet access, according to the report.</p> | 16 March 2024 | The Daily Star (https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bangladesh-lags-behind-peer-nations-ict-development-3568066) | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|--|---------|
| 18 | <p>উইন্ডি অ্যাপারেলস ও কমফিট পেল পরিবেশবান্ধব কারখানার স্বীকৃতি, সব মিলিয়ে ২১৩টি</p> <p>দেশের আরও দুটি তৈরি পোশাক কারখানা পরিবেশবান্ধব কারখানার স্বীকৃতি পেয়েছে। নতুন যে দুটি কারখানা পরিবেশবান্ধব স্বীকৃতি পেয়েছে, সে দুটি হলো উইন্ডি অ্যাপারেলস লিমিটেড ও কমফিট ব্যানানা লিফ। এ দুটি কারখানাই গোল্ড সনদ পেয়েছে। এ দুটি নিয়ে দেশে মোট পরিবেশবান্ধব কারখানার সংখ্যা দাঁড়াল ২১৩টি; এর মধ্যে প্লাটিনাম ক্যাটাগরির কারখানা ৮০টি আর গোল্ড ক্যাটাগরির কারখানা ১১৯টি; সিলভার ক্যাটাগরিতে আছে ১০টি ও সার্টিফায়েড ক্যাটাগরিতে আছে ৪টি কারখানা।</p> | 16 March 2024 | Prothom Alo (https://www.prothomalo.com/business/industry/wzvw4dqo80) | |
| 19 | <p><u>NBR's three-pronged strategy to boost revenue collection</u></p> <p>Aiming to significantly boost revenue collection from domestic sources, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) is adopting a three-pronged approach, reports UNB. These are digital transformation, expansion of tax net, and enhancing administrative capacity. The core idea is to make tax payments easy and transparent to improve taxpayer services which in turn will help NBR to collect more revenue, according to an official document. According to the Medium-Term Macroeconomic Policy Statement (2023-24 to 2025-26) of the Finance Division of Finance Ministry, the government has taken some Major reform measures to materialise the move.</p> | 17 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade-market/nbrs-three-pronged-strategy-to-boost-revenue-collection-1710606741?date=17-03-2024) | |
| 20 | <p><u>NBR grants tax benefits to 3 sectors</u></p> <p>The government has provided tax benefits to three sectors, namely leather, asset management, and research, to boost competitiveness and foreign currency earnings. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) issued three separate statutory regulatory orders (SROs) to that end last Thursday.</p> | 17 March 2024 | The Daily Star (https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/nbr-grants-tax-benefits-3-sectors-3568236) | |
| 21 | <p><u>Air freight costlier, seaborne trade insecure</u></p> <p>Capacity crunch amid demand surge fuels freight costs</p> <p>Air-freight charge for haulage from Dhaka to European destinations gets costlier amid increased pressure and capacity constraint as seaborne trade remains insecure, officials say. Exporters bear the brunt of further export-cost rise in March and additional hassles for having to carry cargoes by truck up to New Delhi for air-shipment amid plane-traffic jam in Dhaka, sources said. Freight-forwarders say airlines flying from Dhaka to various European states are now charging between \$4.0 and \$4.80 to carry each kilogram of goods-up from US\$3.5 in February and \$2.0 in January last. However, the freight rates for flying export goods to the United States, another top destination for Bangladeshi merchandises, remained static in March compared to last few months.</p> | 18 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/air-freight-costlier-seaborne-trade-insecure-1710694367) | |
| 22 | <p><u>Only eight industries to get new gas lines</u></p> <p>The government is likely to stop new gas connections to industries save for eight "economically vital" ones under a forthcoming regulation. The eight industries considered to be economically vital are: garment, pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, agricultural products, ceramic, cement, steel and leather. Only the "economically vital industries" that applied for new connections and did not get it until last year could get supply, as per the draft guideline on using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as an alternative fuel in industries.</p> | 18 March 2024 | The Daily Star (https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/only-eight-industries-get-new-gas-lines-3568996) | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|---|---------------|---|---------|
| 23 | <p><u>Country's first commercial wind power plant starts production</u> Bangladesh has achieved a new milestone in its renewable energy ambition, with the country's first commercial wind power plant going into full production this month. The wind power plant in Cox's Bazar, boasting a capacity of 60 megawatts, started full-scale operation on 8 March and has been running smoothly ever since, according to Nirod Chandra Mondal, joint secretary (renewable energy) at the Power Division. "The electricity generated by the new power plant is being directly supplied to the national grid. Experiments were conducted to ensure a smooth connection before the commercial launch," he told The Business Standard.</p> | 18 March 2024 | The Business Standard (TBS) (https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/energy/countrys-first-commercial-wind-power-plant-starts-production-810678) | |
| 24 | <p><u>Gas crunch poised to ease with FSRU operation</u> This floating private LNG regasification unit almost overhauled for rerun Gas supply across Bangladesh may increase next week as another private-sector floating LNG-regasification unit looks all but ready to resume operation after an overhaul, sources say about a respite from fuel crunch. Summit LNG Terminal Co Ltd, a subsidiary of Summit Group, is expected to resume liquefied natural gas (LNG) regasification at its FSRU on the Bay of Bengal after two months of lie-down, they say. Summit's floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) might return to Moheshkhali mooring facility early next week and initiate tying-up job before resuming operation, a senior Petrobangla official told the FE Monday. The FSRU, which ceased operation in mid-January, was still under overhauling at a Singapore dry dock, he said.</p> | 19 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/gas-crunch-poised-to-ease-with-fsru-operation-1710781103) | |
| 25 | <p><u>25.5pc BD households borrow to buy daily food items: BBS</u> An estimated 25.5 per cent households in Bangladesh borrow money to buy daily food items as their income is insufficient enough to intake their daily meals, official data shows. To cover basic food shortages, the incidence of taking loans is higher in rural areas at 27.8 per cent, followed by urban and city corporation areas at 23.6 per cent and 15.3 per cent respectively. The latest BBS report styled 'Food Security Statistics 2023' reveals that the monthly household average food costs is Tk 12,053 at the national level. The expenditure in city corporation areas is higher at Tk 14,125, followed by in urban areas at Tk 11,890 and in rural areas at Tk 11,718, the study findings showed. Of the expenditure, households spend the highest in daily rice purchase.</p>  | 19 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/metro-news/255pc-bd-households-borrow-to-buy-daily-food-items-bbs-1710778246) | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|---|---------------|--|---------|
| 26 | <p>ইইউতে পোশাক রপ্তানি বাড়লেও কমেছে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রে</p> <p>চলতি ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থবছরের আট মাসে (জুলাই-ফেব্রুয়ারি) সামগ্রিকভাবে ইউরোপীয় ইউনিয়ন (ইইউ), যুক্তরাজ্য, কানাডা ও নতুন বাজারে তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানি বাড়লেও কমেছে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রে। যদিও গত অর্থবছর থেকে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের বাজারে বাংলাদেশের তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানি নিম্নমুখী ধারায় রয়েছে। রপ্তানি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো (ইপিবি) পরিসংখ্যান বিশ্লেষণ করে তৈরি পোশাকশিল্প মালিকদের সংগঠন বিজিএমইএ এ তথ্য জানিয়েছে।</p> <p>এতে দেখা যায়, চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথম আট মাসে ৩ হাজার ২৮৬ কোটি ডলারের তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানি হয়। এই রপ্তানি গত অর্থবছরের একই সময়ের তুলনায় ৪ দশমিক ৭৭ শতাংশ বেশি। চলতি অর্থবছরের প্রথম আট মাসে ইইউর বাজারে ১ হাজার ৬২৪ কোটি ডলারের তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানি হয়েছে। এই রপ্তানি আগের অর্থবছরের একই সময়ের তুলনায় ৩ দশমিক ২৭ শতাংশ বেশি। যদিও গত ২০২২-২৩ অর্থবছর শেষে এই বাজারে প্রবৃদ্ধি ছিল ৯ দশমিক ৯৩ শতাংশ। তার মানে চলতি অর্থবছর ইইউতে রপ্তানি প্রবৃদ্ধির গতি কিছুটা কমেছে।</p> | 20 March 2024 | Prothom Alo (https://www.prothomalo.com/business/industry/e2e9ibvryf) | |
| 27 | <p>Ballooning govt borrowings from banks Financial imbalances feared for hefty debt servicing</p>  <p>Government debts go ballooning, with the volume rising by Tk 378.43 billion to Tk 16.552 trillion as of last September, entailing hefty repayment inclusive of interest. The latest bulletin of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) shows the figures, giving economists to believe that such debt situation may create imbalances in public finance. And most of the borrowings are coming from the banking system through lucrative instruments like state treasury bills and bonds, the statistics show.</p> <p>The data issued by the finance division of the MoF revealed that the government heavily relied on domestic borrowing to bridge the gap between its high spending and low revenues.</p> | 21 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/financial-imbalances-feared-for-hefty-debt-servicing-1710959226) | |
| 28 | <p>How happy Bangladeshis are Country ranking down 11 steps in global happiness index</p> <p>Bangladesh has slipped 11 notches to rank 129th among 143 countries in the latest global happiness measure in terms of people's state of living. Last year, Bangladesh ranked 118th, and in 2022, its position was in the 94th spot, according to the 2024 edition of the global report on measure of happiness of nations.</p> <p>The World Happiness Report is published annually by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The report, which marks the United Nations International Day of Happiness on March 20, draws on global survey data from people in more than 140 countries.</p> <p>As per the report, Finland happens to be the happiest country in the world for the seventh consecutive year.</p> | 21 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/country-ranking-down-11-steps-in-global-happiness-index-1710959281) | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|--|---------------|---|---------|
| 29 | <p>Universal Pension Scheme <u>Govt introduces 'Prottay Scheme'</u> Employees of self-governed, autonomous, state-owned, statutory bodies will be covered under this new product With an aim to incorporate employees of different self-governed, autonomous, state-owned, statutory or homogeneous organisations and their subordinate bodies into the Universal Pension Scheme (UPS), the government has introduced a new product named "Prottay Scheme". Those who would join the services in the organisations on July 1, 2024 and thereafter will be included in the "Prottay Scheme", says a statutory regulatory order (SRO) issued on March 13. The Ministry of Finance issued a press release in this regard on Wednesday, saying another SRO has been issued on the day outlining details of the new product under the UPS.</p> | 21 March 2024 | <p>The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/govt-introduces-prottay-scheme-1710959395</p> | |
| 30 | <p><u>Bangladeshi banks' profitability lowest in South Asia</u> The profitability of the banking sector in Bangladesh is the lowest in South Asia due to the prevalence of higher non-performing loans, lower efficiency, and an elevated level of costs of funds. The return on assets (ROA), also known as profitability, was 0.52 percent in Bangladesh in 2022 and it further slipped to 0.43 percent in June last year, Bangladesh Bank data showed.</p> | 21 March 2024 | <p>The Daily Star https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladeshi-banks-profitability-lowest-south-asia-3571336</p> | |
| 31 | <p><u>Bangladesh prioritises executing transit, PTA with Bhutan, Nepal</u> Preparations rife for April meetings of commerce secretaries</p>  <p>Signing and executing transit-and preferential-trade deals with Bhutan and Nepal gets top priority from Bangladesh at upcoming cooperation talks with the two Himalayan nations, officials say. With Bhutan Bangladesh has already got transit deal and Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), and Dhaka now presses ahead doing spadework for operational modus operandi to be declared from April talks. The seventh Bangladesh-Nepal commerce secretaries' meeting is slated for April 18-19 in Kathmandu. There, the two sides may finalise the list of products for the PTA and discuss the possibility of signing the agreement.</p> | 22 March 2024 | <p>The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bangladesh-prioritises-executing-transit-pta-with-bhutan-nepal-1711044869?date=22-03-2024</p> | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks |
|---------|---|---------------|--|---------|
| 32 | <p><u>BD, South Korea move towards FTA with MoU</u> Aiming to boost bilateral trade and investment Eying a free-trade agreement (FTA) in the future, Bangladesh and South Korea are now advancing to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that focuses on boosting bilateral trade and investment, according to officials. Currently, Bangladeshi products enjoy duty-free and quota-free access to the South Korean market. However, Bangladesh is due to graduate to developing-country status in 2026, which will result in the loss of various trade benefits with wealthier nations. After graduation, trade officials warn that Bangladeshi exports will lose their competitive edge and face tremendous challenges due to higher general duties replacing the current lower rates.</p> <p>To minimise these post-graduation challenges, Bangladesh is actively seeking to sign free trade agreements with key trading partners. Since FTAs are complex and time-consuming to negotiate, Bangladesh and South Korea have opted to begin with a MoU, which could pave the way for a future FTA.</p> | 23 March 2024 | The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/bd-south-korea-move-towards-fta-with-mou-1711131174 | |
| 33 | <p><u>Now big bridge to connect deep-sea port</u> Road-rail bridge across Karnaphuli at Kalurghat links Matarbari hub</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0f0ff;"> <p> Nearly one-km-long bridge will have dual-gauge rails, two-lane road</p> <hr/> <p> Project cost estimated at Tk 115.66b, with part bankrolling by Korean EXIM bank</p> <hr/> <p> Maximum train speed 120kmph, road transport 65kmph</p> <hr/> <p> Project works slated for start next month of April</p> </div> <p>Another major rail-cum-road bridge in Bangladesh will cross over the Karnaphuli River to connect tourist-city Cox's Bazar and Matarbari deep-sea port, officials said, which will establish seamless connectivity up to the country's maritime frontier.</p> <p>The planned Karnaphuli bridge at Kalurghat in Chattagram in the southeast will happen to be a second such major communications infrastructure in the country after the Padma Multipurpose Bridge (PMB) built over the mighty river near the capital, Dhaka, for road and rail links up to the southwestern land border.</p> | 23 March 2024 | The Financial Express https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/now-big-bridge-to-connect-deep-sea-port-1711131271 | |

| Sl. No. | News / Events | Date | Source | Remarks | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|---------|---|------|------|-------------------------------|-------|----|-------|----|--------|---------------|--|--|
| 34 | <p>ব্যবসার খরচ বাড়ছে, চাপে উদ্যোক্তারা বিশেষজ্ঞরা বলছেন, গ্যাস-বিদ্যুতের মতো পণ্যের দাম নির্ধারণে জবাবদিহি থাকলে এবং প্রক্রিয়াটি নিরপেক্ষ হলে ব্যবসার খরচ কিছুটা হলেও কমবে।</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>ডলারের বিনিময় মূল্য</td> <td>৮৬</td> <td>১১০</td> </tr> <tr> <td>বিদ্যুৎ (প্রতি কিলোওয়াটের গড় দাম)</td> <td>৭.১৩</td> <td>৮.৯৫</td> </tr> <tr> <td>গ্যাসের ইউনিট (বৃহৎ শিল্প)</td> <td>১১.৯৮</td> <td>৩০</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ডিজেল</td> <td>৮০</td> <td>১০৮.২৫</td> </tr> </table> <p>গত দুই বছরে শুধু ডলারের বিনিময় মূল্যই বেড়েছে প্রায় ৪৫ শতাংশ। গ্যাসের দাম ১৭৮ শতাংশ পর্যন্ত বেড়েছে। বিদ্যুতের দামও বেড়েছে কয়েক দফা। নতুন করে গত মাসে এক দফায় সাড়ে ৮ শতাংশ বেড়েছে। ডিজেলের দাম ৩৬ শতাংশ বৃদ্ধির পর চলতি মাসে কমানো হয়েছে ৭৫ পয়সা। উচ্চ মূল্যফীতির চাপও আছে। সুদের হার আবার দুই অঙ্কের ঘরে পৌঁছেছে। দুই বছর ধরে এভাবেই দেশে ব্যবসার খরচ হু হু করে বেড়ে চলেছে। বিভিন্ন খাতের কয়েকজন ক্ষুদ্র, মাঝারি ও বড় ব্যবসায়ী বলছেন, করোনার ধাক্কা কাটিয়ে ওঠার পর নতুন করে টিকে থাকার লড়াইয়ে আছেন তাঁরা (ব্যবসায়ীরা)। গ্যাসের দাম কয়েক গুণ বাড়ানোর পরও নিরবচ্ছিন্ন গ্যাস মিলছে না। বিশ্ববাজারে জ্বালানি তেলের দাম কমলেও দেশে সমন্বয় করা হয়েছে যৎসামান্য। অন্যদিকে ডলারের বিপরীতে টাকার অবমূল্যায়ন হলেও শুষ্ক-করে কোনো ছাড়ের উদ্যোগ নিচ্ছে না জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড (এনবিআর)। ব্যবসার খরচ কমে, এমন কোনো উদ্যোগও সরকারের তরফ থেকে দেখা যাচ্ছে না বলে অভিযোগ তাঁদের।</p> | ডলারের বিনিময় মূল্য | ৮৬ | ১১০ | বিদ্যুৎ (প্রতি কিলোওয়াটের গড় দাম) | ৭.১৩ | ৮.৯৫ | গ্যাসের ইউনিট (বৃহৎ শিল্প) | ১১.৯৮ | ৩০ | ডিজেল | ৮০ | ১০৮.২৫ | 23 March 2024 | Prothom Alo (https://www.prothomalo.com/business/industry/1uktww98d) | |
| ডলারের বিনিময় মূল্য | ৮৬ | ১১০ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| বিদ্যুৎ (প্রতি কিলোওয়াটের গড় দাম) | ৭.১৩ | ৮.৯৫ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| গ্যাসের ইউনিট (বৃহৎ শিল্প) | ১১.৯৮ | ৩০ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ডিজেল | ৮০ | ১০৮.২৫ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | <p><u>ADB budget funding worth \$400m forthcoming</u> Loan also meant to cushion Bangladesh's post-LDC economic shocks Another dollop of Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan worth US\$400 million may be forthcoming as budget support to Bangladesh this fiscal year, at a time when the country faces forex crunch. Government's Finance Division (FD) and Economic Relations Division (ERD) are working with the Manila-based lender for the confirmation of the budget support for this fiscal, officials said Saturday. The ADB has assured Bangladesh of support in tackling LDC-graduation fallout on the economy and improving the business climate, especially the position in the global logistics index, said officials at the two divisions.</p> | 24 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/adb-budget-funding-worth-400m-forthcoming-1711213206) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | <p><u>Rampal power plant gets fresh tax benefit</u> Bangladesh customs has offered a fresh tax benefit to the Rampal coal-fired power plant, akin to other power plants, on import of spare parts. The customs wing of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) issued a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO), dated March 18, 2024, offering the benefit for up to 12 years or the existing contract tenure, whichever is lower, from the starting of commercial production of the plant. The power plant would be able to import spare parts up to 10 per cent of the principal value of the imported plant or equipment chalan. The 1,320 megawatt power plant is located at Rampal Upazila of Bagerhat District in Khulna.</p> | 24 March 2024 | The Financial Express (https://today.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/first-page/rampal-power-plant-gets-fresh-tax-benefit-1711213476) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |