The kidneys are a pair of bean-shaped organs in the renal system and found in vertebrates. They are located on both sides of your spine, below your ribs and behind your belly.

**HEALTH TIPS**

**KEEP YOUR KIDNEY HEALTHY**

The kidneys are a pair of bean-shaped organs in the renal system and found in vertebrates. They are located on both sides of your spine, below your ribs and behind your belly.

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**ARTICLE**

**RETAIL BANKING - A WAY OF DIVERSIFYING BANKING PORTFOLIOS**

Retail banking, also known as consumer banking, refers to the offering of banking services to retail customers instead of institutional customers, such as companies, corporations and/or financial institutions.

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**DISCOVER BANGLADESH**

**THE CALM SEA: NIKLI HAOR**

When you are bored to handle city life, traffic jams, business, office, Nikli will give you a chance to forget about everything behind for some time.

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**SPECIAL REPORT**

**MONETARY POLICY STATEMENT: FISCAL YEAR 2019-20**


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**WORLD ECONOMY**

Growth is expected to edge up by 0.1 percentage point, from 6.7% in 2018 to 6.8% in 2019 and again to 6.9% in 2020.

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**A POET OF VERSATILITY: KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM**

Kazi Nazrul Islam is the legendary versatile poet, writer, lyricist and musician. He wrote prose, short stories, novels, and essays but is best known for his songs and poems.

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**MBL RECEIVES AWARD**

Dhaka WASA has awarded Mercantile Bank Limited as the recognition of one of the highest bill collecting Banks.

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**MERCANTILE BANK NEWS**

Mercantile Bank organized 'Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship' distribution ceremony at different location across the country.

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**BANKING INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH**

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) raised the banks’ advance-deposit ratio (ADR) by 1-1.5 percentage points to increase credit supply and boost investment in the economy.

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**DOMESTIC ECONOMY**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected that the economy of Bangladesh would grow 7.6 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2019-20.

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**EDITORIAL TEAM**

Mati ul Hasan
AMD & CRO

Md. Zakir Hossain
DMD & DCBO

Adil Raihan
DMD & CSBO

Research & Planning Team
Bangladesh has taken its position among the top-20 improvers in the ease of doing business 2020 as the country has implemented various reform initiatives to create a business-friendly environment, according to the World Bank (WB). Bangladesh Bank is expecting that the growth rate of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will achieve 8.20 percent target in the current fiscal year (FY20).

Inflation edged up five basis points to 5.54 percent in September 2019, the highest in nine months, driven mainly by spiraling prices of food and non-food items. The spread between the weighted average interest rate on advances and deposits of all banks decreased to 4.00 percent in August 2019 from 4.03 percent in July 2019. Total merchandise commodity export during July-September, 2019 marginally decreased by USD 0.29 billion or 2.94 percent to USD 9.65 billion compared to USD 9.94 billion during July-September, 2018. Custom based import during July-August, 2019 decreased by 2.29 percent and stood at USD 9.32 billion which was USD 9.54 billion during July-August, 2018. Total Receipts of workers’ remittances during July-September, 2019 stood at USD 4.51 billion indicating an increase of USD 0.64 billion or 16.59 percent as against USD 3.87 billion during July-September, 2018.

Bangladesh Bank unveiled monetary policy focused on achieving 8.2% economic growth in the current fiscal year 2019-20, claiming a surplus of liquidity in the banking sector to fund the private sector. According to the BB, this is a cautiously accommodative' monetary program in order to help the government achieve growth target and contain inflation at 5.5%.

At the end of September 2019 total deposit of Mercantile Bank stood BDT 25,561.66 crore and total loans and advances of the Bank reached to BDT 23,359.79 crore. Operating profit stood at BDT 488.58 crore.

Like previous years, in 2019 Mercantile Bank provided scholarships among 1,130 students who have successfully passed (with minimum CGPA of 4.50) J.S.C, S.S.C and H.S.C to continue their further studies. Through this program, we engage to build self-respect and capabilities to make career, educational and life changing journey. Our prudent Board of Directors and Senior Management Team is committed to take the Bank to the sustainable trail of growth focusing on capital adequacy, maintaining quality assets, sound earnings in Export and strong liquidity management.

Disclaimer

“MBL Insight” is a limited publication of Mercantile Bank Limited (MBL). The contents of this publication have been collected through various sources of public information that are believed to be reliable and MBL has taken reasonable care to ensure that such information is accurate.
LGRD minister Mr. Md. Tazul Islam, MP handed over the certificate and crest to Md. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Managing Director & CEO of Mercantile Bank Limited in a programme held at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in Dhaka.

In a function titled ‘Dhaka WASA Bill Collection Award’, Dhaka WASA awarded 10 highest bill collecting Banks among a total of 33 listed Banks for the same purpose. Mr. Helal Uddin Ahmed, secretary, LGRD ministry; Engr. Mr. Taqsem A Khan, MD of Dhaka WASA; Md. Rafiqul Hoque Bhuiyan, SEVP & Head of Mobile Banking Division of MBL; A.B.M. Eradul Islam, EVP & Head of Kawran Bazar Branch of MBL and Tapon James Rozario, AVP & Head of ILMD (CC) of MBL were also present in the award giving ceremony.

“Dhaka WASA recognized Mercantile Bank Limited as one of the highest bill collecting Banks”
‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ distribution Program at Senbag, Noakhali

‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ has been awarded among 47 students at a ceremony organized by MBL in Noakhali. Morshed Alam, MP, Chairman of MBL was present as the chief guest and handed over the cheques and certificates among the students. In his speech, he mentioned that Mercantile Bank will continue awarding scholarships among talented and poor students all over the country. He added that Mercantile Bank is awarding Tk. 1.70 Crore among 1,129 students this year. Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, DMD of MBL, Md. Minhazur Rahman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Senbag and Mizanur Rahman, Officer in Charge of Senbag along with other distinguished guests were also present at the scholarship giving ceremony.

‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ distribution Program at Damudya

Mohd. Selim, Vice Chairman of MBL handed over the cheques and certificates among the students of Damudya upazilla of Shariatpur district, who received ‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’. A total of 75 students received the scholarship. The amounts were Tk. 21,000.00 each in HSC category, Tk. 15,000.00 in SSC category and Tk. 12,000.00 in JSC category. Moniruzzaman Khan, FAVP & Head of Damudya Branch of MBL was present at the program.
A. S. M. Feroz Alam, director of Mercantile Bank Limited, distributed cheques and certificates among the students of Baufal and Dashmina upazilla of Patuakhali district, who received ‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship. A total number of 33 students received the award. Moudud Ahmed, branch manager of Kalaiya Branch of Mercantile Bank Ltd, chaired the event held at Shaheda-Gafur-Ibrahim General Hospital auditorium at Baufal, Patuakhali.

‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ distribution Program at Chandpur

‘Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ has been awarded among 116 students of Chandpur district at a ceremony organized by Chandpur Branch of MBL. Md. Abdul Hannan, Director of Mercantile Bank Limited handed over the cheques and the certificates among the students. Md. Murad Hossain Chowdhury, AVP & HOB, Chandpur Branch; Shahadat Hossain Patwary, Freedom Fighter and former district Comander; Md. Khasru Molla; A.F.M Ekram Hossain Chowdhury, Journalist; Humayum Kabir Tipu were also present at the scholarship giving ceremony. The scholarship were distributed to 60 JSC students, 30 SSC students, and 26 HSC students.
'Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ distribution Program at Banglabazar

Mercantile Bank organized 'Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship' distribution ceremony at Banglabazar Branch of the Bank for the students of Begumganj upazila, Noakhali. The event was chaired by Zafar Ullah Chowdhury, Head of Banglabazar Branch while Deputy Managing Director Dr. Md. Nurul Islam was present as Chief Guest. The scholarship amounts were Tk. 660,000 for 55 JSC & JDC students, Tk. 780,000.00 for 52 SSC students and Tk. 231,000.00 for 11 HSC students. Invited Guests, Journalists along with other officials of the Bank were also present in the ceremony.

'Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship’ distribution Program at Barishal

Mercantile Bank Abdul Jalil Education Scholarship has been awarded among 40 students in a ceremony organized at Barishal Branch of Mercantile Bank Limited in Barishal. In the event, Md. Nizam Uddin, Director, Islamic Foundation, Barishal was present as chief guest. Md. Mizanur Rahman, Deputy General Manager, Bangladesh Bank, Barisal Office was present as special guest. The scholarship amounts were Tk. 180,000.00 for 15 JSC students, Tk. 210,000.00 for 14 SSC students and Tk. 231,000.00 for 11 HSC students. Head of Barishal Branch of MBL along with other officials of the Bank were also present in the ceremony.
Mercantile Bank Limited has recently signed an agreement with Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd (JGTDSL). The agreement was signed by Adil Raihan, DMD & CSBO of the Bank and S.M. Asadul Haque, Company Secretary of JGTDSL, on behalf of their respective organizations at JGTDSL’s Liaison Office, Dhaka. As per the agreement, Mercantile Bank will facilitate the collection of gas bill from JGTDSL customers through the Bank’s online banking system and Mobile Financial Services ‘MyCash’. Engineer Md. Ehsanul Haque Patwary, MD of JGTDSL; Engineer Md. Shaheenur Rahman, GM (Marketing-North) of JGTDSL; Md. Rafiqul Haque Bhuiyan, SEVP & Head of Mobile Banking Division of MBL along with other senior officials of both the organizations were present in the ceremony.

MBL recently signed an agreement with Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB) regarding collection of monthly bill payment of BREB through ‘MYCash’, mobile financial services of MBL. The agreement was signed by Adil Raihan, DMD & CSBO, MBL and Md. Asafuddaula, Secretary, BREB on behalf of their respective organizations at BREB Head Office, Dhaka. Md. Rafiqul Hoque Bhuiyan, SEVP & Head of Mobile Banking Division; Tapon James Rozario, AVP & Head of ILM Division (Acting) of the Bank and Abul Kalam Shamsuddin, Member (Administration); Additional Chief Engineer & Director (Technical) of the ICT Directorate Hedayetul Islam; Deputy Director Finance Md. Ziauddin of BREB along with other senior officials of both the organizations were also present at the ceremony.
Workshop on ‘ICT Security Awareness for IT Contact Person of Branches’

Mercantile Bank recently organized a workshop titled “ICT Security Awareness for IT Contact Person of Branches” at its training institute in Dhaka. A total number of 58 officials from different branches of the Bank participated in the workshop. Md. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Managing Director & CEO of the Bank inaugurated the training and delivered his speech emphasizing on the security risks from internal and external sources. Also advised to be fully conversant with the safety measures in order to maintain IT security at all levels of banking. A.K.M. Atiqur Rahman, SEVP, CTO & Head of IT division and Javed Tariq, Principal of MBTI were present in the program.

Signing Ceremony of MBL and Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB)

Mercantile Bank Limited (MBL) signed an agreement with Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) to provide loan facility in food processing & agro-based industries and ICT projects under Entrepreneurship Support Fund (ESF) with a view to create new entrepreneurs to boost up investment. The agreement was signed by Adil Raihan, DMD & CSBO, Mercantile Bank Limited and Dipika Bhattacharjee, General Manager, ICB on behalf of their respective organizations at ICB Head Office, Dhaka. Basudeb Paul, VP & Head of SME Finance Division of MBL; Md. Abul Hossain, Managing Director of ICB along with other senior officials of both the organizations were also present at the ceremony.
Discussion & Doamahfil of Mercantile Bank on National Mourning Day

MBL organized a discussion and doamahfil for observing the National Mourning Day and 44th martyrdom anniversary of Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Head Office of the Bank on August 15, 2019. Md. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, MD & CEO of the Bank was present in the program as chief guest. Md. Zakir Hossain, DMD & DCBO; Shamim Ahmed, DMD; Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, DMD; Head of the Divisions of Head office; Branch Managers, Senior Executives & Officers of Bank were present in the program. Later, they offered special prayers for the eternal peace of the departed souls of Bangabandhu and his family members, who embraced martyrdom on this day and also prayers for long life of the honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

School Banking Conference, Bhola 2019

Mercantile Bank Limited, as a Lead Bank in Bhola, organized School Banking Conference at a hotel in Bhola. All the scheduled Banks and educational institutions in Bhola sadar have participated in the conference. A colorful rally marched around the city at the beginning of the conference. Adil Raihan, DMD & CSBO of Mercantile Bank presided over the conference while Manoj Kanti Bairagi, Executive Director (Barishal Region), Bangladesh Bank was the chief guest and Swapan Kumar Biswas, DGM of Bangladesh Bank was the special guest. SM Zobayer, DD of Bangladesh Bank along with other officials of 27 scheduled banks, teachers-students from different institutions and journalists from electronic & print media were present in the conference.
Foundation Training for Trainee Assistant Officers

MBTI arranged a foundation training program for Trainee Assistant Officers of the Bank. Md. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Managing Director & CEO of the Bank inaugurated the training. He delivered his speech emphasizing on the importance of Basic Training and advised Trainee Assistant Officers to acquire knowledge from all areas of banking and to be the future leaders in this sector.
EMPLOYEE NEWS

Shamim Ahmed & Dr. Md. Nurul Islam have been promoted as Deputy Managing Director of Mercantile Bank Limited. Prior to this, both were the Senior Executive Vice President of the Bank.

Shamim Ahmed started his banking career with United Commercial Bank Limited in 1992 after completion of Honors’ & Masters in Statistics from University of Dhaka. Afterward, he joined Prime Bank in 1995 and worked in different positions. He joined Mercantile Bank in 1999 and worked at Foreign Trade, Remittance, Treasury, Anti Money Laundering & CFT, Off-shore Banking Unit and Head of Branch in Mercantile Bank. He was selected as a Trainer for outreach training program on Foreign Exchange Risk Management designed for the Training of Trainers arranged by Bangladesh Bank Training Institute and South Asia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF). He participated in a good number of training programs at home and abroad. He is the son of eminent banker Serajul Islam, ex GM, Janata Bank & ex MD (CC), UCBL.

Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, a seasoned banker, started banking career with National Bank Ltd in 1988. Later he moved to Prime Bank Ltd when it established in 1995 & afterward he has joined in MBL at the time of the bank’s inception in 1999. He served in different capacities both at Head Office & Branch of the Bank such as Head of the Financial Administration Division, General Banking Division, SME Financing Division & Head of Branch in MBL. During his 30 years of versatile banking career, he made significant contributions for the development and growth of the banking industries and participated in a good number of training programs, seminars on banking and finance both at home and abroad.

He was born at Nichintapur village of Hazigonj Police Station under Chandpur district of Bangladesh. Mr. Islam completed his B.Com (Hon’s) & M.Com in Accounting from University of Dhaka in 1979 & pursued Ph.D in SME Financing. He, a Diplomaed Associate of Institute of Bankers, Bangladesh, completed CA course from The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh & earned a certificate on Military Science from University of Dhaka. He is an examiner of Banking Diploma Examination holds under Institute of Bankers Bangladesh. He is blessed with a daughter & a son.
The banking sector’s capital base strengthened in the second quarter of the year. As of June this year, banks’ capital adequacy ratio (CAR) stood at 11.74 percent, up from 11.41 percent three months earlier and 10.11 percent a year earlier, according to data from the central bank. CAR has to be maintained to safeguard the interests of depositors and promote financial stability. From the first quarter of the year, banks were asked to maintain CAR at 12.50 percent in line with the global best practices. But the banking sector has failed to achieve the global benchmark for CAR thanks to 11 banks, including seven state-owned lenders. They collectively faced a capital shortfall of Tk. 16,001.49 crore.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Private credit growth decelerated further in August as some banks had to prepare for complying with the central bank’s revised advance-deposit ratio rules. Lower import growth also pushed down the private sector credit growth in September, bankers said. They, however, expected the credit growth to pick up slightly in September as the central bank had backtracked from its previous decision on slashing the ADR to facilitate the bankers to invest more needed to give the current fiscal’s growth a boost. The sector’s credit growth came down to 10.68 percent in August 2019 on a year-on-year basis from 11.26 percent in August, according to the Bangladesh Bank’s latest statistics. This growth was 2.52 percentage points lower than the central bank’s target of 13.20 percent for the first half (1H) of fiscal year 2020.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Loans written off by banks surged 21 percent to Tk. 54,463 crore in the second quarter of the year from a quarter ago as the lenders try to clean up balance sheets and paint a rosy picture of their health. As much as Tk. 674.38 crore was written-off between April and June, in contrast to Tk. 557.30 crore a quarter ago, according to latest data from the Bangladesh Bank. The central bank has recently eased its write-off policy, which has encouraged banks to tidy up the balance sheet artificially, said experts. Furthermore, lenders do not have to file any case with money loan courts to write off delinquent loans worth Tk. 2 lac, up from Tk. 50,000 previously. Banks have failed to recover 76 percent of the total written-off loans since January 2003 when the central bank introduced the policy.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Bangladesh Bank is set to give loans to local banks’ offshore banking units (OBU) to offset the negative returns that it now gets for its liquid euro assets -- a move that can be viewed as making the best out of a bad situation. Interest rates went negative in the eurozone in June 2014 and the European Central Bank is widely expected to lower the negative interest rates. At present, the Euro Interbank Offered Rate (Euribor) ranges from -0.358 percent to -0.452 percent. “This is causing erosion of euro liquid assets,” said Zahid Hussain, former lead economist of the World Bank’s Dhaka office. Meanwhile, OBUs of domestic banks have borrowed from banks in the eurozone at 2-5 percent interest rate, and the interest payments are counted as outflows of foreign exchange from Bangladesh.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)
Non-bank financial institutions have sanctioned 6.37 percent of their outstanding loans without taking any security. The report showed that the amount of loans disbursed by the country’s 36 NBFIs stood at Tk. 69,328.65 crore at the end of March this year. Of the amount, the entities disbursed Tk. 4,413.84 crore in advances without taking any security from the borrowers. The volume of such loan was Tk. 3,609.78 crore at the end of December, 2018. The BB data also showed that the NBFIs disbursed highest 39.73 percent of their loans or Tk. 27,541.81 crore against real estate — land, building and flat. The second highest — 13.17 percent or Tk. 9,503.39 crore in loans — were issued against personal guarantee.

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) raised the banks’ advance-deposit ratio (ADR) by 1-1.5 percentage points to increase credit supply and boost investment in the economy. The central bank in this regard issued a circular enhancing the ADR for conventional banks to 85% from 83.5% and IDR (investment-deposit ratio) for Islamic banks to 90% from 89%. Private sector credit grew by only 11.26% to Tk.10,02,966 crore in July this year compared to the same month of last year. The credit growth fell behind the Bangladesh Bank’s credit growth target of 14.80% set for the current 2019-20 fiscal year. January 30, 2018, Bangladesh Bank reduced banks’ advance-deposit ratio by 1-1.5 percentage points with a view to containing aggressive and risky lending.

Agent banking is expanding fast across the country as over Tk. 5,200 crore has been deposited till June 2019 in over 34 lac accounts. According to the quarterly data of April-June, 2019 of Bangladesh Bank (BB), deposit collection through the agent banking was Tk. 5,284.46 crore, which was 42 percent higher from Tk. 3,734.50 crore in the period from January to March 2019. At the end of April to June quarter, the number of agent banking accounts across the country also increased by 18 percent or around 5.10 lac compared to the previous quarter. The number of accounts with agents increased to 34,16,672 from 29,06,655 in April to June period of 2019.

The Bangladesh Bank has drafted a specific law to control and prevent production, circulation and transaction of counterfeit currencies in the country, rearranging punishment provisions specified for the offences in other laws. Officials said that the central bank took the move to draft a separate law — Counterfeit Currency Control and Prevention Act-2017 — to rationalise existing measures taken to prevent currency counterfeiting. The BB draft has a provision of life-term imprisonment and fine up to Tk. 1 crore for repeated violations of the law. Currently, the offences related to currency counterfeiting are dealt under the sections 489A to 489D of the Penal Code 1860 and section 25A of Special Powers Act-1974, officials of the Department of Currency Management of the central bank said.

The number of female employees in the country’s banking sector has been increasing at a snail’s pace as the number is still below 18 percent. The percentage of woman employees against male staff in banks was 17.88 percent at the end of June this year as 25,771 women were working in the banking sector while the number of male employees was 1,44,104 at that time, according to a Bangladesh Bank report on gender equality in banks and non-bank financial institutions for January-June, 2019. In December last year, the women’s participation was 17.45 percent with 24,991 female employees against 1,43,201 male staff. Among the state-owned, private, specialised and foreign banks, the specialised commercial banks had least number of female employees as women constituted 14.01 percent of the workforce in such banks.

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### Tax from bank depositors’ interest income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY</th>
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<td>38.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>35.54</td>
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*Source: NBR*
Banks have rescheduled a record Tk. 15,469 crore loans in the second quarter apparently to show on paper non-performing loans have reduced. The rescheduled loan amount for April-June quarter is 165 percent higher than that of January-March, according to the latest data from Bangladesh Bank. In the October-December quarter, loans worth Tk. 12,247 crore were rescheduled, the previous record in any quarter. Last calendar year, loans worth Tk. 23,210 crore were rescheduled but in the first six months of this year, loans worth Tk. 21,308 crore had already been rescheduled. The lion’s share of the loans rescheduled last quarter was default loans. Despite this wholesale rescheduling, default loans stood at Tk. 112,425 crore as of June this year, up 19.71 percent from six months ago.

Financial anomalies involving Tk. 11,710 crore have been detected in 16 ministries between the fiscal years 2013-18 during audits by the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General. The constitutional body raised 434 objections in 34 audit reports in the five fiscal years. In the four years between 2009 and 2013, Tk. 4,500 crore was swindled out of BASIC Bank, according to a central bank inspection. Seven more objections were also raised against the bank, involving Tk. 73 lac. The OCAG also raised 29 objections involving Tk. 1,001 crore against the Large Taxpayer Unit’s (LTU) Dhaka office for 2014-15. State-run Agrani Bank faced audit objections related to Tk. 547.66 crore for the fiscal 2013 and the preceding year.

Money available for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) sector has shrunk by over 15 percent to BDT 112.93 billion during the January-June period of this year. A year back, the total amount was at least twenty billion more. According to figures available, the banks have made the flow of credit to the SMEs harder to get, resulting in a 17 percent drop in the total number of new enterprises. As of June, 2019, the total number of enterprises stood at just over 65,000, compared to nearly 79,000 a year earlier. This is not a good sign for a country depending largely on the SMEs for employment generation. There are over 130 sub-sectors among the SMEs including light engineering, rice mills, compost, biogas, handicrafts, horticulture, fish processing and a whole lot of other enterprises.

Bangladesh Bank said that it had not taken any decision or the government had not given any directive to demonetise bank notes of Tk. 500 and Tk. 1,000 denomination. The reports had claimed that the government might demonetise Tk. 500 and Tk. 1,000 bank notes, like Indian move in 2016-2017, amid the ongoing ‘anti-corruption’ drives in casinos. ‘The reports about demonetising Tk. 500 and Tk. 1,000 notes are misleading and false. These reports have spread panic and confusion among people, which might result in instability in money management in the country. This is unexpected,’ said BB in its statement.

The inter-bank weighted average rate of call money has remained above 5 percent for more than one month as the government is offering high interest against treasury bills and bonds. As per the call money rate published on the Bangladesh Bank’s web site, the highest rate in the call money market was 5.5 percent and the lowest 4.5 percent on September 25 this year, making the weighted average interest rate 5.06 percent. On September 25, banks borrowed Tk. 5,255.79 crore through the inter-bank money market, a short-term borrowing facility for the scheduled banks offered by the central bank. The weighted average interest rate in the call money market exceeded 5 percent for the first time on August 22 this year, hitting 5.02 percent, for the first time after October, 2015.

School banking is gradually getting huge responses from the students across the country as deposits with the banking accounts was around Tk. 1,494 crore at the end of June 2019. The central bank’s latest quarterly report on financial inclusion shows that a total of Tk. 1,494.40 crore was deposited with 19,96,030 school banking accounts at 55 scheduled banks as of June 30 this year. According to the report, the school banking service is more popular in the cities than in the rural areas as 7,71,026 school banking accounts were opened in the cities against 12,25,004 accounts in the rural areas. The banking is also more popular among the male students than the female students as 11,38,080 school banking accounts were opened by male students against 8,57,950 by female students.
Bangladesh Bank (BB) has issued a clean note circulation policy, with immediate effect, directing all bank officials to refrain from putting seals or staples on currency bundles or writing on bank notes. The central bank issued the directive addressing all managing directors and CEOs of all commercial banks. The directive also mentioned that it has become a habit for bank officials to write on bank notes, put seals on them and staple the note bundle, which must not be practiced further. It also said, only bundles of Tk.1,000 notes can be stapled.

(Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

The banking sector faced a combined provisioning shortfall of Tk.12,897 crore at the end of June this year, exposing their faltering financial health. Thirteen public and private sector banks are on the list, according to the Bangladesh Bank latest data. Of the 13 banks, four are state-owned, while the remaining nine are private commercial banks. Non-performing loans (NPLs) of banks rose by a staggering Tk.1,551 crore in three months till June this year, taking the amount of stress loan in the banking sector to Tk.112,425 crore. According to experts, the rising trend of defaulted loans in the banking sector is largely responsible for the huge provisioning shortfall.

(Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

Islami Bank Bangladesh and Mutual Trust Bank have decided to issue bonds worth of total Tk. 21 billion subject to approval of the regulatory authorities, according to official disclosures. Mutual Trust Bank has decided to issuance of non-convertible perpetual bond of Tk. 4.0 billion and issuance of seven years non-convertible subordinated bond of Tk. 5.0 billion. The Mutual Trust Bank, which was listed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange in 2003, disbursed 11 percent stock dividend for the year ended on December 31, 2018.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Banks’ spending for corporate social responsibility purposes dropped year-on-year by 61.84 percent or Tk. 387.8 crore in January-June of the year 2019 as banks were suffering from liquidity crisis. For the CSR purposes, 51 scheduled banks spent Tk. 239.33 crore in the January-June period this year against Tk. 627.13 crore spent in the same period last year, according to the Bangladesh Bank data. Bank officials said that many banks were facing liquidity crisis in this year that forced the banks to curtail their CSR spending. Due to the crisis, spending by the banks for the purposes also fell in July-December period, 2018 when banks disbursed Tk. 277.5 crore against their disbursement of Tk. 417.77 crore in the same period of 2017.

(Ref: www.newagebd.net)

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has re-fixed the prices of commemorative gold coins for International Mother Language Day. Now, a 22-carat gold commemorative coin, each weighing 10-gram, will cost Tk.50,000 instead of Tk. 45,000 while two coins will cost Tk. 1,00,000 instead of Tk. 90,000, said a central bank press release. The Bangladesh Bank increased the prices of such coins considering the rise of gold prices in the current market while the new price will come with immediate effect, the release said.

(Ref: www.daily-sun.com)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Types of Bank</th>
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<td>State Owned Commercial Banks</td>
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<td>Tk. 53,744.64 Crore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Commercial Banks</td>
<td>Tk. 49,949.94 Crore</td>
<td>Tk. 51,924 Crore</td>
<td>1,974 Crore increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Commercial Banks</td>
<td>Tk. 2,256.51 Crore</td>
<td>Tk. 2,057.62 Crore</td>
<td>198.89 Crore decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Specialized Banks</td>
<td>Tk. 4,787.64 Crore</td>
<td>Tk. 4,696.83 Crore</td>
<td>90.81 Crore decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The country’s banking sector saw deposits swell in July as savers turn away from putting money into the national savings instruments. The growth in deposits leaped more than 12 percent year-on-year as of July 31, up from 11.48 percent a month ago, according to the central bank statistics. Excluding inter-bank balance, all banks’ deposits rose to around Tk. 12 trillion as of July 31 from Tk. 11.81 trillion a month ago. The figure was Tk. 11.20 trillion as of March 28. The deposit growth was 11.07 percent as of December 31, 2018. Meanwhile, the net sales of national savings tools plunged by more than 57 percent to Tk. 21.60 billion in July 2019 from Tk. 50.36 billion during the same period of the last calendar year. It was Tk. 32.08 billion in June this year, according to official figures.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Britain is not ready for its next recession and must consider changes to the way it manages its economy to see off the downturn when it comes, the Resolution Foundation, a think-tank, said. British gross domestic product shrank in the second quarter of this year and the economy is struggling to pick up momentum as Brexit approaches, meaning it could already be in a technical recession before it leaves the European Union. The Resolution Foundation said the Bank of England could muster only a quarter of the firepower needed in a typical recession because its key interest rate is so low and its bond-buying programme is likely to prove less effective now.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

At a time when investors are losing money on good stocks, gambling on underperforming companies is rampant. In the last two weeks of month August and first week of September, the prices of 10 badly-performing companies’ stocks soared 9 to 37 percent for seemingly no reason, when the overall market fell 4.26 percent, according to data from the Dhaka Stock Exchange. The companies too informed the DSE that there is no reason for the abnormal price hike of the stocks. If a company fails to provide less than 10 percent dividend then it is put in the ‘B’ category and if it fails to provide any dividend it becomes a ‘Z’ category stock.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The central bank will allow non-bank entities to set up automated teller machines (ATMs) and point of sale (POS) terminals as it ramps up efforts to promote card-based transactions across the country. The move will help people in distant parts of the country to settle their transactions without going to banks as some private companies already have plans to install a large number of ATMs, said a Bangladesh Bank official. India’s central bank has issued such a guideline in 2012 and allowed non-bank entities to set up ATMs in 2014. As of June, banks have installed 10,722 ATMs and 52,846 POS terminals while they issued 12.03 lac credit cards and 1.57 crore debit cards, according to data from the central bank.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

SME Financing Company Limited, a subsidiary company of Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB), has disbursed Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) loan worth Tk. 257.5 million (Tk. 25.75 crore). The company also recovered loan of Tk. 202.2 million (Tk. 20.22 crore) attaining profit of Tk. 44.2 million (Tk. 4.42 crore) in fiscal year 2018-19 (FY ’19). Successful promotion of the sector could be the effective means of alleviating poverty, generating employment side by side accelerating economic growth. SME promotion is very important for reducing the existing gap between rural and urban areas.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
Banks are showing reluctance in lending through the agent banking window based in rural areas despite mobilising large sums through the platform. As of June, Tk. 5,284 crore was collected through the window, up from Tk. 2,013 crore a year earlier, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank. But only Tk. 237 crore was lent through the window, up 72 percent year-on-year. “The year-on-year lending growth was apparently good last quarter, but it hardly had any impact on rural entrepreneurs because the amount is little,” said a Bangladesh Bank official. The trend of deposit mobilisation and lending indicates banks are more interested in collecting funds from rural areas than extending lending facilities to them.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The central bank has asked the scheduled banks to comply with cash reserve ratio (CRR) and statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) rules concerning their offshore banking operations. The banks are allowed to maintain the CRR and SLR only for the offshore banking operations (OBOs) using both local and foreign currencies, officials said. The banks will be allowed to maintain the SLR using their balance of nostro accounts, according to a notification, issued by the Bangladesh Bank (BB).

The banks, which have offshore banking operations (OBOs), need around Tk. 230 billion to meet the CRR and SLR requirements.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The central bank is set to come up with a new formula for calculating the cost of funds for banks with a view to bringing down the interest rate on lending, much to the trepidation of bankers. The cost of funds is the interest rate paid by lenders for the funds they use in their business. The move comes as banks now calculate their cost of fund following different methods, raising questions of transparency. In a bid to bring uniformity the Bangladesh Bank has now decided to come up with a blanket formula that all banks must use to calculate their cost of funds.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has asked all scheduled banks to maintain cash reserve ratio (CRR) and statutory liquidity reserve (SLR) for liabilities arising from respective offshore banking operations. It also asked the banks to comply with this directive effective from September 1, 2019, said a circular issued from the central bank’s department of offsite supervision (DOS). Before this circular, there was no separate directive for banks with regard to maintaining CRR and SLR for offshore banking operation (OBO), said Md Rezaul Islam, General Manager, Department of Offsite Supervision, adding that the previous directives covered banks’ local operation.

(Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

The government has all on a sudden stepped up its borrowing from the banking system from this month as its revenue collection fell short of expectations, sending the cash-strapped banks into a state of panic. Until the end of April, the government did not borrow from banks; rather, it paid back Tk. 1,083 crore, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank. But from this month it started borrowing; as of May 15, it has taken Tk. 7,998 crore, which is the highest in six years. The government had earlier targeted to borrow Tk. 2,725 crore from commercial banks in May. But in the second week of this month, it has revised the amount to Tk. 6,725 crore.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent Banking</th>
<th>Deposit vs Lending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As of June 2019, In crore taka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>Deposit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Arafah</td>
<td>1,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch - Bangla</td>
<td>1,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Asia</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islami</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrani</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BB

AT A GLANCE

The new method will show low cost of fund

Lower cost of fund will bring down the lending rate

Banks to deduct portion of provisioning for default loans, CSR and incentive bonus from total cost

A maximum of 70pc of banks’ administrative cost will be calculated to set the cost of fund

The central bank tries to lower the lending rate to a single digit by implementing the formula, say bankers

The method may have a negative impact on banks if lending rate is set artificially

GOVT’s BANK BORROWING

In crore taka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY13</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
<th>FY19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-6,870</td>
<td>2,725</td>
<td>3,29</td>
<td>5,666</td>
<td>7,998</td>
<td>4,612</td>
<td>7,998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Till May 15

Source: BB
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected that the economy of Bangladesh would grow 7.6 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2019-20. The IMF projected the GDP growth rate at 8.0 percent for FY 2018-19, according to the IMF’s latest Staff Report on Article IV Consultation of Bangladesh released. The Washington-based global monetary watchdog also projected that Bangladesh’s inflation, as measured by the consumers’ price index (CPI), rose to 5.6 percent in the FY '20 on annual average basis from 5.5 percent of the previous fiscal. Meanwhile, the current account deficit is projected to be around 2.0 percent of GDP, according to the IMF near-term outlook. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Despite sharing a long border, Bangladesh is still a very tiny source for merchandise for India due to a lack of diversification of products and non-tariff barriers. India’s annual merchandise import amounts to $500 billion, in which Bangladesh’s share is only 0.2 percent, or a little above $1 billion, even though duty-free facilities have existed since 2011 for all local products save for 25 alcoholic and beverage items. In fiscal 2018-19, Bangladesh’s merchandise shipments to India were $1.24 billion, crossing the $1 billion-mark for the first time, according to data from the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Inflation rose 10 basis points to 5.62 percent in July as both food and non-food prices moved upwards. In June, inflation was 5.52 percent, down 11 basis points compared to the previous month, because of a decline in both food and non-food prices. Food inflation was up two basis points from 5.40 percent in June to 5.42 percent in July, while non-food inflation rose to 5.94 percent last month, up 23 basis points from 5.71 percent a month ago. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Country’s overall import dropped by more than 2.0 percent in the first month of the current fiscal year (FY) 2019-20 following announcement of the national budget, officials said. The settlement of letters of credit (LCs), generally known as actual import, came down to US$4.57 billion in July of this fiscal year from $4.69 billion during the same period of the previous fiscal, according to the central bank’s latest statistics. Talking to the FE, a senior official of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) said import normally falls after announcement of the national budget. “Most of the businessmen usually maintained a ‘go-slow’ policy in the months of May and June mainly due to the national budget,” the central banker said while explaining the lower growth in imports. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Bangladesh lost its global market share in apparel exports by 0.1 percentage point to 6.4% when its closest competitor Vietnam gains newer shares of its market in the 2018. Bangladesh suffer the loss despite having enormous scope to gain from the shifting business from China due to tariff war with the USA. However, in 2018-19 fiscal year, export earnings from the clothing sector posted a 11.49% growth to $34.13 billion from $30.61 billion in the previous fiscal. According to the World Trade Statistical Review 2019 recently released by the World Trade Organization (WTO), of the global apparel export market of $421 billion, Bangladesh grabbed $32 billion in 2018, which was $29 in 2017. (Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

Global Apparel Export Market Share of Top Five Countries (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Trade Statistics Review/WTO
The government's net borrowing from the country's banking system is set to be negative in October, as it is scheduled to repay more than Tk.10 billion from surplus, officials said. The Ministry of Finance has set the net negative bank borrowing target at Tk.13.93 billion for the next month, according to the auction calendar issued by the Bangladesh Bank (BB). According to the calendar, the government may take up to Tk.98 billion as gross borrowing from the banking system in October by issuing treasury bills (T-bills) and bonds. The government's net bank borrowing is set to be negative at Tk.13.93 billion by the end of October, after deducting Tk.111.93 billion as maturity amount of the government securities from the gross borrowing amount, according to the central bank officials.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has suggested addition of more ports of call in the Indo-Bangla water transit protocol with a view to offering alternatives to users, officials said. "Inclusion of more ports of call widens choice, (but) doesn't compel businessmen to use those ports or stop them from using others," a recent review meeting on bilateral pending issues was told. The suggestion came while reviewing the issue relating to notifying more ports of call for transhipment of goods in India and Bangladesh to facilitate 'third country' export-import (EXIM) trade. "(The) government may agree to expand the choice, leaving actual use to the business people based on their judgment of profit and convenience," reads a memo of the meeting.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The export-oriented sectors will get full exemption from payment of value-added tax (VAT) on utility services like gas, water and electricity bills only for the units manufacturing exportables. The facility will not be valid for other purposes like offices and administrative buildings of exporters, said a guideline of the revenue board. It will be valid for the wholly export-oriented sectors, deemed exporters and industries located inside the export processing zones (EPZs). The National Board of Revenue (NBR) issued the guideline on the offer for exporters.

It was a long-cherished demand of the exporters to exempt them from payment of VAT on utility bills. Earlier, the rate of VAT exemption was 80 percent natural gas and electricity, 60 percent for water and 100 percent for other services.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

A number of UAE business groups are set to invest $10 billion (Dh36.7 billion) into Bangladesh, according to data compiled by Bangladesh Economic Forum. Bangladeshis are major investors in the UAE economy where more than 50,000 businesses are owned and successfully run by Bangladeshi expatriates who employ more than 150,000 people collectively. Bangladesh is more than ready to receive a higher level of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) that jumped 69 percent last year to US$3.61 billion. Domestic consumption is increasing in Bangladesh as more than 2 million people are joining the middle income group and becoming consumers – that opens up more scope and opportunities for new investors. We are developing 100 economic zones and 28 hi-tech parks in Bangladesh for investors to set up their operations and benefit from the lowest labour cost and very low operational costs.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Bangladesh economy's degree of openness has seen a mixed trend in the last 10 years as economic expansion outstripped foreign trade rise. Bangladesh's trade-GDP ratio reached 46.30 percent during fiscal year 2012-13 rising from 37.8 percent in FY '10. But such a ratio has fluctuated during the next six fiscal years until FY '19. The higher such a ratio the more integrated an economy is. The trade-GDP ratio came down to 38.89 percent in the FY '19 from 44.51 percent in the FY'14, according to a measurement on the basis of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data. Trade analysts and economists said such a fluctuation in foreign trade happened mainly due to the lack of synchronisation between GDP growth and overall foreign trade.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
Bangladesh’s e-commerce sector is expected to grow 70 percent in 2017 as the rollout of 3G internet 3-4 years back led to rapid adoption of online shopping, reports India-based Economic Times. The size of Bangladesh’s e-commerce market is estimated to be $110-115 million (around Tk.900 crore ) this year, growing from $65-70 million in 2016, said the report referring to RedSeer Consulting. The e-commerce size is still is a mere 0.7 percent of the country’s total retail market. Rocket internet-backed online marketplace Daraz, Foxconn-backed e-retailer Pickaboo, Bagdoom and Chaldal are among the leading startups in the country. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Non-leather footwear has opened up a new avenue of export opportunity for the country when the second largest export earner after apparel — leather and leather goods — is going through crises over non-compliance issues and the need for product diversification is at its peak. Synthetic footwear and sports shoes have drawn the attention of global buyers and brands and earned $271.53 million registering a sharp rise by 11.24% in the fiscal year 2018-19. In the FY18, export earnings from the synthetic shoes were $244 million, as per Export Promotion Bureau. On the other hand, leather footwear export earnings rose by 7.50% to $608 million, while export earnings from leather and leather goods witnessed a 6.06% negative growth to $1.01 billion, which was $1.08 billion in last fiscal year. (Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

The apparel items, the largest contributor to the national exports, earned $3.31 billion, up 9.7% from the same month of last year. Bangladesh’s merchandise export earnings in July, the first month of the current 2019-20 fiscal year, posted an 8.55% growth to $3.88 billion riding mainly on apparel sector, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) provisional data. The apparel items, the largest contributor to the national exports, earned $3.31 billion, up 9.7% from the same month of last year. Of the total, knitwear products earned $1.68 billion, up 9.89% and woven products earned $1.63 billion, up 9.51% month-on-month. (Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)
The country’s trade deficit fell by 14.76% year-on-year to $15.49 billion in the last (2018-19) fiscal year, thanks to a steady growth in export earning, remittance earnings and a slowdown in import growth. The deficit narrowed due to a better export growth than previous year and expected remittance earnings, said Zahid Hussain, former lead economist of World Bank, Bangladesh. He said export increased owing to the ongoing trade war between China and the USA. According to central bank data, trade deficit eased in FY 19 as import grew by only 1.79% against the export earnings growth by 10.09% during the period. Import payments stood at $55.44 billion from $54.46 billion in the same period of FY18. As of August 14, foreign exchange reserves stood at $32.35 billion due to the rising trend of export earnings, and remittances. (Ref: www.dhakatribune.com)

The government will import 1.4 million metric tonnes of refined petroleum for a six-month period (July-Dec) of the current year from seven state-owned companies of six countries through negotiations. The annual demand for petroleum in the country is about 6.5 million metric tonnes of which about 5.6 million is imported refined fuel. Official sources said the planned import of 1.4 million mts of petroleum will cost approximately $819.306 million (equivalent to Tk.69.23 billion). Of this, $784.857 million (Tk.66.32 billion) will be spent as value of the products while $34.49 million (Tk.2.91 billion) for premium which covers transportation and other charges. The proposed import, official documents show, the diesel (gas oil) is 1.120 million mts (about 8,355 million barrel), jet A-1 is 145,000 mts (1.160 million barrel), petrol (mogas) 30,000 mts (258,000 barrel) and furnace oil 140,000 mts. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Investment Corporation of Bangladesh has sought Tk 1,000 crore in financial support from Bangladesh Bank on an “emergency basis” to inject liquidity into the ailing capital market as part of its concerted efforts to bring back investor confidence. The largest financial investor in the capital market sent a letter to Governor Fazle Kabir on September 19 seeking his cooperation in the form of either credit or financial support. Between June 27 and September 26, the DSEX, the Dhaka Stock Exchange’s benchmark index, shed 461 points or 9.29 percent to reach 4,968, which is below the psychological mark of 5,000, while investors lost Tk.23,925 crore. The government has recently instructed the ICB to provide required support to the market amid the ongoing volatility which has dampened investor confidence, according to the letter signed by ICB Managing Director Md Abul Hossain. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Domestic production of fruit is too insignificant to meet the demand. Between fiscals 2014-15 and 2018-19, fruit imports have soared 72 percent to 5.99 lakh tonnes, according to data compiled by the Plant Quarantine Wing (PQW) of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), and Bangladesh Bank. In fiscal 2016-17, 3,000 tonnes were produced, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. Production of locally grown fruits has soared but the demand for foreign fruits has increased owing to reluctance among many to consume native fruits. Many people prefer foreign fruits even though the nutrition value of native fruits is not less than the imported ones. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA) has formed a surveillance committee to monitor the compliance of paying 15 percent agent commission by the insurers, according to a press statement. In July, the regulator of the country’s 78 life and non-life insurance companies had fixed 15 percent agent commission for the privately-owned non-life insurers with an effect from August. The IDRA fixed the rate, as there are allegations that many insurers give even 70 percent commission to their agents against policies that ultimately weakens financial strength of the companies. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
Bangladesh has taken its position among the top-20 improvers in the ease of doing business 2020 as the country has implemented various reform initiatives to create a business-friendly environment, according to the World Bank (WB). As per the multi-donor bank report, available on its website, Bangladesh made it easier for entrepreneurs to start a business, obtain an electrical connection and access credit. Among other initiatives, Bangladesh lowered the name clearance fee for new company registration, abolished digital certification fees and reduced registration fee calculations based on share capital. (Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The net foreign investment on the Dhaka bourse has kept falling for the seventh straight month because of eroding investor confidence and the rising fear of depreciation of the local currency. Their net investment hit Tk 60.36 crore in the negative in September, when foreigners bought shares worth Tk 257.78 crore and sold securities amounting to Tk 318.14 crore, according to data of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE). It was Tk 102.53 crore in the negative in August. The net foreign investment plunged to Tk 123 crore in the negative in March, reversing fromTk 323 crore in the positive a month ago. The portfolio investment has been falling since then. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The Bangladesh economy is forecast to achieve the second highest growth rate this fiscal year in South Asia, the World Bank said in its biennial regional economic update. Bangladesh’s gross domestic product is projected to grow at 7.2 percent this fiscal year and 7.3 percent the following year, according to the latest edition of the ‘South Asia Economic Focus, Making (De) centralisation Work’. Bhutan topped the list with an estimated 7.4 percent growth this fiscal year. “The outlook is clouded by rising financial sector vulnerability, but the economy is likely to maintain growth above 7 percent, supported by a robust macroeconomic framework, political stability and strong public investments.” (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Bangladesh has to create a vibrant corporate bond market immediately if it wants to go to the next level of development, experts said. Banks get deposits for short-term -- three months to 12 months -- but give loans for long-term, which is seven years or more. This is creating an asset-liability mismatch and liquidity crisis in the industry, they said. Bangladesh will need around $600 billion in investment only for infrastructure if it aspires to be a developed nation within 2041. But the current investment trend shows there will be a gap of about $200 billion, which can be raised by bonds. Bangladesh’s bond market is dominated by the treasury bonds. The central bank data shows the government raised more than Tk 2 lakh crore by issuing bonds of different tenure. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Feed makers urged the government to withdraw advance tax on the import of raw materials of feed and machinery of the poultry industry, as the new fiscal measure has increased the cost of their businesses. The industry operators said imports of products related to livestock and fish farming are exempted from customs tariff, duties and taxes. Therefore, the imports of the raw materials of feed should not be subject to advance tax (AT). The National Board of Revenue (NBR) introduced 5 percent AT under the Value Added Tax and Supplementary Duty Act 2012 that came into effect on July 1 this year. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)
Monetary Policy Statement: Fiscal Year 2019-20

Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir unveiled monetary policy statement for the current fiscal year 2019-20 at the central bank headquarters on 31.07.2019, subject to such mid-course modifications in policy rates and statutory cash reserve & liquidity ratios as found necessary. Fazle Kabir said this MPS would be in action for the entire fiscal, from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. BB decided to enforce one monetary program for each financial year, effective from the current fiscal, instead of twice.

Brief look back at FY19 Monetary Policy objectives vis-a-vis outcomes

Both the key FY19 monetary program objectives, viz., bringing down annual average CPI inflation to 5.60 percent by end June 2019, from 5.78 percent of end June 2018, and supporting attainment of government’s 7.80 percent real GDP growth target for FY19 stood over-fulfilled; with end June CPI inflation at 5.47 percent and 8.13 percent FY19 real GDP growth estimated by BBS.

The above charts plot actual growth paths of major monetary aggregates in FY19 vis-à-vis their program paths. Both broad money (M2) and domestic credit (DC) are seen to have moved roughly along their programmed directions but at markedly slower than programmed growth pace. The private and public sector components of domestic credit have likewise both moved along the programmed direction, but at markedly slower than programmed growth pace in case of private sector, and substantially higher than programmed growth pace in the fourth quarter of FY19 in case of public sector. High public sector borrowing in the last quarter of fiscal year for ADP implementation related expenditure is however not unusual.

Actual growth path of net foreign assets (NFA) is seen to have diverged significantly (Chart 5) both in direction and growth pace from the program projection particularly since February 2019, recovering to positive growth trend against program projection of continuing decline, due to aforementioned faster than projected narrowing of bop current account deficit.
Overview of the global and local contexts of Monetary Policy stance for FY20

1. Global Growth, Inflation and Interest Rate outlook

The below table shows IMF’s near term projections for global GDP growth and its breakup by major advanced and emerging market/developing country groups. These projections of lower single digit growth rates for advanced economies and higher single digit growth rates for emerging market/developing country groups undergo small changes in biannual revisions, with overall global growth projections little changed at levels below four percent.

Table-1: Overview of the GDP growth as per WEO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Difference From April 2019 WEO Projections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>Projections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Economies</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Euro Area</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Advanced Economies</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Market and Developing Economies</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Global food and non-food commodity price trends since June 2016 are plotted in Charts 6 and 7 below; broadly depicting price stability in both groups but with somewhat higher volatility in price trends of energy and rice. Recent energy prices are seen to be lately in downward trend, and Bangladesh doesn’t need much of rice import except in occasional flood or other adverse weather related major crop losses. Global commodity price trends do not therefore pose significant near term risk for domestic price inflation in Bangladesh.

2. Domestic growth and Inflation Outlook

Robust growth momentum continues in the Bangladesh economy amid tepid global growth environment, with 8.13 percent real GDP growth estimated by BBS for FY19 against global growth projection averaging 4.1 percent for 2019 in emerging market and developing economies (Table 1). The strong 8.13 percent FY19 real GDP growth was broad based across economic sectors, supported both by strong domestic demand and by external demand reflected in 10.5 percent export growth.
Chart 9: Projection of GDP Growth for FY20-FY24

Chart 10: Twelve Month Average Inflation

Chart 11: Excess (above CRR and SLR) Liquid Assets

Chart 12: Call Money and Policy Rates

Chart 13: Nominal Interest Rates

Chart 14: Real Interest Rates

Chart 12 plots Bangladesh’s trends of the food, non-food and ‘core’ (non-food, non energy) components of general (12 month average) CPI inflation since June 2015, using BBS data. With low volatility, the general CPI inflation has edged down to 5.47 percent in June 2019, well below the targeted 5.60 percent ceiling. The food and non-food components of CPI inflation are seen in the chart to be moving in negative correlation. While the overall general CPI inflation remains stable below the targeted ceiling, its non-food, non energy ‘core’ component kept rising steadily to 5.48 percent in June 2019, indicating rising inflationary pressure.

3. Fund flows, Fund Costs, and related issues in Money and Credit markets

Money Market Liquidity and Interest Rate trends

Charts 11 and 12 depict trends of surplus liquidity (liquid assets in excess of CRR and SLR), and of weighted average overnight interest rates in interbank money market. Overall surplus liquidity is seen to be broadly stable, displaying only moderate variability; declining surplus towards the end of FY19 largely accounted for by ADP implementation related bank borrowing of the government typically bunching up towards end of fiscal year.

Trends of Deposit and Lending Interest Rates - intermediation efficiency:

Both lending and deposit interest rates are seen in the charts to be in declining trend, as is to be expected in environment of declining inflation. The intermediation spread between the two has however narrowed only slightly, indicating insignificant efficiency gain, limited competitive behavior in the banking sector, or both.
4. Overview of trends in external sector accounts

Charts 15, 16, and 17 show growth paths of export, import, and workers’ remittance inflows in FY18 and FY19. The unusually high FY18 import growth (due to some megaprojects related need and rice import to cover crop loss in flood) came down to normalcy in FY19, while both exports and workers’ remittance inflows rose higher in FY19 than in preceding FY18.

5. Overview of Capital Market developments

Chart 18 shows DSE broad index (DSEX) remaining little changed by end FY19 from its level at end FY18 amid usual day to day turnover variability. Trading volumes remained stuck at low levels, with occasional episodes of trading coming almost to halt.

Monetary Policy stance and monetary program for FY20, policy rates, CRR, and SLR

1. Monetary policy stance

As customary, the FY20 monetary program is based on the 8.2 percent real GDP growth and 5.5 percent CPI inflation ceiling targets declared for FY20 in the national budget, as these targets were adopted in consultative process participated by BB. Arithmetic sum of the targets of real GDP growth rate and inflation ceiling constitutes the target rate for nominal GDP growth. BB’s annual monetary programs make adequate room for money and credit growth for attaining the targeted nominal GDP growth, appropriately adjusted to take account of any change in money velocity.

2. FY20 Monetary Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Program</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Foreign Assets*</td>
<td>-4.2</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Domestic Assets</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Credit</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit to the public sector</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit to the private sector</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad money</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve money</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*At constant exchange rates of end June 2019. Source: Bangladesh Bank

In the Table-2, summarizes the projected quarterly movements of growth rates of key monetary and credit aggregates of BB’s FY20 monetary program.
3. **Policy Interest Rates, CRR, and SLR**

In 2018 private sector banks and financial institutions faced substantial liquidity stress from household savings in bank deposit accounts being lured away into National Savings Scheme instruments bearing high non-market yields. High import growth that year also created stress in the interbank foreign exchange market, requiring BB’s USD sales to banks, which further depleted their Taka liquidity. The state owned banks suffered less of liquidity stress because of their greater access to public sector deposits. BB stepped in to address the Taka liquidity stresses with measures including a 1.00 percentage point lowering of CRR from 6.50 to 5.50 percent of total time and demand liabilities. Bop current account deficit narrowed substantially in FY19, relieving stresses in the foreign exchange market; and the government has also taken up reform measures in the NSC scheme.

**Quality dimension of BB’s growth support objective – some new priorities**

BB maintains a good number of refinance lines supporting lending for productive pursuits in various underserved economic sectors and population segments, solely with BB funds or in participation with development partners. Besides magnitude of incremental growth, BB’s focus in growth support pursuits are also on such quality dimensions as inclusivity, job creation, and environmental sustainability.

**Potential risk factors for attainment of FY20 monetary program objectives**

A couple of near term domestic risk factors loom over to fully or partly impair attainment of FY20 program objectives. Recent upward revision of fuel gas prices and new VAT law implementation has already imparted some impact on prices in the beginning of FY20, the lingering effect over the coming month remains to be seen. Ongoing trade war and geopolitical tensions are uncertainties in the external front that may or may not impair attainment of BB’s FY20 monetary program outcomes.
Retail Banking
- A way of diversifying banking portfolios

Tapash Chandra Paul, PhD, Head of Risk Management Division, Mercantile Bank Limited

The entire banking system has changed to digital coverage and customer convenience. As a result, it is important to tap the opportunities of retail banking by the commercial banks in Bangladesh. The growing network of banks and increasing use of digital technology will also contribute to the growth of retail lending activities. Banks in Bangladesh are still in the traditional mode. Here, corporate banking and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were getting more focus ignoring the retail sector. But with retail banking, it can reach a wide variety of customers across the country.
sector. But with retail banking, it can reach a wide variety of customers across the country. It can be said with confidence that retail banking will be the main driver of growth for the country’s banking sector in the near future as lenders’ dependency on corporate banking is waning due to rising of non-performing loans. Retail banking, in contrast, has much lower NPLs than corporate banking.

In commercial banking, a single corporate customer can cost a huge amount in impairments. Regulators are also making banks hold more capital, limiting lending (single borrower exposure limit i.e., bank can extend credit facilities up to 35 per cent of its capital including funded and non-funded facilities to a single customer; in case of RMG which is 50 per cent.

It is pertinent to mention that retail banking is the most visible face of banking for the general public. These services are typically offered at the physical branches and at the omnipresent ATMs. The delivery channel for retail banking is now no longer restricted to branches and ATMs but is also made available through telephone and the internet. In fact, some retail banks in the West operate solely via the internet and do not have facilities to serve customers at physical outlets. Generally, the banks that focus purely on retail clienteles are relatively few and retail banking activities are generally conducted by separate divisions within banks.

Banks in Bangladesh currently do their banking on a booming retail business as the household debt in Bangladesh as a percentage of (nominal) GDP is one of the lowest in this continent. US-based Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in its report on Bangladesh has reinforced the fast growing middle and affluent class in Bangladesh and the rise of consumerism. Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) claimed that by 2030, 33 per cent of our population will belong to the middle-class. Gross domestic product (GDP) at purchasing power parity (PPP) is expected to grow to USD 1,324 billion in 2030 and USD 3,064 billion by 2050. From this we can assume that the nature of their demand will shift, they can afford more to buy newer things and more importantly, they would demand better financing or banking solutions.

Accordingly, banks in Bangladesh should adopt customer-centric business model to cater for diverse groups of people through customization. The big metropolitan areas of the country are always treated as the key markets for retail banking but now it is high time to extend it to provide all key retail banking services to even rural areas. Bringing technology-driven solutions, modernization of banking software and the use of contents in digital channels are the primary concerns to render banking more efficient and diversified. Features like mobile app-based banking, electronic payment and secure online transactions have become essential rather than luxury. It has become challenging for banks to retain customers and attract new ones, deliver new products and provide steady customer-centric services while meeting the regulatory requirements. Without automation of critical business processes, it is not possible to ensure seamless customer service. Anyone and everyone should be a target customer of retail banking. Banks should bring every citizen under the banking ecosystem through agent banking, school banking, ‘10 Tk. Account’ for root level farmers in order to move towards financial inclusion.

As retail banking ensures steady flow of deposits, which plays an important role in lending and other investments, it is also a tool for banks to maintain ADR. This is done through offering diverse savings schemes to clients belonging to various income groups.

However, one of the major constraints for banks is ‘product scarcity’. Banks are sometimes helpless when the clients ask for any tailor-made solution. However, there is no avenue other than retail banking to ensure sustainable profit in the days to come as banks will have to depend on the window for both deposit collection and loan disbursement. Efficient and skilled manpower are also essential to remain competitive in retail banking. Retail banking helps banks to lower the cost of deposit and operations. It also reduces the risks stemming from dependency on large loans. Banks must shift the gear towards retail banking since it helps achieve a healthy lending portfolio. In today’s competitive world, banks have to be proactive in their approach.

(Ref: The Financial Express, Date: 5 October 2019)
Growth is expected to edge up by 0.1 percentage point, from 6.7% in 2018 to 6.8% in 2019 and again to 6.9% in 2020. Sub-regional averages in South Asia reflect heavy weighting for India, where growth slipped from 7.2% in 2017 to 7% in 2018 as agriculture and government expenditure both experienced slower growth and as global oil prices rose. Most other countries in South Asia are expected to maintain or slightly improve on their high growth rates, with Bangladesh expected to achieve 8% growth in 2019 and 2020. Inflation in South Asia was stable at 3.7% in 2018 with benign food inflation and despite higher global oil prices. Sub-regional inflation is expected rise to 4.7% in 2019 and 4.9% in 2020 under pressure from currency depreciation and India’s upward adjustment of some agricultural procurement prices to cover higher input costs.

(Ref: www.adb.org)

Overview of the World Output Growth Projections

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</table>

Source: www.adb.org

US consumer spending slowed sharply in August, according to the latest government data, suggesting turmoil from President Donald Trump’s trade wars was hitting home for the general public. And in another sign trade tribulations are weighing on American industry, demand for big-ticket manufactured goods also showed unwelcome weakness, economists said. The new data caused some economic forecasters to cut their third-quarter GDP growth estimates sharply, and they also were likely to exacerbate disagreements among US central bankers over the path of interest rates.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Canada ended the fiscal year 2018-2019 with a deficit of 14 billion Canadian dollars (10.6 billion US dollars) on March 31, said the Finance Department. In fiscal year 2017-2018, Canada saw a deficit of 19 billion Canadian dollars (14.33 billion US dollars), reports Xinhua. Total federal debt at the end of the 2018-2019 fiscal year came to 685.5 billion Canadian dollars (517.4 billion US dollars), compared with 671.3 billion Canadian dollars for the previous year. However, the country's federal debt-to-GDP ratio fell to 30.9 percent from 31.3 percent a year ago.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Chinese companies are facing many difficulties due to trade frictions, Commerce Minister Zhong Shan said. The United States and China have been locked in an escalating trade war for over a year. They have levied punitive duties on hundreds of billions of dollars of each other’s goods, roiling financial markets and threatening global growth. “Trade faces unprecedented challenges,” Zhong told a news conference in Beijing. “These challenges are both external and internal.” The trade war has taken its toll on the Chinese economy. China’s exports unexpectedly fell in August as shipments to the United States slowed sharply, pointing to further weakness in the world’s second-largest economy and underlining a pressing need for more stimulus.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)
Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced mega PSU bank mergers, merging PNB, OBC, United Bank to create India’s second largest govt bank in a bid to realise Modi’s $5 trillion economy dream. Not only this, the government has decided to amalgamate seven other PSU banks into three big lenders. Nirmala Sitharaman said that Union Bank, Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank will be merged to create India’s 5th largest PSU bank entity, while Canara Bank will be merged with Syndicate Bank to form 4th largest government bank. Finally, Indian Bank will be merged with Allahabad Bank to form the 7th largest state-run bank in India.

(Ref: www.financialexpress.com)

Australia will set aside an additional $100 million Australian dollar (68 million US dollar) to support the country’s drought-stricken farmers, Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Australia’s east coast will swelter for at least three more months and the country will experience hotter-than-normal conditions, putting the chance of exceeding average temperatures at 80 percent over the period, its weather bureau has said. Australia is among the world’s top 10 exporters of the grain, typically contributing about 2.0 percent to GDP. In addition to setting aside more funds to prop up the industry, Morrison said his government will also lower eligibility standards so more farmers can get access to the previously committed A$7 billion in aid.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

President Donald Trump’s administration is considering delisting Chinese companies from US stock exchanges, three sources briefed on the matter said, in what would be a radical escalation of US-China trade tensions. The move would be part of a broader effort to limit US investment in Chinese companies, two of the sources said. One said it was motivated by the Trump administration’s growing security concerns about the companies’ activities. Shares of New York Stock Exchange-owner Intercontinental Exchange Inc ended down 1.88 percent and shares of Nasdaq Inc declined 1.70 percent. It was not immediately clear how any delisting would work.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has predicted further slowdown in the global economy this year and in 2020. Updating its outlook, the OECD, which groups 36 of the world’s leading economies, revised down its global growth forecast for 2019 and 2020 to 2.9 percent and 3.0 percent respectively. The Paris-based organisation had previously expected global growth to accelerate by 3.2 percent this year and by 3.4 percent next year. The figure was at 3.6 percent in 2018, reports Xinhua. "The global economy is facing increasingly serious headwinds and slow growth is becoming worryingly entrenched," said Laurence Boone, OECD chief economist.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has lowered South Korea’s 2019 growth outlook to 2.1 percent, according to South Korean Finance Ministry. The revised forecast was down from 2.4 percent estimated in July, citing the deepening of the global trade dispute and economic slowdown in major economies, the Ministry of Economy and Finance said. The 2020 growth forecast for the South Korean economy was also cut from 2.5 percent to 2.4 percent. The country’s real gross domestic product (GDP), adjusted for inflation, expanded 1.0 percent in the second quarter from three months earlier, after unexpectedly diminishing 0.4 percent in the first quarter.

(Ref: www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Euro zone inflation was stable in August at its lowest level in nearly three years, the European Union’s statistics agency said, confirming its earlier estimates. Eurostat said inflation in the 19 countries sharing the euro was at 1 percent on the year in August, unchanged from the July reading and in line with expectations in a Reuters poll. On the month, inflation went up 0.1 percent, below market expectations of a 0.2 percent rise, new monthly data released by Eurostat showed. Core inflation, which strips out volatile unprocessed food and energy and which the ECB scrutinises in policy decisions, was also confirmed at 1.1 percent in August on the year, the same rate recorded in July.

(Ref: www.thedailystar.net)
Tariffs imposed or threatened by the United States and China could shave 0.8 percent off global economic output in 2020 and trigger more losses in future years, the International Monetary Fund said. IMF spokesman Gerry Rice said trade tensions were beginning to affect a world economy already facing challenges including a weakening of manufacturing activity not seen since the global financial crisis of 2007-2008, reports Reuters. World economic activity remained subdued, with trade and geopolitical tensions causing uncertainty and eroding business confidence, investment and trade. The IMF had previously forecast that the US-China trade war and other trade disputes threatened future global growth, but the impact was now being felt. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Britain is not ready for its next recession and must consider changes to the way it manages its economy to see off the downturn when it comes, the Resolution Foundation, a think-tank, said. British gross domestic product shrank in the second quarter of this year and the economy is struggling to pick up momentum as Brexit approaches, meaning it could already be in a technical recession before it leaves the European Union. The Resolution Foundation said the Bank of England could muster only a quarter of the firepower needed in a typical recession because its key interest rate is so low and its bond-buying programme is likely to prove less effective now. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Consumer prices in Britain rose in August at the slowest rate since December 2016, a pre-Brexit boost to the spending power of households who are also seeing the fastest wage growth in 11 years. Prices of goods and services paid by consumers rose at an annual rate of 1.7% in August after a 2.1% increase in July, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. A Reuters poll of economists had pointed to a rate of 1.9%. Separate ONS figures showed British house prices rose in July by just 0.7% in annual terms, the smallest rise since 2012, as weakness in the London market spread to other parts of England. (Ref: dailyasianage.com)

United Nation’s trade chief has said climate change poses an “existential threat to commodity-dependent developing countries” and highlighted the need to diversify economies and exports. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)’s Commodities and Development Report 2019, maintains that diversification could be either “horizontal”, meaning venturing into new goods and sectors to reduce dependence on a narrow range of commodities – or vertical, which involves increasing a commodity’s value. According to the report, a successful diversification strategy will mostly likely involve a combination of horizontal policies, such as education and health investments, and targeted measures to promote promising sectors. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Federal Reserve looks poised to cut interest rates for a second time. The modest rate cut the Fed announced in July its first in more than a decade left its benchmark short-term rate in a range of 2% to 2.25%. It also raised expectations that it would follow with up to three additional quarter-point rate cuts this year. Most economists have declined two beginning. So has a belief that oil prices will remain elevated, that inflation might finally be reaching the Fed’s target level and that the US economy remains sturdy. (Ref: dailyasianage.com)

A leading indicator of Japan’s core consumer inflation slowed for a second straight month to its lowest rate in more than a year, underscoring the challenge for the central bank in hitting its 2 percent price target. Government data released on Friday showed core consumer prices in Tokyo, a leading indicator of nationwide price trends, rose 0.5 percent in September from a year earlier, slowing from a 0.7 percent gain in the previous month. The rise in the core consumer price index for Japan’s capital city, which includes oil products but excludes fresh food prices, undershot the median estimate of a 0.6 percent increase. It was the slowest growth since May last year and weighed by declines in energy prices. “October’s sales tax hike will serve as one factor for lifting inflation temporarily, but that will be offset by government steps to make pre-school education free of charge,” said Masaki Kuwahara, senior economist at Nomura Securities. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)
Germany sees much lower borrowing costs than expected due to record-low yields and this could create additional fiscal room of roughly 5 billion euros this year, maybe more, two people familiar with Berlin’s budget planning told Reuters. In its 2019 federal budget, Chancellor Angela Merkel’s government has initially earmarked 17.6 billion euros ($19.36 billion) for debt servicing costs. But lower-than-expected borrowing costs stemming from the European Central Bank’s loose monetary policy and worldwide demand for scarcer “safe haven” bonds mean Berlin is now reckoning on a sum between 10 and 13 billions euros. Two other budget experts said Germany’s borrowing costs could come in between 12 and 13 billion euros at the end of this year. From January to June, German borrowing costs stood only at 4.9 billion euros, a Finance Ministry document showed. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

Brexit and trade war fears drove eurozone business growth to its lowest level in six years in September, a closely watched survey, warning that the single currency area’s economy was “close to stalling”. Deepening problems in the manufacturing sector led the downturn, with output falling at the quickest rate since 2012, but there was also bad news in the service sector, where growth slowed after previously holding up, according to data from IHS Markit. IHS Markit’s composite eurozone PMI, seen as a key indicator of business confidence, fell to 50.4 in September, down from 51.9 in August -- the lowest reading since June 2013. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

The pound has hit its highest level against the dollar since July in Britain amid hopes a no-deal Brexit can be avoided. Sterling jumped more than 1 percent on September 13, 2019 to over $1.24 against the dollar, its highest level in seven weeks. The pound was boosted after a report in the Times said the DUP, Northern Ireland’s largest political party, was prepared to abide by some European rules after Brexit. However, the DUP swiftly denied the claim. Despite this, sterling held on to its gains, and against the euro it was up 0.7% at over €1.12. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

India is looking to ease foreign investment limits in government bonds, as it seeks to get its securities included in global bond indexes in the next two years, three government officials with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. New Delhi is considering creating a special window for foreign passive investors that focus on index investing, one of the officials added, even as it seeks to counter the risk posed by hot money flows from more actively managed funds. The investors in the new window will not face the same caps as India currently has on such investments from foreign portfolio investors, the person said. The officials, who asked not to be named as they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly, did not provide any timeline as the issue is still in early stages of discussion. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

China has ranked first in terms of contribution to global economic growth since 2006, becoming the leading engine of world economic growth, an official report said. In the past 70 years, China’s proportion of major economic and social aggregate indicators in the world has further increased, its international status has been further enhanced, and its global influence has continued to grow, said a report released by the National Bureau of Statistics. The report shows that from 1961 to 1978, China’s average annual contribution to global economic growth was 1.1 percent, but from 1979 to 2012, the average annual contribution rate was 15.9 percent, ranking second in the world. From 2013 to 2018, the average annual figure climbed to 28.1 percent, ranking first place globally, the report said. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
The US federal budget deficit reached 984 billion US dollars in the fiscal year 2019, up by 26 percent year-on-year, and is the highest since 2012, the Treasury Department has said. The federal deficit was 4.6 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the fiscal year that ended on Sept. 30, which is 0.8 percentage point higher than the previous year, the department said. Total outlays for the FY2019 stood at $4,447 billion, up by 8.0 percent from the previous year, while total receipts stood at $3,462 billion, up by 4.0 percent, reports Xinhua. The top three outlays in the fiscal year are $1,044 billion on social security, $688 billion on national defence, and $651 billion on federal health insurance Medicare.

(Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Singapore Economic Development Board said that the country's manufacturing output grew 0.1 percent year-on-year in September, compared to a revised 6.4 percent decrease this August. Excluding biomedical manufacturing, the output declined 4.3 percent year-on-year in September, compared to a revised 10.3 percent decrease in the previous month, reports Xinhua. Meanwhile, on a seasonally adjusted month-on-month basis, Singapore's manufacturing output increased 3.7 percent in September. Excluding biomedical manufacturing, the output grew 5.9 percent. As for the performance of different clusters, the electronics cluster's output contracted 9.6 percent year-on-year in September, while the biomedical manufacturing cluster's output expanded 21.9 percent in the month, the precision engineering cluster's output rose 4.0 percent, the transport engineering cluster's output grew 3.0 percent, the chemicals cluster's output fell 3.9 percent, and the general manufacturing industries cluster's output decreased 7.4 percent. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

South Korea’s economy grew at a slower pace of 0.4 percent in the third quarter (Q3) from the previous quarter, slightly missing market expectations, preliminary central bank estimates showed. The median forecast from a Reuters survey of 26 economists was for South Korea’s gross domestic product to expand by a seasonally adjusted 0.5 percent in the July-September period in sequential terms, following a 1.0 percent gain in the second quarter. The Bank of Korea’s estimated Asia’s fourth-largest economy grew 2.0 percent for the three months ended Sept. 30 from a year earlier, compared with 2.1 percent growth tipped in the poll and 2.0 percent expansion in the second quarter. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The Ukrainian government predicted next year's gross domestic product (GDP) growth to be up to 3.7 percent, Interfax Ukraine reported. Sergiy Nikolaichuk, deputy minister of economic development, trade and agriculture, said, "Next year, we expect (the GDP) growth to accelerate to 3.7 percent," reports Xinhua. The current year's macroeconomic forecast will also be revised from 3.3 percent to 3.5 percent of GDP growth, according to Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture Tymofiy Mylovanov. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

The short supply of housing in the United States pushed prices up sharply in September, causing sales of existing homes to drop, according to new industry figures released Tuesday. While low interest rates are enticing buyers to purchase new houses, townhouses or condominiums -- a third of them first-time home buyers -- rising demand is driving prices higher, according to the National Association of Realtors. The latest NAR report showed sales of existing homes fell 2.2 percent compared to August, to 5.38 million at a seasonally adjusted annual rate, well below what economists had expected. (Ref: www.thedailystar.net)

China's GDP expanded 6.2 percent year on year in the first three quarters of 2019 to about 69.78 trillion yuan (about 9.87 trillion US dollars), data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed. The growth was in line with the government's annual target of 6-6.5 percent set for 2019. In the third quarter, the country's GDP rose 6.0 percent year on year, according to the NBS data. A breakdown of the data showed output of the service sector, which accounted for 54 percent of the total GDP, rose 7.0 percent in the first three quarters of the year, outpacing a 2.9-percent increase in the primary industry and a 5.6-percent rise in the secondary industry. Consumption continued to be the mainstay in driving up demand, with the final consumption contributing 60.5 percent to the economic growth in the Jan.-Sept. period, NBS data showed. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
World Bank President David Malpass said the development lender will likely again downgrade its global growth outlook amid uncertainty over falling trade and investment flows. “As we look at the data today, we will probably be looking at a further downgrade from our June downgrade,” he said. Malpass said this at the start of World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings, reports Reuters. The World Bank in June cut its global growth forecast for 2019 by 0.3 percentage point to 2.6 percent, about the same level as 2016. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

Singapore’s Ministry of Trade and Industry has announced that based on advance estimates, the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the third quarter of 2019 grew 0.1 percent year on year. That was the same pace of growth as in the previous quarter, the ministry said. On a quarter-on-quarter seasonally-adjusted annualised basis, Singapore’s economy expanded by 0.6 percent in the Q3, a turnaround from the 2.7 percent contraction in the preceding quarter. In a breakdown, Singapore’s manufacturing sector contracted by 3.5 percent year on year in the third quarter, compared to the 3.3 percent decline in the second quarter. The construction sector grew by 2.7 percent year on year, extending the 2.8 percent expansion in the previous quarter, reports Xinhua. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

China’s GDP expanded 6.2 percent year on year in the first three quarters of 2019 to about 69.78 trillion yuan (about 9.87 trillion US dollars), data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed. The growth was in line with the government’s annual target of 6-6.5 percent set for 2019. In the third quarter, the country’s GDP rose 6.0 percent year on year, according to the NBS data. A breakdown of the data showed output of the service sector, which accounted for 54 percent of the total GDP, rose 7.0 percent in the first three quarters of the year, outpacing a 2.9-percent increase in the primary industry and a 5.6-percent rise in the secondary industry. Consumption continued to be the mainstay in driving up demand, with the final consumption contributing 60.5 percent to the economic growth in the Jan.-Sept. period, NBS data showed. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)

China’s trade with countries along the Belt and Road (B&R) posted robust growth in the first three quarters of this year, official data showed. Trade with B&R countries totalled 6.65 trillion yuan (about US$940.3 billion) during the period, up 9.5 percent year-on-year, outpacing the country’s total trade growth by 6.7 percentage points, according to the General Administration of Customs (GAC). China’s foreign trade maintained stable growth in the first nine months of this year by expanding 2.8 percent year-on-year. Trade with B&R countries also registered a higher share of China’s total trade, which stood at 29 percent, up by 1.8 percentage points over one year ago. (Ref: thefinancialexpress.com.bd)
The kidney participates in the control of the volume of various body fluid compartments, fluid osmolality, acid-base balance, various electrolyte concentrations and removal of toxins. Blood comes into the kidney, waste gets removed, and the filtered blood goes back into the body. Waste gets turned into urine which collects in the kidney's pelvis, a funnel-shaped structure that drains down a tube (called the ureter) to the bladder. All of the blood in your body passes through them several times a day. If blood stops flowing into a kidney, part or all of it could die. That can lead to kidney failure.

The main function of Kidneys is filter the blood before sending it back to the heart. The kidneys perform many crucial functions, including:
- maintaining overall fluid balance
- regulating and filtering minerals from blood
- filtering waste materials from food, medications, and toxic substances
- creating hormones that help produce red blood cells, promote bone health, and regulate blood pressure

Each kidney has around a million tiny filters called nephrons, the structural and functional unit of the kidney. Nephrons are the most important part of each kidney. They take in blood, metabolize nutrients, and help pass out waste products from filtered blood.

After blood enters a nephron, it goes into the renal corpuscle, also called a Malpighian body. The renal corpuscle contains two additional structures:
- **The Glomerulus.** This is a cluster of capillaries that absorb protein from blood traveling through the renal corpuscle.
- **The Bowman capsule.** The remaining fluid, called capsular urine, passes through the Bowman capsule into the renal tubules.

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**Keep Your Kidney Healthy**

The kidneys are a pair of bean-shaped organs in the renal system and found in vertebrates. They are located on both side of your spine, below your ribs and behind your belly. In adult humans each kidney is about 4 to 5 inches in length. Each kidney is attached to a ureter, a tube that carries excreted urine to the bladder. They help the body pass waste as urine.

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**Dr. Masih-ur Rahman**

MBBS, PhD (Cardiology)
Fellow of RSPH (UK) FCGP Medical Retainer, MBL
Most importantly, they filter waste products, excess water, and other impurities from your blood. These waste products are stored in your bladder and later expelled through urine.

In addition, your kidneys regulate pH, salt, and potassium levels in your body. They also produce hormones that regulate blood pressure and control the production of red blood cells. Your kidneys are also responsible for activating a form of vitamin D that helps your body absorb calcium for building bones and regulating muscle function.

Maintaining kidney health is important to your overall health and general well-being. By keeping your kidneys healthy, your body will filter and expel waste properly and produce hormones to help your body function properly.

Here are some tips to help keep your kidneys healthy:

1. **Keep Active and Fit**
   Walking, running, cycling, and even dancing are great for your health. Find an activity that keeps you busy and have fun. It’ll be easier to stick to it and have great results.

2. **Control your Blood Sugar**
   Diabetes may develop kidney damage. Over years of exertion, this can lead to life-threatening damage. However, if you can control your blood sugar, you reduce the risk of damage. Also, if the damage is caught early, your doctor can take steps to reduce or prevent additional damage.

3. **Monitor Blood Pressure**
   High blood pressure can cause kidney damage. If high blood pressure occurs with other health issues like diabetes, heart disease, or high cholesterol, the impact on your body can be significant.

   A healthy blood pressure reading is 120/80. Pre-hypertension is between that point and 139/89. Lifestyle and dietary changes may help lower your blood pressure at this point.

4. **Monitor Weight and Eat a Healthy Diet**
   People who are overweight or obese are at risk for a number of health conditions that can damage the kidneys. These include diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease.

   A healthy diet that’s low in sodium, processed meats, and other kidney-damaging foods may help reduce the risk of kidney damage. Focus on eating fresh ingredients that are naturally low-sodium, such as cauliflower, blueberries, fish, whole grains, and more.
5. **Drink Plenty of Fluids**
Water helps clear sodium and toxins from your kidneys. It also lowers your risk of chronic kidney disease. Aim for at least 1.5 to 2 liters in a day.

6. **Don’t Smoke**
Smoking damages your body’s blood vessels. This leads to slower blood flow throughout your body and to your kidneys.
Smoking also puts your kidneys at an increased risk for cancer. If you stop smoking, your risk will drop. However, it’ll take many years to return to the risk level of a person who’s never smoked.

7. **Be aware of the amount of OTC pills you take**
If you regularly take over-the-counter (OTC) pain medication, you may be causing kidney damage. Non Steroidal anti-inflammatory Drugs including ibuprofen and naproxen, can damage your kidneys if you take them regularly for chronic pain, headaches, or arthritis.

8. **Have your kidney function tested if you’re at high risk**
If you’re at high risk of kidney damage or kidney disease, it’s a good idea to have regular kidney function tests. The following people may benefit from regular screening-
- people who are over 60 years old
- people who were born at a low birth weight
- people who have cardiovascular disease or have family with it
- people who have or have a family history of high blood pressure
- people who are obese
- people who believe they may have kidney damage

A regular kidney function test is a great way to know your kidney’s health and to check for possible changes. Getting ahead of any damage can help slow or prevent future damage.
Kazi Nazrul Islam (popularly known as Kobi Nazrul) is the legendary versatile poet, writer, lyricist and musician. He wrote prose, short stories, novels, and essays but is best known for his songs and poems. The theme of his poetry and music is mostly on freedom, humanity, love, religious devotion and rebellion against oppression. Nazrul's activism for political and social justice earned him the title of 'Rebel Poet'. He always opposed all forms of bigotry and fundamentalism, including religious, caste-based and gender-based. He composed Islamic Songs, Ghazals, Shyama Sangeet, Bhajans, Kirtan. In his versatile life, Nazrul also known as a Drama artist, Dukhu Mian, Army Havildar, Punthi Pathak, Flutist, Journalist, Rebel, Lover and Politician.

In personal life, Nazrul got married with Pramila Devi at Cumilla in Bangladesh and they had 4 sons: Krishna Mohammad, Arindam Khaled Bulbul, Kazi Sabyasachi and Kazi Aniruddha. Kazi Nazrul Islam lived in Mymensingh, Cumilla, Chattagram, Dhaka, Sirajgong districts in Bangladesh for part of his life and wrote many memorable poems there.

In 1972 Nazrul and his family moved to Dhaka permanently at the invitation of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Same year, the government of Bangladesh conferred upon him the status of ‘National Poet’. In January 1976, the Bangladesh government granted him citizenship of Bangladesh and on February 21 awarded him the 'Ekushey Padak'.
Kazi Nazrul Islam was born on 24 May 1899 in the village of Churulia, Asansol Sadar, Paschim Bardhaman district of the Bengal Presidency (now in West Bengal, India). He was born into a Bengali Muslim Kazi family. His father Kazi Faqeer Ahmed was the Imam and caretaker of the local mosque and mother Zahida Khatun was housewife. He had two brothers and a sister. Nazrul studied at a maktab and madrasa. In 1908, his father died and at the age of 10, he took his father's place as a caretaker of the mosque to support his family and later he worked as the muazzin.

In his early life attracted to folk theatre, Nazrul joined a travelling theatrical group ‘leto’ run by his uncle Fazle Karim. He worked and travelled with them, learning to act. Nazrul began studying Bengali and Sanskrit literature, Puranas. In 1910, Nazrul left the troupe and returned to school. He studied for some time at the ‘Raniganj Searsole Raj School’ in Raniganj. Later he transferred to the ‘Mathrun High English School’. Unfortunately, Nazrul again had to leave school being unable to continue paying his school fees. He left the school and joined a group of kaviyals. Later he took jobs as a cook at Wahid’s, a well-known bakery of the region and at a tea stall in the town of Asansol. Thus the young Nazrul, aptly nicknamed ‘Dukhu Mian’ (দুঃখী মিয়া), experienced the harsh realities of life.

While working at the tea stall, Nazrul became acquainted with Rafizullah, a police sub-inspector of Asansol, who succeeded in persuading the young Nazrul to return to school. In 1914 Nazrul got admitted to class seven of ‘Darirampur School’ (now Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University) in Trishal, Mymensingh District. During his short stay at Trishal, Nazrul became known among the locals for his ‘Punthi’ (one kind of folk literature) reading skills and his mesmerizing flute tunes. Amongst other subjects, Nazrul studied Bengali, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian literature and Hindustani classical music. One year later he returned to his own village and got admitted to class VIII of ‘Raniganj Searsole Raj School’ in 1915. Here he continued his studies up to class ten. But unfortunately he did not appear for the matriculation pre-test examination.

During the end of 1917, he joined the British Indian Army at the age of 18. Attached to the 49th Bengal Regiment, he was posted to the Karachi Cantonment, where he wrote his first prose and poetry. He rose in rank from corporal to havildar and served as quartermaster for his battalion. He was in the Army about two years and a half. During his stay in the army, Nazrul read extensively the works of Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay as well as the Persian poets Hafez, Omar Khayyam, and Rumi. His first prose work ‘বাইরের মাতৃকরিম’ (Life of a Vagabond) was published in May 1919. His poem ‘মুক্তি’ (Mukti) was published by the Bengali Muslim Literary Journal in July 1919.

Nazrul left the British Indian army in 1920 and began the career of a litterateur-journalist in Calcutta. He joined the staff of the ‘Bengali Muslim Literary Society’. Nazrul's life as a journalist began with the publication of the evening daily ‘নবজুগ’ (Nabajug) in 1920. Though A K Fazlul Huq (Sher-e-Bangla) was the official editor, the work was mainly done by Nazrul. He was a regular at the social clubs for Calcutta’s writers, poets and intellectuals. He published his first novel ‘বাংলা-হরা’ (Bandhan-hara) in 1920, on which he continued to work over the next seven years.

In the year 1921, he met the well-known book publisher Ali Akbar Khan at the office of the ‘Muslim Sahitya Samiti’ and accompanied him to his village Daulatpur, Cumilla and stayed there for some time. Cumilla was in ferment on account of the non-cooperation movement.
Nazrul joined many processions and meetings and sang his newly composed patriotic songs. Thus the amateur composer and singer of Kolkata turned into a political activist and composer of patriotic songs. The same year, Nazrul got engaged to Nargis, the niece of Ali Akbar Khan in Daulatpur, Cumilla. But on 18 June 2021, the day of the wedding, upon public insistence by Khan that the term ‘Nazrul must reside in Daulatpur after marriage’ be included in the marriage contract, Nazrul walked away from the wedding ceremony. However, many songs and poems reveal the deep wound that this experience inflicted on the young Nazrul and his lingering love for Nargis.

Nazrul went to Cumilla again in November 1921. An all-India strike had been called on the day. After his return to Kolkata in December 1921, Nazrul composed two of his most famous revolutionary writings: ‘বিদ্রোহী’ (Vidrohi) and ‘বাঘাবাগান’ (Bhabgar Gan). These two compositions totally changed the tenor of Bangla poetry. Nazrul reached the peak of his fame in 1922 with Bidrohi (The Rebel), which contains his most famous work, winning the admiration of India’s literary society for his description of a rebel.

Nazrul started a bi-weekly magazine, ‘ধুমক্ত’ (Dhumketu) on 12 August 1922 that was critical of the British Empire. Earning the moniker of the ‘Rebel Poet’, Nazrul aroused the suspicion of British Raj authorities. The Police raided the office of Dhumketu after it published ‘আনন্দমোহিনী’ (Anondomoyeer Agomone) a political poem in 1922. Nazrul's book of essays, Yugavani, was proscribed on 23 November 1922. The same day the poet was arrested in Cumilla and brought to Kolkata. The Poet was charged with sedition (বিদ্রোহী). On 14 April 1923, he was moved from Alipore Jail to a jail in Hooghly. He released from Jail in December 1923. Nazrul composed numerous poems and songs during his period of imprisonment.

During his visit to Cumilla in 1921, Nazrul met a young Bengali Hindu woman, Pramila Devi, with whom he fell in love, and they married on 25 April 1924. Brahma Samaj criticised Pramila, a member of the Brahma Samaj, for marrying a Muslim. Besides, muslim religious leaders criticized Nazrul for his marriage to a Hindu woman. He also was criticized for his writings. However, while Nazrul was becoming popular, he was also becoming the target of conservative Muslims and Hindus.

Nazrul’s book ‘বিশেষ বাঙালি’ (Bisher Banshi) was banned by the British Raj. Bisher Banshi called for rebellion in India against the British Raj. Nazrul became active in encouraging people to agitate against British rule. The end of 1925, Nazrul joined politics directly. He attended political meetings at Cumilla, Midnapore, Hugli, Faridpur, Bankura and many other places.

On 16 December 1925, Nazrul began publishing the ‘লংগল’ (Langal) a weekly and served as its chief editor. The Langal was the mouthpiece of the Sramik-Praja-Swaraj Dal, which aimed to eradicate class differences in society.

In 1926, Nazrul started living at Krishnanagar with his wife and young son Bulbul. Towards the end of this year, Nazrul contested from East Bengal for a seat in the upper house of the central legislative council. In this connection he extensively toured East Bengal, especially Dhaka division. Nazrul attended the first annual conference of muslim sahiya samaj at Dhaka on 28 February 1927. He came to Dhaka again in the second week of February 1928 to attend its second annual conference. He returned to Dhaka again in June, 1928.

At Krishnanagar Nazrul also composed ghazals. The Bangla ghazal is mainly the creation of Nazrul. Nazrul's ghazals are structured like Urdu ghazals and are sung with or without tal. It was about this time that Nazrul started publishing his songs with notations. These songs clearly manifest that it was though his life at Krishnanagar was one of poverty and hardship, his musical talent blossomed there. Nazrul believed in the
equality of women, a view his contemporaries considered revolutionary, as expressed in his poem ‘নারী’ (Naari). He talked about the working poor through his works such as the poem ‘পরিশিস’ (Poverty). Nazrul began working as a lyricist, composer, and music director for his Master’s Voice Gramaphone Company in 1928.

In January 1929, Nazrul visited Chattagram, where he stayed with habibullah bahar chowdhury and his sister shamsunnahar mahmud. He also visited sandwip, the birthplace of his friend, Muzaffar Ahmed.

In December 1929 Nazrul Islam was accorded a reception at Albert Hall, Kolkata, on behalf of the people of Bengal. In May that same year his 4 years old son Bulbul died of smallpox. Nazrul was terribly shocked by his son death and in the view of many this marked a turning point in his life. Gradually he became an introvert and turned towards spiritualism. At Bulbul’s sickbed Nazrul translated Hafiz’s Rubaiyat. It was published as Rubaiyat-i-Hafiz.

His works changed significantly from the rebellious exploration of society to deeper examination of religious themes. His works in these years led Islamic devotional songs into the mainstream of Bengali folk music, exploring the Islamic practices of namaz, roza, hajj, and zakat. Nazrul’s recording of Islamic Songs was a commercial success and created interest in gramophone companies about publishing his works. He wrote the song ‘O Mon Romzaner Oi Rozar Sheshe’ on fasting during Ramadan. This Islamic song is popular during Ramadan in Bangladesh. Nazrul was not limited to Islamic devotional music but also wrote Hindu devotional music.

He composed Shyama Sangeet (শৈবাল সঙ্গীত), Bhajans (ভজন), Kirtan (কীর্তন). Nazrul's poetry and songs explored the philosophy of Islam and Hinduism. Although a Muslim, he named his sons with both Hindu and Muslim names: Krishna Mohammad, Arindam Khaled (Bulbul), Kazi Sabyasachi and Kazi Aniruddha.

In 1930, his book ‘প্রলয় শিখা’ (Pralay Shikha) was banned and he also faced charges of sedition by the British Indian colonial government. He was sent to jail and released in 1931, after the Gandhi–Irwin Pact was signed. In November 1932 Nazrul attended the Bangiya Mussalmant Tarun Sammelan at Sirajganj district, Bangladesh. In 1939 Nazrul began working for Calcutta Radio, supervising the production and broadcasting of the station's musical programs. Nazrul also wrote a large variety of songs inspired by the raga Bhairav. His songs based on baul, jhumur, Santhali folksongs, jhanpan, or the folk songs of snake charmers, bhatiali, and bhaola consist of tunes of folk-songs. Nazrul also wrote and published poems for children.

Nazrul's wife Pramila fell seriously ill in 1939 and was paralyzed from the waist down. To provide for his wife's medical treatment, he mortgaged the royalties of his gramophone records and literary works for 400 rupees. He returned to journalism in 1940 by working as chief editor for the daily newspaper ‘নবজুগ’ (Nabajug), founded by the Bengali politician A. K. Fazlul Huq. Nazrul came to Dhaka in December 1940 to attend the 1st anniversary of the Dhaka radio station.

On hearing about the death of Rabindranath Tagore on 8 August 1941, a shocked Nazrul composed two poems in Tagore's memory. One of the two poems, ‘রবিরহা’ (loss of Rabi, or without Rabi), was broadcast on the All India Radio.

Within a year, Nazrul himself fell seriously ill and gradually lost his power of speech, being stricken by rare neurodegenerative disease. Thereafter from July 1942 till his death in August 1976, the poet spent 34 years in mute silence unable to speak even a single word. His wife constantly cared for her husband in spite of her own illness. However, Nazrul's health had seriously deteriorated and he grew increasingly depressed. He received treatment under homeopathy as well as Ayurveda, but little progress was achieved before mental dysfunction intensified and he was admitted to a mental.
asylum in 1942. Spending four months there without making progress, Nazrul and his family began living a quiet life in India. In 1952, he was transferred to a Ranchi Mental Hospital in Ranchi. Through the efforts of a large group of admirers who called themselves the ‘Nazrul Treatment Society’, Nazrul and Promila were sent to London, then to Vienna for treatment. Several eminent physicians in London, were of the opinion that his initial treatment had been inadequate and incomplete. His condition was diagnosed as incurable. Nazrul returned to Calcutta on 15 December 1953. He spent the rest of his life in utter misery. On 30 June 1962 Pramila died and Nazrul remained in intensive medical care. He stopped working due to his deteriorating health.

After the liberation of Bangladesh, at the request of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Government of India allowed Nazrul to be taken for residing in Bangladesh with his family. On 24 May 1972, the newly independent nation of Bangladesh brought Nazrul and his family in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The President and Prime Minister paid their homage to him. The poet and his family lived in ‘Kabi Bhabon’ in dhanmondi area Dhaka, which was allotted for them by the initiative of Government. They had got full state honour there. The government of Bangladesh conferred upon him the status of ‘National Poet’ in 1972. In recognition of his contribution to Bangla literature and culture, Dhaka University awarded him the honorary degree of DLitt at a special convocation on 9 December 1974. On 22 July 1975, Nazrul was transferred to the ‘Institute of Post Graduate Medicine and Research’ (now BSMM University) in Dhaka for continuous medical supervision. He spent the remaining time of his life there. In January 1976, the Bangladesh government granted him citizenship of Bangladesh and on February 21 awarded him the ‘Ekushey Padak’.

Despite receiving treatment and attention, Nazrul's physical and mental health did not improve. His condition deteriorated continuously. Nazrul succumbed to his long-standing ailments and breathed his last at 10:10 am on 29 August 1976. As soon as Nazrul’s death was broadcast over Radio and TV the news spread like wild fire and plunged the Bengali nation in profound gloom. Life came to a standstill in Dhaka as thousands of men and women lined up to have a last glimpse of the rebel poet’s mortal remains in the Teacher-Students’ Centre of the University of Dhaka. As per desire, he had expressed in one of his poems, Kazi Nazrul was buried with full state honor beside Central mosque of the Dhaka University campus. The great lines of the Poem is “মসজিদেরই পাশে আমার কবর দিও ধাই। যেন গোরে থেকেও মোয়াজিনের আজান মনেতে পাই।”

For 34 long years, from July 1942 to August 1976, the poet suffered this unbearable life of silence. Now more than four decades after his death, Kazi Nazrul Islam resides in the hearts of millions of Bangladeshis as their national poet. Now, the world over, Nazrul is known as the National Poet of Bangladesh. Many centers of learning and culture in Bangladesh and India had been founded and dedicated to his memory. Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University in Mymensingh, Bangladesh is a public university named after him. The Nazrul Institute is Bangladesh's national institute, established in February 1985. Its headquarters are located at Kabi Bhaban in Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Bangladesh. It fulfills a number of roles; promoting the literary work of the poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, recognizing excellence in literature research by conferring awards, and public engagement.

The greatness of the national poet Kazi Nazrul is not limited to his music, poetry or drama. He inspired a modern and liberal idealism of unsurpassed philosophical archetypes. His philosophy is relevant for us all the time. The new generation needs to follow Nazrul’s ideology and thereby create their own path.
DISCOVER BANGLADESH

THE CALM SEA:

NIKLI HAOR
The months in-between Joishtho and Kartik of the Bengali calendar are very special, endorsing an amazing phenomenon at the haor areas inundated by vast waterways. This is definitely a worthy sight for onlookers.

It is believed that the inconceivable beauty of the haor areas is the secret behind their immense motivational quality. The enormity of the splendour cannot be described in mere words; it needs to be witnessed first-hand to comprehend the depth. Nikli is such type of haor that you cannot imagine the beauty of the haor. It is one of the most attractive haors in beautiful Bangladesh. When you are bored to handle city life, traffic jams, business, office, Nikli will give you a chance to forget about everything behind for some time. Floating on the vast waters, you can lighten your body by looking at the blue sky. When you float in the water if you do not see a village at one stage, you may feel like a calm sea. Sometime you will see the incredibly beautiful little green villages floating on the water. If you ever get close enough to these small villages you would be surprised to see how the people of the villages live in a seemingly squeezed livelihood with their domestic animals. The entire sight is enthralling. Even the hay piles seem to multiply the immense beauty of the green villages. Amongst all of these you would also be able to notice a lot of birds and different types of trees including Hijal, Varun, Bon Kalmi and few other rain trees rising above the water. The spectacle will definitely mesmerize any ardent traveler.

You can buy snacks from different village markets which are float in water. Sitting on a boat roof in the open air under the open sky how was feel that can’t express it.
Location

Nikli Haor is located in the Nikli Upazila of Kishoreganj district. The distance from Kishoreganj Sadar to Nikli Upazila is about 25 kilometers.

See another Ratargul in Nikli Haor

To see the view you have to go chatirchor. A green forest drowned underwater. Green trees are placed in the layer by layer. You will be floating in the water along the chest of the tree. You might think it is another ratargul. It takes about an hour to get straight from nikli beribadh. If you rent a boat for 3 hours you will be able to cover these things.

Rent a boat in Nikli Haor

It will cost 300 Tk to 500 Tk per hours to rent a small boat and 700 Tk to 800 Tk per hour to rent a large boat. If you rent for longer, the cost will be slightly lower. Hire a boat as you have time on your hands. Try to rent the boat for at least 3 hours.

Where to eat at Nikli

Basically, Nikli doesn’t have a lot of good quality hotel. However, there are several restaurants in the market, they served quality fresh fish. Some good hotels are, Hotel Shetu, The Cafe Deo. You can eat haor fresh fish from 100 tk to 200 tk.

Spend the night on Nikli Haor

You can spend a quiet night under the dark blue sky. It’s safe to stay there at night if the weather is good. However, for the sake of security, you might be informed to Nikli police station. Then you can spend a relaxed night. And you must stay at any place near Beribadh at night.

Where to stay at Nikli

There are no good residential hotels in Nikli. You can stay newly opened chairman guest house or in the Upazila Dak Bungalow. However, the bungalow is not so good. If this is not the case, then there is Kishoreganj city near your hand. You can stay in good quality hotels in kishoreganj sadar.

When to go Nikli

The end of the rainy season is the perfect time to travel to haor.

How to go Nikli Haor

By Bus:

If you want to leave Dhaka in the morning and return at night, the best way is to go to Pulerghat. The nearest way to go nikli haor is using pulerghat. From the Golapbag bus stand beside Dhaka Saidabad, straight to Pulharghat. The rent is Tk 220. It will take 3 hours. From Pulerghat, CNG will reach nikli beribadh within 1 hour. The rent per person is 80 taka.
By Train:

Dhaka to Kishoreganj train schedule:
At 7.15 am – Agarosindur Provati
At 10.35 am – Kishoreganj Express
At 6.30 pm – Agarosindur Godhuli

Kishoreganj to Dhaka train schedule:
At 6.30 am – Agarosindur Provati
At 12.30 pm – Agarsindu Godhuli
At 2.40 pm – Kishoreganj express

Train Cost:
Shovon – 125 taka
Shovon chair – 170 taka
First Class Chair -200 Tk

It will take 3 to 5 hours.

However, the true beauty of haors is best captured when the sun is setting. This particular time is perfect for passionate photographers because the sky changes its hue constantly, as does the water below.

So if you have any plan to visit Nikli Hahor, it is the best time to go for an adventure trip with friends and family.
### MBL KEY INDICATORS

#### Deposits (BDT in Crore)
- **Mar-2019**: 23,639.59
- **Jun-2019**: 24,944.28
- **Sep-2019**: 25,561.66

#### Loans & Advances (BDT in Crore)
- **Mar-2019**: 22,610.77
- **Jun-2019**: 23,270.63
- **Sep-2019**: 23,359.79

#### Non-performing Loans (In %)
- **Mar-2019**: 5.36%
- **Jun-2019**: 4.83%
- **Sep-2019**: 4.85%

#### Capital to Risk-weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) (In %)
- **Mar-2019**: 14.01%
- **Jun-2019**: 13.22%
- **Sep-2019**: 13.67%

#### Operating Profit (BDT in Crore)
- **Mar-2019**: 159.47
- **Jun-2019**: 319.02
- **Sep-2019**: 488.58

#### Earning Per Share (EPS) (in BDT)
- **Mar-2019**: 0.60
- **Jun-2019**: 1.73
- **Sep-2019**: 2.29

#### Particulars

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<tr>
<td>Capital to Risk-weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) (In %)</td>
<td>14.01%</td>
<td>13.22%</td>
<td>13.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating profit (BDT in Crore)</td>
<td>159.47</td>
<td>319.02</td>
<td>488.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earning Per Share (EPS) Face value BDT 10</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>