TOP NEWS

Two dozen firms skip FY26 dividends, several report heavy losses

Twenty-three listed companies have decided not to recommend dividends for FY2025-26, and several posted heavy losses, according to The Business Standard. Of more than 100 companies that announced dividend decisions over two weeks, 82 recommended cash or stock dividends, against 213 cash payers, 33 stock or bonus payers and 51 non-payers in 2025. Zeal Bangla Sugar Mills had the largest loss per share at Tk72.32, followed by Meghna Cement (Tk63.68), Shyampur Sugar Mills (Tk42.94) and Bashundhara Paper Mills (Tk42.74), while the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) lost Tk7.52 per share and its net asset value (NAV) per share fell from Tk37.45 to Tk30.26. Deshbandhu Polymer and Munno Agro earned profits but still paid nothing. Insiders cited financial weakness, cash shortages and heavy debt. Three companies, including ICB, were moved from the “B” to the “Z” category after two years without dividends, and 17 companies now sit in the Z category.

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City Bank’s Q3 profit drops 19% on lower investment income

City Bank PLC’s consolidated net profit after tax fell 19% year-on-year to Tk341 crore in July-September 2026 from Tk422 crore, according to unaudited statements approved on 29 October and reported by The Business Standard. Standalone profit declined to Tk337.63 crore from Tk403.98 crore, and consolidated earnings per share (EPS) fell to Tk1.95 from Tk2.41. The report attributes the drop mainly to lower investment income, while consolidated operating expenses climbed to Tk636.68 crore from Tk535.35 crore on higher salaries, administrative costs and depreciation. The nine-month picture was stronger: consolidated net profit rose 20% to Tk867 crore from Tk722 crore and EPS to Tk4.96 from Tk4.13, helped by higher commission and fee income and better net interest and investment earnings. Consolidated NAV per share rose to Tk41.51 from Tk35.37 at the end of 2025.

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Most MNCs see profit squeeze amid energy crisis, price hikes in Q3

Most multinational companies listed on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) saw profits squeezed in July-September 2026 as higher energy costs, weak demand and price-sensitive markets hurt earnings, according to The Business Standard. Of 13 listed multinationals, only Berger Paints (up 28% to Tk76.66 crore), Reckitt Benckiser (up 9% to Tk26.86 crore) and Robi (up 4% to Tk251.28 crore) grew profit, six reported lower profits and four stayed loss-making. British American Tobacco Bangladesh fell 67% to about Tk99.8 crore on volume de-growth, LafargeHolcim Bangladesh fell 47% to Tk63.09 crore on energy, freight and imported raw material costs, Linde fell 19% and Unilever Consumer Care 33%, while Grameenphone and Marico were nearly flat. Singer’s loss widened to Tk77.16 crore and Heidelberg Materials swung to a Tk20.41 crore loss. A late-July fire at the Excelerate floating LNG unit cut imported LNG by about 450 million cubic feet a day, and electricity prices rose roughly 16%.

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Brokers seek capital gains tax exemption until 2030

The DSE Brokers Association of Bangladesh (DBA) has proposed a full exemption from capital gains tax on listed securities for individual and foreign investors until 2030, according to The Business Standard. The proposal was submitted on 28 October to Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, the Prime Minister’s investment and capital market adviser Tanvir Shahriar Ghani, BSEC Chairman Masud Khan and National Board of Revenue Chairman Ahsan Habib. Individuals are currently exempt on gains up to Tk50 lakh, with 15% tax above that, and the DBA wants a full exemption restored for individuals and a review of the framework for foreign investors, with eligible trades executed on exchanges and settled through the central depository and existing rules kept for sponsors, directors and domestic institutions. It argues the move would restore confidence, lift liquidity and trading volumes and encourage reinvestment, and says assessing gains will become simpler once Central Counterparty Bangladesh Limited (CCBL) is fully operational, which it expects by 2030. It noted that Sri Lanka, Thailand and China do not tax resident individuals’ listed-share gains.

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Bata Shoe recommends 36.1% interim dividend, reports higher quarterly profit and revenue

Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Limited’s board recommended an interim dividend for 2026 on 29 October, based on retained earnings up to 31 December last year, according to The Business Standard. The headline gives the rate as 36.1%, but the article body states 36.31%, or Tk3.63 per Tk10 share, so the headline appears to contain a rounding error. The record date is 25 November. In July-September 2026, revenue rose to Tk211 crore from Tk183 crore and the net loss narrowed to Tk5 crore, from Tk14.44 crore a year earlier according to a separate report on multinationals. For the nine months to 30 September, revenue increased to Tk770 crore from Tk700 crore, net profit more than tripled to Tk45 crore from Tk12.74 crore and earnings per share (EPS) rose to Tk33.21 from Tk9.32. The company remains profitable over nine months despite the third-quarter loss.

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Half of Rupali Bank’s Tk19,805cr defaulted loans stuck with 20 borrowers

State-owned Rupali Bank recovered only Tk4.03 crore from its 20 largest defaulters in January-June 2026, according to a Bangladesh Bank report cited by The Business Standard. Those borrowers owe Tk9,859 crore, nearly half of the bank’s non-performing loans (NPLs) of Tk19,804.59 crore. The actual capital shortfall was Tk18,026 crore in June, falling to Tk5,232 crore after regulatory forbearance, and the bank posted an operating loss of Tk233 crore and a net loss of Tk397 crore for the half. Top-20 recoveries were Tk45.70 crore in 2024 and Tk361 crore in 2025, while overall recoveries were Tk330 crore in the half against a full-year target of Tk2,300 crore. Beximco Group leads defaulters with Tk994 crore, followed by Bangladesh Sugar and Food

Industries Corporation (Tk908 crore), Crony Group (Tk872 crore) and Jute Textile Mills (Tk724 crore). Bangladesh Bank has restricted rescheduling and set recovery targets for the top 20 defaulters.

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Iranian strikes damaged 26 US military bases across Middle East, causing billions in losses

Iran and Iranian-backed militias carried out more than 115 drone and missile strikes on structures at 26 US military bases and sites holding American equipment through August, across Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, according to a report by The Business Standard that does not identify the underlying data. Early strikes hit early-warning radars, destroying a US$500 million US Army radar in Jordan and significantly damaging a US$1.1 billion radar in Qatar. Kuwait suffered the heaviest damage, with Ali Al Salem Air Base struck at least 30 times and Camp Buehring losing more than 30 structures, and a drone strike on 1 March at Port Shuaiba killed six soldiers. At least 15 US aircraft were damaged across bases, and the US moved critical aircraft, air defences and communications equipment out of the Gulf. US Central Command declined to give details, and analysts said the attacks showed how vulnerable fixed bases are to inexpensive drones.

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Extra $1.0b import payments deepen forex strain

Bangladesh paid an additional US$1.0 billion in October to settle public-sector import bills, mainly for fuel oil, gas and electricity, adding pressure to the foreign exchange market, according to The Financial Express. The taka weakened by more than Tk1.00 in October, closing at Tk124.00 on 30 October against Tk122.92 on 1 October. A senior Bangladesh Bank official said the central bank cleared about US$2.50 billion for these imports against an earlier estimate of US$1.50 billion, expects letter of credit (LC) settlements to exceed US$7.0 billion for October against US$6.32 billion in September, and sold US$142 million through two auctions in October. Petroleum LC settlements rose about 26% to US$2.93 billion in July-September. Brent closed at US$112.33 on 30 October, up 73.43% from a year earlier, having settled at US$116.72 on 23 October, the highest close since April, against about US$72 before the crisis began in late February. LNG spot prices are near US$30 per million British thermal units against roughly US$14 in pre-war deals, and bankers warned import costs could stay high before Ramadan.

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ADB may lend Tk 37.79b to finance procurement

Bangladesh Railway plans to buy 200 metre-gauge passenger coaches for its eastern operations, possibly with financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to meet growing passenger demand, according to The Financial Express. Officials put the project at Tk37.79 billion, or Tk3,779 crore, covering the coaches plus four relief cranes and four under-floor wheel lathe machines, and the railway has submitted a Development Project Proposal (DPP) to the Planning Commission. The railway has 1,282 metre-gauge coaches in total, but only 681 are operational and many are reportedly in poor condition. A senior official said the relief cranes would help respond to derailments and emergencies, and the wheel lathes would allow repairs without removing wheels from the bogies, shortening maintenance time and improving coach availability. The project awaits scrutiny and approval from the Planning Commission, and railway experts stress the need for investment in both new coaches and maintenance facilities. The impact will depend on timely approval, procurement and delivery.

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