

|| WEEKLY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ||

BANGLADESH ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE (BEI)

|| Brief Highlights on Current Issues of South Asia ||

|| July 24, 2021 – July 29, 2021 ||

SOUTH ASIA: COVID-19 CRISIS: AT A GLANCE

Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health on July 29, 2021 has recorded 544 new cases of coronavirus across the country with total fatalities cases of 62. The total tally since the outbreak of the pandemic has reached to 145,552 cases in the country.

Bangladesh has reported 237 fatalities and 16,230 new coronavirus cases on July 29, 2021. As of July 29, 2021 total caseload has reached to 12, 10,982 including total death tolls 20,016. Till July 29, 2021, 2.63 per cent of Bangladeshi have fully vaccinated. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 27, 2021 has instructed the authorities concerned to inoculate the people massively with Covid-19 vaccines to ensure protection of all. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said on July 27, 2021 that Bangladesh will launch a mass vaccination campaign at union level from August 7, 2021.

Bhutan has reported one new case on July 29, 2021 with no death toll. In Bhutan, total 2,501 coronavirus cases have been identified so far. 60.05 per cent Bhutanese have received two doses Covid-19 vaccine till July 29, 2021.

India has recorded 634 fresh death toll and 43,509 new cases due to coronavirus on July 29, 2021. Country's total confirmed cases become 3, 14,84,605 and total death toll reached to 4,22,022. In India, 7.09 per cent population has been fully vaccinated as of July 29, 2021.

Maldives reports 77094 of confirmed cases and 220 deaths as of July 29, 2021. Health Emergency Operations Center (HEOC) has started online appointments for the AstraZeneca vaccines from July 31, 2021. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has decided to allow unvaccinated tourists to travel but on the condition of a negative PCR test within forty eight hours of arrival and departure.

Myanmar has reported 284,099 active cases and 8,210 deaths till July 29, 2021. According to the Reuters tracker, only 3.2% of the population is vaccinated.

Nepal on July 29, 2021 has reported 2,335 new coronavirus cases taking the nationwide infection tally to 690,642. The countrywide death toll has now reached 9,807. The number of active cases stands at 30,390. The Health Ministry has started administering the single-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine from July 26, 2021.

Pakistan reports 1,020,324 confirmed cases and 23,209 deaths as of July 29, 2021 since the outbreak of the pandemic. The current positivity rate is 7.5% as recorded on the same day.

Sri Lanka has recorded 301,832 active cases and 4,258 deaths reported till July 29, 2021. 8.64 percent of the population has been is fully vaccinated till date. China donated 1.6 billion vaccine jabs to Sri Lanka, the first consignment of which along with syringes arrived on July 27, 2021.

Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html> (John Hopkins University)

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TRADE AND INVESTMENT: BANGLADESH RECOVERING DESPITE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR SOUTH ASIA DAMPEN, ADB REPORTS; THE COUNTRY MAY GET MORE RMG ORDERS IN NEXT TWO YEARS: STUDY SHOWS

The Asian Development Bank has noted its Asian Development Outlook report published on July 20, 2021 that Bangladesh's economy is recovering, although economies of other South Asian countries are dampened by new waves of COVID-19. According to the report, the country's exports grew by 13.6 per cent and remittances by 39.5 per cent in the first 11 month of last fiscal year. Revenue collection by the National Board of Revenue also grew by 12.9 per cent in the first 10 months of the same period. However, countrywide lockdown from early April 2021 has disrupted the economic activities.

In the meantime, the '2021 Fashion Industry Benchmarking Study' shows that Bangladesh's price competitiveness would continue to attract more US apparel companies to source from the country in next two years. The study has also found that in the post Covid-19 scenario, diversifying the product structure, improving production flexibility and agility would be critical. The study has revealed that in the coming days, US plan to work with less vendors in Bangladesh, which will create more competition in the local market which will eventually make small and less competitive firms vulnerable.

Sources:

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/economic-outlook-for-south-asia-dampened-but-bangladesh-recovering-adb-1627053448>

<https://rmgbd.net/2021/07/bd-may-get-more-orders-in-next-two-yrs-study/>

NEW UK TRADING SCHEME TO BENEFIT BUSINESS OF BANGLADESH

The recent scheme announced by the UK government aims at driving trade with Bangladesh and other countries to boost jobs and economic growth. Acting British High Commissioner in Dhaka Mr. Javed Patel said that the proposed UK Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) indicates UK government's eagerness to promote global free, competitive and fair trade. By enabling Bangladeshi businesses to access the UK market more easily, the scheme demonstrates UK government's commitment to expand economic ties with Bangladesh.

The new trading rules will work in two ways; it will help trading developing countries in coming out of poverty and at the same time it will help British businesses and consumers. The scheme will mean more opportunity and less bureaucracy for developing countries by simplifying rules of origin requirements or reducing tariffs on imports.

Source:

<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/bangladesh-be-benefitted-new-uk-scheme-277240?amp>

AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN LEADER MEETS CHINESE FM AND ASSURES NOT TO ALLOW TERRORIST FORCES TO OPERATE FROM AFGHANISTAN; "IF THE TALIBAN SEIZE POWER, AFGHANISTAN WILL BECOME A PARIAH STATE": US SECRETARY OF STATE

A Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar on July 28, 2021 made a visit to China and held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, during which the Taliban leader termed Beijing as a "trustworthy friend" and assured that the group will not permit "anyone to use" Afghanistan's territory. This is the first meeting between China and the Taliban amid the withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan. The ongoing drive by the Taliban capturing a significant portion of territory from government forces has sparked concerns in China that the separatist Uyghur group from its volatile Xinjiang province, the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, (ETIM) would infiltrate through its Afghan borders.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told Indian reporters during his first official visit in New Delhi on July 28, 2021, "Afghanistan, which does not respect the

rights of its people, and Afghanistan who commits atrocities against its own people, will become a Pariah state," Mr. Blinken warned that if the Taliban wanted to be globally accepted, it would have to change. "The Taliban says it wants international recognition and wants international support for Afghanistan. Perhaps it means that its leaders are free to travel the world, sanctions will be lifted, etc. I want it," he said. The statement comes after a Taliban delegation has made a surprise visit to China on July 28, 2021.

Sources:

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/taliban-delegation-visits-china-taliban-spokesperson-2021-07-28/>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/29/afghanistan-pariah-state-taliban-blinken-china>

AFGHANISTAN: UN ENVOY STRESSES PRESSING NEED FOR PEACE TALK TO END VIOLENCE

Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan have met the Afghan government chief negotiator Masoom Stanekzai on July 26, 2021, highlighted the pressing need for an end to violence in the country. Lyons stressed the need for mediation to accelerate the peace talks and added that the UN works together with Qatar in this regard. Stanekzai also stressed the importance of talks within the framework of the constitution of Afghanistan in his meeting with Lyons. This comes as the Afghan govern-

ment and Taliban agreed to begin the second round of peace talks in early August, 2021.

Sources:

<http://www.afghanistantimes.af/un-envoy-asks-afghan-negotiator-to-accelerate-peace-talks/>

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AFGHANISTAN: US, NATO PROMISE USD FOUR BILLION A YEAR UNTIL 2024 TO SUPPORT AFGHAN FORCES; CANADA TO RELOCATE AFGHANS WHO ASSISTED IN WAR AMID 'RAPIDLY DETERIORATING' SECURITY SITUATION

NATO remains committed to the enduring partnership with Afghanistan and pledges to pay USD four billion a year until 2024 to support Afghanistan's military and security forces. Already, the US has spent nearly \$89 billion over the past 20 years to build, equip and train Afghan forces. Nevertheless, America's own government watchdog says oversight of the money has been poor, hundreds of millions of dollars have been misspent and corruption is rife in the security apparatus.

Canada plans to resettle Afghans who aided the Canadian military and the country's embassy and could face danger because of their work, as the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan nears completion and the Taliban mounts offensives to regain territory. Canada's "path to protection" will be open to Af-

ghans with a "significant and enduring relationship" with the Canadian government. The eligibility criteria could include interpreters, locally engaged embassy staff members, as well as a host of other locals who assisted the war effort such as cooks, drivers, cleaners, security guards and their families. The program will include "special immigration measures that will offer a path to protection in Canada for those at risk due to their work," the statement said on July 23, 2021.

Sources:
<https://apnews.com/article/business-83c0fac2109711d703f4f490798868b9>
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/23/canada-vows-to-resettle-afghans-citing-rising-taliban-threat>

BANGLADESH: BANGLADESH TO LAUNCH 'JOGAJOG' AS ALTERNATIVE TO FACEBOOK, SAYS ICT MINISTER

Bangladesh is going to launch social media platform 'Jogajog' as an alternative to Facebook and 'Alapon' as an alternative to WhatsApp. State Minister for ICT Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak announced the news on July 24, 2021 in a program organized by Women e-Commerce where he said through the Jogajog app, the entrepreneurs would be able to create their own online marketplace and group for information, data, and communication. He also said the government earlier successfully created 'Boithok' app as an alter-

native to Zoom as well as 'Surokkha' app for Covid-19 vaccine registration. Government is expecting 2 million jobs in e-commerce, hardware, software and BPO sectors by 2021. ICT Minister also hoped that it would be possible to earn \$5 billion in export earnings from ICT by 2025.

Source:
<https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/bangladesh-launch-jogajog-alternative-facebook-says-palak-278443>

BANGLADESH: BANGLADESH TO ATTRACT FDI DESPITE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN, USA REPORT STATES

Despite Covid-19 induced economic slowdown, a new report released by the US Department of State shows that Bangladesh will continue to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) as favorite place for global investors. The US Department of State has released the '2021 Investment Climate Statements' on July 21, 2021 that mentioned the continuous upward economic growth of Bangladesh in the past decade, its hardworking workforce, its strategic location and its vibrant private sectors as major drivers.

The report also stated that in spite of doing a lot for investment friendly environment like electricity generation, Bangladesh has some

specific issues such as inadequate infrastructure, bureaucratic delays, lax enforcement of labor laws and corruption that are impediments to foreign investment top attract investment.

Source:
<https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/economy/2021/07/22/us-bangladesh-will-continue-to-attract-foreign-investments>

BHUTAN: FOR BETTER ECONOMIC COORDINATION AND EFFICIENCY, BHUTAN SHOULD JOIN WTO; STUDY RECOMMENDS

Bhutan's department of trade and UNDP Bhutan have published a report 'The Diagnostic Trade Integration Study Update 2020.' In the report it has recommended that the country should join the World Trade Organization (WTO) for better economic coordination and efficiency. To be a member state of WTO, Bhutan has to commit to liberalize its trade and to adhere to many other agreement of the organization. However, the WTO provides some flexibility to develop-

ing countries and least developed countries (LDCs). According to the report, being an observer country Bhutan is on the process of harmonizing its domestic laws with WTO rules therefore, becoming a full member state of WTO would not create much pressure on its economy.

Source:
<https://kuenselonline.com/study-recommends-bhutans-accession-to-wto/>

INDIA: INDIA A LEADER AND KEY US ALLY IN AFGHANISTAN, SAYS US SECRETARY OF STATE

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has called on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 28, 2021 in his maiden two day visit to India after assuming office earlier this year. In the meeting, the Prime Minister welcomed President Joe Biden's commitment to strengthen the India-US strategic partnership. The Prime Minister also appreciated the initiatives taken by President Biden including those related to the Quad, Covid-19 and climate change. The US Secretary of State also met with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval earlier on the same day.

In a joint press conference, the US Secretary of State said there is no military solu-

tion to conflict in Afghanistan and India as a leader will be the important partner for the US in the region and will continue to make contribution for Afghanistan's peace, stability and development. He also said the solution to Afghanistan's problem lies in Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, a position that has been pushed by India consistently for the last several years.

Source:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/07/28/blinken-pulls-india-closer-amid-challenges-china-afghanistan/>

INDIA: INDIA SCORES BETTER AT UN TRADE FACILITATION SURVEY; THE ECONOMY IS RECOVERING AFTER COVID-19 SECOND WAVE

In a recent trade facilitation survey conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific's (UNESCAP) on digital and sustainable trade facilitation, India has substantially improved scoring 90.32 per cent against 78.49 per cent in 2019 among 143 countries. The 2021 survey shows that India made good score in all its five indicators- transparency, formalities, institutional arrangement and cooperation, paperless trade and cross-border paperless trade. UNESCAP conducts the survey every two years and assesses 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

On the other hand, India is gradually gaining macroeconomic stability as the country is observing comparatively lower coronavirus cases, sharp rise in people's mobility and business resumption. Global petroleum prices have fallen in July and Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced that would gradually increase oil production which might probably reduce oil price. The monsoon has brought good news for agricultural production. These are all favorable developments for the economy.

Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/business-economy/economy/article/india-beats-eu-in-un-survey-on-digital-trade-2021-marks-massive-jump-in-score-from/789568>

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INDIA: PEGASUS ROW: 'PRIVACY A RIGHT THAT HAS TO BE RESPECTED', SAYS UNGA PRESIDENT-ELECT

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The United Nations General Assembly President-elect Abdulla Shahid has visited India on a three day official tour starting on July 20, 2021. During his stay in India, the UNGA President-elect commented on the Pegasus snooping row by saying that privacy as a right, which is constitutionally protected by all civilized countries and it has to be respected. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives, has been elected the President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly on June 7, 2021. He also said the

privacy regime that governs digital communications needs to be seriously looked into.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/united-nations-general-assembly-president-elect-abdullah-shahid-visit-to-india/article35472134.ece>

MALDIVES: FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULA SHAHID'S VISIT TO BULGARIA

The President-elect of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Maldives' Foreign Minister, Abdula Shahid has visited to Bulgaria on July 27, 2021 on an official visit. During his visit, he met Bulgaria's Foreign Minister, Svetlan Hristov Stoev and discussed the bi-lateral relations between Maldives and Bulgaria and to probe new ways to strengthen cooperation between the countries. Later he met Bulgaria's Tourism Minister, Dr. Stella Baltova accompanied by the country's senior government

officials to explore opportunities of collaboration in various sectors between the two countries including tourism. He also voiced his priorities for the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly during the meetings.

Sources:

<https://en.sun.mv/68087>

<https://en.sun.mv/68050>

MYANMAR: MYANMAR JUNTA ANNULS 2020 ELECTION RESULTS; THE WORLD BANK ESTIMATES EIGHTEEN PERCENT SHRINK IN MYANMAR'S ECONOMY

Myanmar's regime has cancelled the election result of 2020 on July 26, 2021, which was won by Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi's National Democratic League (NLD) party. In the election of November, 2020, National Democratic League (NLD) had a landslide victory securing nine hundred and twenty seats i.e. eighty two percent seats nationwide against the military backed Union Solidarity and Development party which secured only seventy one seats i.e. about six percent of seats. The regime-controlled Union Election Commission (UEC) accused National Democratic League (NLD) for more than 11 million cases of fraud in the elections and that the election was "not free and fair" and "not in compliance with" the constitution of the country. However, the Asian Network for Free Elections monitoring group stated in their report that the election represented mass will.

The World Bank's report assumes Myanmar's economy to shrink by eighteen percent in the fiscal year 2021 (October 2020-September 2021), due to massive political upheaval following the coup and a third

corona virus wave. The report states that the Myanmar kyats depreciated by twenty three percent against the US dollars and estimates approximately one million job loss including a decline in wages as a result of reduced working hours. World Bank country director for Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, Mariam Sherman commented that the military takeover affected the growing economy of the country as major multi-billion-dollar foreign investment projects have been halted or disrupted, trade and domestic activity also decreased. This consequently heightened the health and food insecurity which took a heavy toll on the poorest and the most vulnerable sections of the population.

Sources:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-junta-officially-annuls-nlds-2020-election-win.html>

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/world/south-east-asia/2021/07/26/myanmar-junta-cancels-results-of-2020-polls>

NEPAL: US SECRETARY OF STATE CALLS PRIME MINISTER SHER BAHADUR DEUBA TO DISCUSS BILATERAL TIES

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with the Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on July 27, 2021 to discuss bilateral collaboration and intensify fight against COVID-19. According to State Department Spokesperson Ned Price, they highlighted the importance of the US-Nepal collaboration and the recent US donation of 1.5 million vaccines and other COVID-19 support to Nepal. Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said he discussed bilateral relations, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change with Mr. Blinken. "We renewed the shared com-

mitment to taking forward the cooperative partnership in the interest of our two countries and peoples," said Prime Minister Deuba.

Source:
<https://kathmandupost.com/national/2021/07/27/us-secretary-of-state-anthony-bilken-calls-prime-minister-sher-bahadur-deuba>

PAKISTAN: SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS PAKISTAN AND ASSURES UNFLINCHING SUPPORT; PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT DENIES ANY ALLEGATION REGARDING TALIBAN

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Bin Abdullah met with Pakistani Army Chief of Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa on July 27, 2021. During the meeting, which was held on the sidelines of the Foreign Minister's visit to Islamabad, the two sides reviewed the bilateral Saudi-Pakistani relations and ways to enhance joint cooperation to preserve security and stability in the region. They also discussed issues of mutual concern. Earlier on, Prince Faisal Bin Farhan met with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, who congratulated the Saudi leaders on the success of this year's Hajj season, and their ability to maintain an environment free from the spread of COVID-19 and other epidemic diseases. This is the second state visit by Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan to Pakistan in a year.

The Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has said on July 29, 2021 that his government cannot be held responsible for their

actions in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of soldiers by the US and its allies. In his comments to Afghan media representative that were aired on July 29, 2021, Mr. Khan also said that Pakistan will have good relations with whoever the Afghans choose. "What the Taliban are doing or aren't doing has nothing to do with us. We are not responsible, neither are we spokespersons for the Taliban," Imran Khan was quoted. Mr. Khan's remarks were a continuation of Pakistan's repeated statements that it would not accept the responsibility if it was blamed for any setbacks in the Afghan peace process.

Sources: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1637024/saudi-fm-to-visit-pakistan-tomorrow-to-discuss-bilateral-ties-regional-issues-with-fm-qureshi>

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1637578/pakistan-neither-responsible-for-taliban-nor-are-we-their-spokespersons-pm-imran>

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- Bangladesh: Bangladesh to launch 'Jogajog' as alternative to Facebook, says ICT Minister
- Bangladesh: Bangladesh to attract FDI despite economic downturn, USA report states
- Bhutan: For better economic coordination and efficiency, Bhutan should join WTO; study recommends
- India: India a leader and key US ally in Afghanistan, says US Secretary Of State
- India: India scores better at UN trade facilitation survey; the economy is recovering after Covid-19 second wave
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- Maldives: Foreign Minister Abdula Shahid's visit to Bulgaria
- Myanmar: Myanmar Junta annuls 2020 election results; The World Bank estimates eighteen percent shrink in Myanmar's economy
- Nepal: US Secretary Of State calls Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to discuss bilateral ties
- Pakistan: Saudi Foreign Minister visits Pakistan and assures unflinching support; Pakistan government denies any allegation regarding Taliban
- Pakistan: China vows high quality construction of CPEC: Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson
- Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka's weakening external finances to pressure corporate ratings.

PAKISTAN: CHINA VOWS HIGH QUALITY CONSTRUCTION OF CPEC: CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

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During the visit of Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi to China, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian said on July 26, 2021 that Pakistan and China have agreed to continue the high quality construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and strengthen coordination on international and regional affairs. The two sides held in-depth, exchange of views on international and regional issues of common interest, Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here. He informed that State Councilor Wang Yi pointed out that since China and

Pakistan set up diplomatic ties 70 years ago, the two countries have worked together to overcome many difficulties and obstacles and forged an iron-clad friendship and established a strategic partnership of cooperation.

Source:

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-to-continue-high-quality-construction-of-cpec-lijian/>

SRI LANKA: SRI LANKA'S WEAKENING EXTERNAL FINANCES TO PRESSURE CORPORATE RATINGS

Fitch Ratings, in its latest report of July 22, 2021, stated that corporates may face rating pressure if the government further continues import restrictions amidst weakening external finances. Fitch experts assume that the corporates that import finished goods, which are considered to be non-essential will be more affected than those companies who imports raw materials for local value addition. Fitch expert believes decrease of raw material and capital goods imports used for domestic value addition is uncertain in the near future, such imports fundamentally supports the country's long-term import substitution drive.

will be prioritized.

Sources:

<https://www.fitchratings.com/research/corporate-finance/sri-lanka-weakening-external-finances-to-pressure-corp-rtg-22-07-2021>

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2021/07/26/business/254831/lanka%E2%80%99s-weakening-external-finances-may-pressure-corporate-ratings-fitch>

<https://www.fitchratings.com/research/corporate-finance/polarised-impact-on-sri-lanka-corporates-from-weak-sovereign-external-finances-22-07-2021>

Foreign currency reserves of the country is only USD four billion which is further pressured by huge external debt maturities until 2026. The pandemic affected the economy i.e. considerable decrease of tourism revenue and a sharp rise in the price of major import, crude oil. However, the government has taken measures to tighten the capital outflow of foreign currency from the country to stabilize the economy. The central bank stated on June 28, 2021 that imports of essential intermediate and capital goods

About Us

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute is a non-profit, non-political research centre. Established in October 2000, the Institute has established for itself a reputation for excellence in its research and advocacy work focusing on the growth of private enterprise in Bangladesh. The Institute promotes issues of importance to the private sector and seeks to initiate essential measures and influence policy for the development of a market-oriented economy. Through the promotion of sustainable growth in domestic trade, commerce and industry, BEI hopes to address the enormous challenge for Bangladesh in securing a fair share of the global market.

BEI has a particular interest in the support and growth of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), which have the potential to be the engine of economic growth in Bangladesh. BEI also undertakes research and policy advocacy work focusing on the issues of foreign policy and security, particularly those of terrorism impacting Bangladesh and South Asia.

Being conscious of the enormous challenge to securing a fair share for Bangladesh in the global market as well as to address issues of trade and investment promotion, the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) was established under the initiative of some leading business personalities of the country. Salman F. Rahman, Deputy Chairman of the BEXIMCO Group, has been working as the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador, and past Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment, has been working as a Distinguished Fellow and Member of the Board of Governors of the institute and M Humayun Kabir, former Ambassador, has been working as the President and Chief Executive of the institute.

The institute is registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Bangladesh, under the Societies Registration Act.

DISCLAIMER

In compiling this weekly news update, BEI has attempted to include the most relevant news accounts from the past week concerning South Asian Region. From time to time, news beyond South Asia has also been included if it finds relevance on any issues to the region. We recognize that some developments may have been overlooked, and that some sources may not be viewed by all as credible or balanced. Inclusion of a news story and its summary does not constitute any kind of endorsement or position taken by BEI, and the text and positions included in the above are solely extracted from various news articles published in the print media in various countries in South Asia and beyond. If you have any comments or feedback for us regarding this digest, please email at bei@bol-online.com. For more information about BEI and our work, please visit <https://www.bei-bd.org/>

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