

Economy

EU apparel imports faced sharp decline in January; Bangladesh exports hit hard

March 24, 2026

- The European Union's apparel import sector has started the year 2026 on a dull note, recording a double-digit decline in value as major global suppliers, including Bangladesh, face significant negative growth.
- According to the latest data from Eurostat, the EU's total apparel imports fell by 15.48pc in January 2026 compared to the same month last year, with total import values dropping to €7.03bn.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/eu-apparel-imports-faced-sharp-decline-in-january-bangladesh-exports-hit-hard>

Eid boosts remittance inflow despite Middle East war

March 24, 2026

- Remittance inflows rose sharply in the first two weeks of March ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr, despite tensions in the Middle East stemming from the US-Israel war on Iran.
- Expatriates sent home USD 2.2bn in the first 14 days of March, up 36pc from USD 1.62bn during the same period last year, according to Bangladesh Bank (BB) data.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/eid-boosts-remittance-inflow-despite-middle-east-war-4132276>

World Bank pledges support for job creation, inclusive growth during VP's Bangladesh visit

March 24, 2026

- World Bank Vice President for South Asia Johannes Zutt has reaffirmed the institution's commitment to supporting Bangladesh in creating jobs and promoting inclusive economic growth, following the conclusion of his three-day visit to the country on Tuesday.
- During the visit, Zutt met senior government leaders, other public officials and representatives of civil society to discuss Bangladesh's development priorities and the areas where the World Bank Group can extend support

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/world-bank-pledges-support-for-job-creation-inclusive-growth-during-vps-bangladesh-visit-1>

Exemptions cut significantly but Bangladesh's tax-GDP ratio still one of lowest

March 24, 2026

- The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has significantly reduced tax exemptions over FY21-FY23 as the government moves to scale back blanket relief measures and strengthen revenue mobilisation, but the country's tax-GDP ratio still remains one of the lowest in the world.
- According to the NBR's latest Tax Expenditure Report for FY23, tax exemptions declined to BDT 1.07tn (USD 8.73bn) in FY23 from BDT 1.26tn (USD 10.26bn) in FY21, a reduction of BDT 186.82bn (USD 1.52bn) over the period.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/nbr/exemptions-cut-significantly-bangladeshs-tax-gdp-ratio-still-one-lowest-1389011>

Trade and Commerce

Eid fails to lift electronics sales amid weak demand

March 24, 2026

- Sales of electronics and home appliances are witnessing an unusual slowdown even close to Eid-ul-Fitr, with demand for products such as televisions and refrigerators showing only marginal improvement and remaining near regular-day levels instead of the customary festive surge.
- Saikat Azad, head of distributors at Transcom Electronics Limited, said the usual pre-Eid sales momentum is largely absent this year, even with only a few days left before the festival. Despite visiting multiple markets outside Dhaka, including in northern regions, he observed a similar lack of demand across the board.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/eid-fails-lift-electronics-sales-amid-weak-demand-4132271>

Pre-Eid demand drives up prices of poultry, beef, aromatic rice and spices

March 24, 2026

- A pre-Eid surge in demand has pushed up the prices of chicken, beef, aromatic rice for pilaf, spices, cucumbers and lemons in several kitchen markets across Dhaka, intensifying the strain on lower-income households.
- Traders said demand for some products doubled or even tripled ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, while supply failed to keep pace, triggering price hikes.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/pre-aid-demand-drives-prices-poultry-beef-aromatic-rice-and-spices-4133106>

Life insurers face mounting unpaid claims, now at 1.2mn

March 24, 2026

- Payments to life insurance policyholders continue to face heavy delays as the sector grapples with a deepening liquidity crisis. In 2023, around 1mn policyholders were waiting for payouts from 29 companies, with BDT 30.5bn (USD 248.47mn) in unpaid claims.
- The situation has since deteriorated. According to the latest data from the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (Idra), about 1.2mn policyholders remain unpaid, with 32 insurance companies struggling to clear dues and seven showing the lowest settlement rates. Unsettled claims have grown to BDT 44.03bn (USD 358.70mn) till 2025.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/life-insurers-face-mounting-unpaid-claims-now-12-lakh-4132306>

Dhaka, Delhi move to fast-track CEPA talks

March 24, 2026

- Bangladesh and India accelerate negotiations to conclude a comprehensive economic deal aimed at strengthening bilateral trade, lowering tariff and non-tariff barriers, attracting investment and deepening economic integration, sources say.
- As envisaged, the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) also aims to help Bangladesh maintain smooth trade access to the Indian market at the next door after its graduation from the least-developed country (LDC) status, while creating new opportunities for businesses, supply chains and economic cooperation in areas such as services, technology, and infrastructure. Bangladesh is currently scheduled to graduate from the LDC category in 2026, although the government has sought a three-year postponement of its graduation.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/dhaka-delhi-move-to-fast-track-cepa-talks>

Energy and Power

Bangladesh in race to secure emergency LNG supply amid Gulf turmoil

March 24, 2026

- Bangladesh's energy security is once again under strain as global turmoil in the Middle East disrupts the flow of liquefied natural gas (LNG), a fuel that has become indispensable to the country's power sector.
- In a bid to secure supply, the government has confirmed the purchase of seven LNG cargoes from the spot market since the beginning of the US-Israel war on Iran—at prices more than double those paid just months ago.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bangladesh-race-secure-emergency-lng-supply-amid-gulf-turmoil-4131976>

Bangladesh eyes more than USD 2bn in fresh funds to mitigate fuel, LNG crisis

March 24, 2026

- Bangladesh is seeking billions in external financing to secure fuel and liquefied natural gas imports, as the new government led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman moves to stabilize the economy amid a worsening global energy outlook due to the Iran war.
- The nation of 175mn relies on imports for about 95pc of its energy needs, and state-run agencies have increasingly turned to the volatile market to plug the gap.

From:

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladesh-eyes-more-2-billion-fresh-funds-mitigate-fuel-lng-crisis-4133271>

RMG

Most BGMEA factories clear Feb salaries, Eid bonuses

March 24, 2026

- Almost all member factories of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) have paid February salaries and Eid bonuses, President of the trade body Mahmud Hasan Khan said yesterday.
- At a press briefing in the capital, he said, "99.91pc of factories have completed February salary payments, while two factories are still in the process of paying workers. No BGMEA-listed factory has any pending issues regarding February salaries."

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/most-bgmea-factories-clear-feb-salaries-eid-bonuses-4132281>

Telecom

BTRC approves experimental facial verification trial

March 24, 2026

- Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has approved a proposal from mobile operators to test a new system that would allow citizens to register SIM cards using real-time facial "liveness" verification.
- This process aims to prevent fraud, such as registration using photos, screens, videos, masks, or deepfakes, and would enable customers to activate mobile connections remotely through a smartphone.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/btrc-approves-experimental-facial-verification-trial-4132216>

Corporate

Agrani Insurance profit dips 88pc, declares no dividend for 2025

March 24, 2026

- The board of directors of Agrani Insurance Company Limited has recommended no dividend for 2025 as the general insurer's profit tumbled 88pc year-on-year to BDT 6.5mn (USD 52,953.16) in 2025.
- Higher operating expenses and lower premium income weighed on earnings amid a challenging business environment.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/agrani-insurance-profit-dips-88pc-declares-no-dividend>

Capital Market

Regulator to probe LankaBangla Investments over suspected financial misreporting

March 24, 2026

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has ordered an inquiry into alleged financial irregularities at LankaBangla Investments Limited, involving negative equity accounts, irregular interest calculations, and violations of margin rules.
- According to the order issued last week, the inquiry will examine whether the company declared or facilitated cash dividends during periods when it had negative equity or unrealised losses.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/regulator-to-probe-lankabangla-investments-over-suspected-financial-misreporting>

NRBC Bank Securities comes under probe over alleged data falsification

March 24, 2026

- NRBC Bank Securities will face a thorough regulatory investigation over alleged non-compliance, including the submission of fabricated data on negative equity to the securities regulator.
- A two-member committee formed by the securities regulator has been asked to submit a report within 60 working days of the issuance of the order on Wednesday last week.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/nrbc-bank-securities-comes-under-probe-over-alleged-data-falsification>

International

Gold prices sees worst rate drop in over 40 years

March 24, 2026

- Gold prices witnessed a steep decline on Monday, dropping by over 10pc to around Rs 0.13mn per 10 grams in the futures market, as a broad global sell-off in precious metals unfolded amid mounting macroeconomic concerns.
- On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold futures plunged by Rs 14,897, or 10.3pc, settling at Rs 129,595 per 10 grams.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/gold-prices-sees-worst-rate-drop-in-over-40-years>

Indian rupee, bonds set to extend rough patch as Mideast war enters fourth week

March 24, 2026

- The Indian rupee and government bonds will remain under pressure from elevated oil prices and energy supply woes as the Middle East war enters its fourth week.
- The rupee, which slid past 93 per dollar in its worst week in over three years, is set to extend losses, though traders remain wary of central bank intervention as the currency has dropped about 3pc since the Iran war began.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/indian-rupee-bonds-set-to-extend-rough-patch-as-mideast-war-enters-fourth-week>

US green-lights delivery and sale of Iranian oil at sea

March 24, 2026

- The US Treasury on Friday temporarily lifted sanctions on Iranian oil already loaded onto vessels, in Washington's latest step to stem a supply crisis over the Middle East war.
- The authorization allows for the delivery and sale of Iranian crude oil and other petroleum products loaded onto ships before March 20, and will last through April 19, the Treasury said in a statement

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/us-green-lights-delivery-and-sale-iranian-oil-sea-4133266>

Dollar gains as investors flee risk on escalating Middle East war

March 24, 2026

- The dollar rose today (23 March) as escalating retaliatory threats in the Middle East conflict curbed risk appetite and lifted demand for safe-haven assets.

Morning Newsflash

Tuesday, 24 March, 2026

IDLC-SL Research

- The Australian dollar, a liquid proxy for global sentiment, slid as equities sold off across Asia. Japan's top currency diplomat said his government is ready to take action to counter foreign-exchange volatility as the yen edged lower

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/dollar-gains-investors-flee-risk-escalating-middle-east-war-1392471>

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