

Economy

ADB to provide USD 1bn as Bangladesh seeks to cushion Mideast war shocks

March 31, 2026

- The funds are expected to be released between May and June, according to officials at the Economic Relations Division (ERD).
- The support will come under two separate budget assistance programs. Under the "Strengthening Economic Management and Governance Program – Subprogram 2 (PBL)", the initial allocation of USD 500mn has been increased to USD 750mn due to prevailing circumstances. The ADB will also provide USD 250mn under the "Second Strengthening Social Resilience Program – Subprogram 2 (PBL)".

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/adb-provide-1b-bangladesh-seeks-cushion-mideast-war-shocks-1397276>

T-bill yields mixed amid weak credit demand

March 31, 2026

- Yields on treasury bills showed a mixed trend on Sunday as banks channeled excess liquidity into short-term government securities, reflecting subdued private sector credit demand and cautious market sentiment.
- The shift in investment preference comes amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainties and slowing credit growth, prompting banks to favor safer, shorter-tenure instruments over longer-term exposure.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/t-bill-yields-mixed-amid-weak-credit-demand>

Foreign loan commitments rise, but disbursal slows

March 31, 2026

- Bangladesh secured higher foreign loan commitments in the first eight months of the current fiscal year, yet actual disbursement fell by 26pc compared with the same period last year, raising concerns about the country's ability to use external funds effectively.
- Between the July-February period, foreign loan disbursement dropped to USD 3.05bn, down from USD 4.13bn a year earlier, according to data released by the Economic Relations Division (ERD) yesterday.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/foreign-loan-commitments-rise-disbursal-slows-4139621>

Banking

Dedicated BB div pursuing 200 major NPL cases of BDT 2.0bn (USD 16.4mn) each

March 31, 2026

- A dedicated division under Bangladesh Bank spearheads a new stolen-asset-recovery initiative with over 200 high-value non-performing loan (NPL) cases under scrutiny, each involving an estimated BDT 2.0bn (USD 16.4mn). A newly established unit - Stolen Asset Recovery Division - is currently validating the amounts using data from the Credit Information Bureau (CIB), says Farhanul Gani Choudhury, adviser to the governor on stolen asset recovery.
- The advisor said the 200 cases were shortlisted from NPL data submitted by commercial banks to the central bank. According to compiled information, these cases collectively account for approximately USD 12bn or BDT 1.47tn in NPLs. Bangladesh's total NPL volume stood at BDT 5.57tn as of December 2025, according to BB data.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/dedicated-bb-div-pursuing-200-major-npl-cases-of-tk-20b-each>

Interim govt took BDT 730bn (USD 5.95bn) in loans in first 7 months of FY26

March 31, 2026

- The interim government's reliance on the banking sector surged significantly to meet development project costs and other expenditures, with borrowing from internal banks reaching over BDT 730bn (USD 5.95bn) in the first seven months of the current fiscal year, FY2025-26.
- According to a report from Bangladesh Bank, 81pc of the government's total domestic and foreign loans between July and January were sourced from the internal banking system.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/interim-govt-took-tk-730-billion-in-loans-in-first-7-months-of-fy26>

Trade and Commerce

Chittagong Port returns to 'Zero Waiting Time': CPA

March 31, 2026

- Bangladesh's premier seaport, Chittagong Port, has successfully restored its 'Zero Waiting Time' status, bringing down the vessel stay at the outer anchorage to nil.
- This achievement has significantly reduced the turnaround time for ships and accelerated the pace of import-export activities, said Syed Refayet Hamim, Secretary of the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA).

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/chittagong-port-returns-to-zero-waiting-time-cpa>

Farmers pay more for fertilizers despite no major shortage

March 31, 2026

- Farmers in northern and south-western districts say urea stocks are mostly fine, but DAP and TSP are harder to find and often sold above official rates, turning a supply issue into a local price squeeze.
- Officials blame hoarding and informal reselling, saying there is no nationwide shortage and that mobile courts are already acting. The real problem, they say, is patchy distribution and dealer power in remote areas.
- The upward price pressure of fertilizers is said to have caused by the Middle East war shocks in global fertilizer markets, while the agriculture minister says stocks should cover the coming months and complaints must be resolved within 48 hours.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/farmers-pay-more-fertilisers-despite-no-major-shortage-4139646>

NZ proposes FTA with Bangladesh to boost trade ties

March 31, 2026

- New Zealand has proposed initiating negotiations for a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Bangladesh to significantly expand trade and investment between the two nations.
- The proposal was moved by New Zealand's Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay during a high-level bilateral meeting with Bangladesh Commerce Minister Khandaker Abdul Muktadir on the sidelines of the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) held on Sunday at the Palace of Congress, in Yaounde, Cameroon, said a press release on Monday.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/nz-proposes-fta-with-bangladesh-to-boost-trade-ties>

Fin min suggests changes in mode of providing aid

March 31, 2026

- The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has sought a budget allocation of BDT 79.43bn (USD 647.09mn) for the next fiscal year to implement a range of social programs, which is 1.55pc higher than the current amount.
- The programs include food for work (KABIKHA), test relief (TR), humanitarian aid under Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) and General Relief (GR), and

Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP)

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/fin-min-suggests-changes-in-mode-of-providing-aid>

Govt plans to build country's 1st cable-stayed bridge over Karnaphuli river

March 31, 2026

- The Roads and Highways Department has undertaken an initiative to construct Bangladesh's first cable-stayed bridge over the Karnaphuli River at the Chandraghona-Raikhali Ferry Ghat.
- The proposed bridge will connect Kaptai upazila of Rangamati district with Rangunia upazila, significantly improving regional connectivity.
- The total estimated cost of the project is BDT 16.59bn (BDT 135.13mn).

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/govt-plans-to-build-countrys-1st-cable-stayed-bridge-over-karnaphuli-river>

Telecom

Starlink gains just 3,500 users after 8 months in Bangladesh

March 31, 2026

- Elon Musk's Starlink has received a lukewarm response in Bangladesh in the first eight months since its launch in the country, as prices up to ten times higher than local broadband fail to attract subscribers.
- The satellite internet service, operated by SpaceX, attracted only 3,469 customers as of January 2026, according to data from the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC).

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/starlink-gains-just-3500-users-after-8-months-bangladesh-4139626>

Capital Market

Foreign investors keep pulling out as uncertainty weighs on market

March 31, 2026

- Foreign investors have continued withdrawing funds from Bangladesh's equity market over the past nine months through February this year amid persistent geopolitical tensions and macroeconomic uncertainties.
- Political stability following the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's landslide victory in the February polls has failed to attract foreign investment, as intensifying conflict in the Middle East poses fresh economic challenges.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/foreign-investors-keep-pulling-out-as-uncertainty-weighs-on-market>

International

Brent heads for record monthly jump as Houthi attacks widen Gulf conflict

March 31, 2026

- Oil prices extended gains on Monday, with Brent headed for a record monthly rise, after Yemeni Houthis launched their first attacks on Israel over the weekend, widening the US-Israel war with Iran in the Middle East.
- Brent crude futures jumped USD 2.43, or 2.16pc, to USD 115 a barrel by 0342 GMT after settling 4.2pc higher on Friday. US West Texas Intermediate was at USD 101.50 a barrel, up USD 1.86, or 1.87pc, following a 5.5pc gain in the previous session.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/global-economy/brent-heads-record-monthly-jump-houthi-attacks-widen-gulf-conflict-1397531>

Vietnam textile firms strengthen resilience amid rising global risks

March 31, 2026

- Vietnamese textile and garment enterprises are steering through unpredictable global markets, rising transport costs and Middle East conflicts while securing orders, diversifying sources and eyeing domestic growth.
- Unpredictable market developments and geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East have disrupted supply chains, driven up transportation and insurance costs and affected business operations.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/vietnam-textile-firms-strengthen-resilience-amid-rising-global-risks-4139576>

From Belt and Road to belt tightening: China's neighbors get cold shoulder on energy

March 31, 2026

- As energy stress spreads across Southeast Asia, governments across the region are asking China to deliver on its pledges of closer energy security cooperation by freeing up now-banned exports of fertilizer and fuel.
- But so far China has offered only vague statements and has yet to even publicly acknowledge the export bans reported by Reuters and others as it focuses on insulating its own economy from the war in Iran

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/belt-and-road-belt-tightening-chinas-neighbours-get-cold-shoulder-energy-4139341>

Iran inflation rate rises to 50.6pc: statistics centre

March 31, 2026

- Iran's annual inflation rate rose to 50.6pc by mid-March, up three percentage points from the previous month, the country's official statistics centre said on Sunday.
- "The inflation rate for the twelve months ending in Esfand (from February 20 to March 20) reached 50.6 percent," the centre said in a statement carried by the official IRNA news agency.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/iran-inflation-rate-rises-506-statistics-centre-4139536>

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