

Economy

Islamic Development Bank agrees to lend USD 1.0bn

March 15, 2026

- An Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) mission has assured Bangladesh of providing USD 1.0bn in loan for setting up a 3.0-million-tonne-capacity oil refinery, officials say and hope it would cut import dependence for petroleum fuels.
- The IsDB technical team extensively reviewed the ERL capacity during its 4-day mission on March 8-11 and agreed to provide the USD 1.0bn financing package in phases for financing the Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL) Unit-2 project.
- The loan will be disbursed in three tranches as the refinery -setting-up works will take five years to complete.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/islamic-development-bank-agrees-to-lend-10b>

IMF reaffirms continued support for Bangladesh

March 15, 2026

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) Resident Representative in Bangladesh Maxym Kryshko on Thursday reiterated the organisation's commitment to continuing close cooperation with the country.
- He made the remarks during a courtesy meeting with Governor of Bangladesh Bank at the central bank's headquarters in Dhaka.
- During the discussion, Kryshko congratulated the governor and expressed the IMF's interest in working closely with the newly formed political government that assumed office following a free and fair national election. He said the IMF is keen to cooperate with the government on maintaining macroeconomic stability and implementing reforms in the financial sector.

From: <https://observerbd.com/news/569471>

Banking

Sub-branch credit soars 17.4 pc, as rural BD grips niche banking

March 15, 2026

- The scheduled banks' sub-branch banking model has emerged as a powerhouse for financial inclusion in the final quarter of 2025, with credit disbursement skyrocketing by 17.4pc - nearly nine times the growth rate of the overall banking sector.
- The Bangladesh Bank's (BB) latest data for the October-December 2025 period reveals a surge in niche banking activities, as the total outstanding loans and advances disbursed through these sub-

branches reached BDT 218.80bn (USD 1.8bn) in the period from BDT 186.45bn (USD 1.52bn) in July-September 2025.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/sub-branch-credit-soars-174-pc-as-rural-bd-grips-niche-banking>

Trade and Commerce

Shipping costs spiral as Iran war prompts new surcharges

March 15, 2026

- Bangladeshi exporters and importers are facing higher shipping costs as major global carriers introduce war-related surcharges following the US-Israel war on Iran.
- The extra fees, ranging from USD 500 to USD 4,000 per container, threaten to push up export prices, delay deliveries, and disrupt trade flows to the Middle East and other markets.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/shipping-costs-spiral-iran-war-prompts-new-surcharges-4128606>

Global fuel price hike won't hit Eid travel cost: minister

March 15, 2026

- Commerce Minister Khandaker Abdul Muktadir today said that increased global fuel prices will not affect transport costs in Bangladesh or impact travel to and from home during Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations in the country.
- There is also no possibility of a spike in the prices of essential commodities, said Muktadir, who is also the minister for industries, textiles, and jute.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/global-fuel-price-hike-wont-hit-eid-travel-cost-minister-4128546>

HSIA 3rd Terminal: Bangladesh seeks revised proposal from Japan

March 15, 2026

- Bangladesh has sought a revised proposal quickly from the Japanese side over managing the operation and maintenance of the third terminal of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in Dhaka, said official sources.
- The request was made during a meeting between officials of the Civil Aviation and Tourism Affairs Ministry (MoCAT), Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) and a Japanese delegation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/hsia-3rd-terminal-bangladesh-seeks-revised-proposal-from-japan>

US launches trade probe into Bangladesh, 15 others

March 15, 2026

- The US has launched a new investigation into Bangladesh and some of its biggest trading partners after the Supreme Court struck down a key part of President Donald Trump's tariff policies last month.
- On Wednesday, US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the Section 301 unfair trade practices probe could lead to new levies against countries including China, the European Union, India, Japan, South Korea and Mexico by this summer, reports BBC.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/us-launches-trade-probe-into-bangladesh-15-others>

Rod prices jump BDT 10,000 (USD 81.47) per ton in 10 days, cement up BDT 25 (USD 0.20) per bag

March 15, 2026

- Bangladesh's construction materials market is facing rising prices, with the cost of key inputs such as steel rods and cement increasing sharply in recent days.
- Over the past 10 days, steel rod prices have risen by up to BDT 10,000 (USD 81.47) per ton, while cement prices have increased by BDT 20-25 (USD 0.16-0.20) per bag, according to market data.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rod-prices-jump-tk10000-tonne-10-days-cement-tk25-bag-1384486>

RMG

Bangladeshi garments fetch over 10pc higher prices in EU than US

March 15, 2026

- Bangladeshi apparels are fetching over 10pc higher prices in European markets on average compared to the United States, even for similar products, according to a recent study by the Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID).
- The study, unveiled yesterday by the local think tank in Dhaka, links the price gap to differences in tariff structures and trade preferences, with exporters benefiting from lower tariffs in Europe while facing higher barriers in the US.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/bangladeshi-garments-fetch-over-10-higher-prices-eu-us-4128621>

Telecom

Internet subscriber base shrinks by 7mn in 6 months

March 15, 2026

- Bangladesh's internet subscriber base has been on the decline for the last six consecutive months till

January, with around 7mn users dropping off the network since August last year, mainly due to a steady fall in mobile internet subscriptions.

- According to the latest data of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the total number of internet subscribers stood at 129mn in January, down from 136mn in July 2025.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/internet-subscriber-base-shrinks-70-lakh-6-months-4128611>

Corporate

Crisis-hit People's Leasing seeks BDT 7.5bn (USD 61.10mn) stimulus from govt for revival

March 15, 2026

- Crisis-hit People's Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (PLFS), a non-bank financial institution (NBFI), has formally sought a financial stimulus of BDT 7.50bn (USD 61.10mn) from the government to complete its restructuring process and resume full-scale operations.
- In a letter sent to the Ministry of Finance, the company outlined a comprehensive 'revival plan' aimed at safeguarding depositors' interests and restoring confidence in the troubled NBFI sector, according to sources

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/crisis-hit-peoples-leasing-seeks-tk-75b-stimulus-from-govt-for-revival>

Paramount Ins posts slight fall in profit, declares 10pc cash dividend

March 15, 2026

- Paramount Insurance PLC reported a marginal decline in profit for 2025, as higher operating expenses and subdued premium income weighed on earnings amid persistent macroeconomic headwinds.
- According to a disclosure filed with the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) on Wednesday, the general insurer's profit fell 2pc year-on-year to BDT 89mn (USD 789,357), down from BDT 90.6mn (USD 738,086) in 2024.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/paramount-ins-posts-slight-fall-in-profit-declares-10pc-cash-dividend>

Capital Market

11 more brokerage firms get FIX certification to boost trading efficiency

March 15, 2026

- The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) has awarded FIX (Financial Information Exchange) certification to 11 more brokerage houses, as part of its ongoing

initiative to enable brokers to deploy their own Order Management Systems (OMS) through direct API connectivity

- The newly certified institutions are NF Management Company Ltd, Akij Capital Management Ltd, Amar Securities Ltd, Commerce Bank Securities and Investment Ltd, Mona Financial Consultancy and Securities Ltd, Premier Bank Securities Ltd, Prilink Securities Ltd, Pubali Bank Securities Ltd, Remons Investment Securities Ltd, Skyline Securities Ltd and United Securities Ltd

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/11-more-brokerage-firms-get-fix-certification-to-boost-trading-efficiency>

BSEC prepares new rules to regulate public interest companies

March 15, 2026

- The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) is working to introduce a comprehensive framework to define and regulate public interest companies (PICs), aiming to restore regulatory control over capital issuance and prevent misuse in the securities market.
- The draft rules, which will be published soon for public opinion, seek to repeal a 2019 exemption that allowed non-listed companies to raise capital without prior BSEC approval

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/bsec-prepares-new-rules-to-regulate-public-interest-companies>

International

Dollar rises broadly

March 15, 2026

- The US dollar rose across the board on Friday, set for a second straight weekly gain, as the war in the Middle East drove investors toward safe-haven assets and weighed on energy-sensitive currencies such as the euro.
- President Donald Trump said the US was going to be hitting Iran "very hard over the next week", shortly after issuing a partial 30-day waiver for purchases of sanctioned Russian oil, hoping to ease prices fueled by the US-Israeli war on Iran.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/dollar-rises-broadly-4128706>

War cuts Hormuz transit to 77 ships

March 15, 2026

- Only 77 ships have so far crossed the Strait of Hormuz in March as the Mideast war disrupts one

of the world's most vital shipping routes, a maritime data firm reported Friday.

- Lloyd's List Intelligence said most of these vessels belonged to the so-called "shadow fleet", ships used to skirt Western sanctions and regulations, typically linked to Russia and Iran.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/war-cuts-hormuz-transit-77-ships-4128691>

Trump rejects efforts to launch Iran ceasefire talks

March 15, 2026

- President Donald Trump's administration has rebuffed efforts by Middle Eastern allies to start diplomatic negotiations aimed at ending the Iran war that started two weeks ago with a massive U.S.-Israeli air assault, according to three sources familiar with the efforts.
- Iran, for its part, has rejected the possibility of any ceasefire until U.S. and Israeli strikes end, two senior Iranian sources told Reuters, adding that several countries had been trying to mediate an end to the conflict.
- The lack of interest from Washington and Tehran suggests both sides are digging in for an extended conflict, even as the widening war inflicts civilian casualties and Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz sends oil prices soaring.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/trump-rejects-efforts-launch-iran-ceasefire-talks-1386966>

India seeks passage for more vessels stranded around Strait of Hormuz after a few sail through

March 15, 2026

- India has sought safe passage for 22 of its vessels stranded west of the Strait of Hormuz, a foreign affairs ministry spokesperson said on Saturday (14 March), after Iran allowed a few Indian ships to sail through, in a rare exception to the blockade.
- Randhir Jaiswal told a press conference that India has stayed in touch with all major parties in the Middle East - including Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Iran, the US and Israel - to convey its priorities, particularly on energy security.
- Tehran's Ambassador to India, Mohammad Fathali, confirmed that Iran has allowed some Indian vessels to sail through the Strait of Hormuz.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/india-seeks-passage-more-vessels-stranded-around-strait-hormuz-after-few-sail-through-1386806>

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