

Economy

Bangladesh targets recovery of USD 200bn 'stolen funds' as banks face liquidity stress

April 19, 2026

- Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury has put the recovery of an estimated USD 200bn in stolen assets at the centre of efforts to stabilize the economy, warning that years of capital flight have hollowed out the banking system and left the private sector starved of liquidity.
- Speaking in a featured interview aired during the Atlantic Council's coverage of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings, Khosru laid out what he described as the scale of financial "looting" that has weakened the domestic economy.

From:

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/bangladesh/bangladesh-targets-recovery-of-200b-stolen-funds-as-banks-face-liquidity-stress>

Retail sector moves from product sales to customer experience: Experts

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh's retail sector is undergoing a structural shift from product-centric sales to experience-driven consumption, as customers increasingly demand better service, modern store environments and personalized shopping experiences, industry experts said.
- The growing middle class seeks a balance between quality, pricing, warranty and after-sales service, while lower-income consumers remain largely price-driven with a focus on affordability and accessibility.
- Speakers noted that established companies are facing rising competition from young entrepreneurs, many of whom are successfully operating e-commerce businesses from home with limited capital. They also observed a decline in brand loyalty among Gen Z consumers, who are more willing to switch brands based on value, quality and overall experience.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/retail-sector-moves-product-sales-customer-experience-experts-1414921>

Large-scale manufacturing sees some rebound

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh's large-scale manufacturing sector sees some rebound with its return onto growth trajectory in January after a tumble last December, signifying tentative recovery in the industrial sector.

- The index that measures the industrial output rose nearly 1.0pc year on year in January, in a reversal of 6.34pc decline recorded in December, according to data released Thursday by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).
- Such biggies in industrial sector account for around 11pc of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/large-scale-manufacturing-sees-some-rebound>

Trade and Commerce

VAT exemptions to go, sparing poorest 40pc

April 19, 2026

- The government plans to withdraw existing VAT exemptions on most goods and services, sparing only those used by low-income groups and people living below the poverty line, a move experts said will be difficult to implement and could widen the tax net, raise effective rates, and push up consumer costs.
- A new plan was discussed to withdraw all VAT exemptions, except those benefiting the bottom 40pc of the population. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics data, the bottom 40pc accounts for roughly 68mn people.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/vat-exemptions-go-sparing-poorest-40-1414171>

Real estate sinks deeper into crisis as booking cancellations surge, defaults hit 26.7pc

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh's real estate sector is facing one of its deepest downturns in recent years, marked by a wave of booking cancellations following the political shift on 5 August 2024, while rising construction costs, high interest rates, and global instability have pushed default loans in the sector to nearly 27pc.
- Industry insiders say the crisis is squeezing developers' cash flows, halting projects and threatening knock-on effects across dozens of connected industries. According to developers, the primary reason for booking cancellations was that many investors and high-net-worth buyers either left the country or adopted a wait-and-see approach.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/real-estate-sinks-deeper-crisis-booking-cancellations-surge-defaults-hit-267-1412596>

Bepza eyes industrialization in North, plans new EPZs in Rangpur, Sirajganj

April 19, 2026

- Since its inception under the Prime Minister's Office, the organization has made a substantial contribution to the nation's economic development, and analysts have noted its ongoing influence on social and economic advancement.
- Bepza Executive Chairman Major General Mohammad Moazzem Hossain said, "Currently, besides eight operational EPZs and two economic zones, new EPZs are being implemented in Jashore and Patuakhali, and EPZs in Rangpur and Sirajganj are in the planning stage.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/bepza-eyes-industrialisation-north-plans-new-epzs-rangpur-sirajganj-1412591>

Govt raises fuel prices by up to BDT 20 per litre (USD 0.16)

April 19, 2026

- The government has set new retail prices for all types of fuel in Bangladesh, citing the continued impact of rising global oil prices.
- According to the new pricing, diesel will cost BDT 115 per litre (USD 0.94), octane BDT 140 (USD 1.15), petrol BDT 135 (USD 1.11), and kerosene BDT 130 per litre (USD 1.06).

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/govt-raises-fuel-prices-by-up-to-tk-20-per-litre>

BIDS, BCI to publish regular manufacturing indexes

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh Institute of Development Research (BIDS) and Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) will publish regular manufacturing indexes to highlight the trends and real information of the industrial sectors, including textile, garment, pharmaceuticals and leather
- A stakeholder consultation meeting was held on Saturday at the BIDS conference room to jointly conduct the research titled "BIDS-BCI Industry 100 Index" on large and medium manufacturing industries of various sectors, according to a statement.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/bids-bci-to-publish-regular-manufacturing-indexes>

Wheat imports exceed FY25 total with 2.5 months to go

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh has imported a large volume of wheat within nine and a half months of this fiscal year, exceeding the total amount imported in the previous year.

- This hike was driven by lower global prices, shifting food consumption patterns, and efforts to narrow the trade gap with the United States, importers said.
- According to data from the Directorate General of Food, a total of 6.23mn tonnes of wheat were imported in the fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25), combining both government and private sectors. On the other hand, a total of 6.76mn tonnes of wheat was imported during just the July-April period of the current fiscal year 2025-26 (FY26).

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/wheat-imports-exceed-fy25-total-25-months-go-4153201>

Corporate

ILO flags Grameenphone union dispute as 'serious and urgent'

April 19, 2026

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) has once again raised concerns over a long-running labour dispute involving the Grameenphone Employees Union (GPEU), identifying the case as "serious and urgent" and drawing renewed attention to the prolonged legal battle of union leader Adeeba Zerin Chowdhury
- The dispute dates back to the late 2000s, when several GPEU members, including Ms Chowdhury, were dismissed following efforts to establish and operate a union within the company.
- The dismissals triggered a series of legal proceedings that have continued for more than 15 years, moving through labour courts and appellate mechanisms without reaching a final resolution.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/i-lo-flags-grameenphone-union-dispute-as-serious-and-urgent>

Capital Market

Bangladesh National Insurance declares 22pc cash dividend

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh National Insurance Company has recommended a 22pc cash dividend for 2025, subject to approval by shareholders.
- The company also reported improved financial performance for the year under review. Earnings per share (EPS) rose to BDT 4.81 (USD 0.04) in 2025, up from BDT 4.19 (USD 0.03) in the previous year.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/bangladesh-national-insurance-declares-22pc-cash-dividend>

BSEC's fresh move to register ICB Unit Fund rekindles control row

April 19, 2026

- The dispute over operational authority of the country's oldest and largest-ever pooled fund remains unresolved, with the asset manager aiming to retain control and the market watchdog seeking to assume it.
- The ICB Unit Fund, floated in 1981 and managed by the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), operates under the ICB's own ordinance.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/bsecs-fresh-move-to-register-icb-unit-fund-rekindles-control-row>

Excise shock, factory shift drag BATBC profit down 67pc

April 19, 2026

- British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company (BATBC) posted a steep 67pc year-on-year decline in profit after tax in 2025, hit by a mid-year excise duty hike and a forced factory relocation that drove up one-off costs.
- The company's income plunged to BDT 5.8bn (USD 47.9mn) in 2025, resulting in earnings per share of BDT 10.81 (USD 0.09) for 2025, the lowest in at least six years, down from BDT 32.42 (USD 0.27) the year before.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/excise-shock-factory-shift-drag-batbc-profit-down-67pc>

Merchant banks risk losing licenses over IPO shortfall

April 19, 2026

- Merchant banks will face penalties-including license cancellation-for having failed to bring at least one IPO proposal every two years, as required by the relevant rules. They were notified of the regulatory position at a meeting held on Wednesday at the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC).
- There has been no new listing since the entry of Techno Drugs into the secondary market in March 2024. Hence, all issue managers have theoretically failed to comply with the rules required to retain their licenses. However, the macroeconomic situation has also been unfavorable for new listings.

From: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/stock/bangladesh/merchant-banks-risk-losing-licences-over-ipo-shortfall>

DSE brokers team up with Japanese peers for sustainable development

April 19, 2026

- The DSE Brokers Association of Bangladesh (DBA) has teamed up with the Japan Securities Dealers Association (JSDA) to foster sustainable development, enhance efficiency, and strengthen international cooperation in Bangladesh's capital market.
- Under the agreement, the two organizations will collaborate in several key areas to support the development of the securities market, including the exchange of laws and regulations related to financial investment businesses and capital markets.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/dse-brokers-team-japanese-peers-sustainable-development-4154476>

Energy and Power

USD 2.0bn out of pocket as energy costs surge

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh has shouldered nearly USD 2.0bn in extra costs as global disruption drives up energy imports, said Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury.
- "The major sources of procurement were not working anymore. Due to disruptions, we have had to rely heavily on spot market purchases, which are significantly more expensive," the minister said during a discussion at the Atlantic Council on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/2b-out-pocket-energy-costs-surge-4154666>

LPG supply security hinges on boosting storage capacity

April 19, 2026

- Bangladesh's liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sector has grown rapidly, yet lacks the storage capacity to buffer itself against global market shocks, according to the president of the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB).
- According to industry estimates, Bangladesh currently consumes around 17-18 lakh tonnes of LPG annually. Around 80 percent of this demand comes from households, mainly for cooking in areas where natural gas through pipeline is unavailable. Industrial, commercial, and autogas use together account for the remaining share.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/lpg-supply-security-hinges-boosting-storage-capacity-4154701>

International

EU backs Morocco autonomy plan as 'most feasible' solution for Moroccan Sahara

April 19, 2026

- The European Union has expressed support for Morocco's autonomy proposal for Western Sahara, describing it as a "most feasible" basis for resolving the long-running dispute, during a high-level visit to Rabat.
- EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas conveyed the position during talks with Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita on Wednesday (15 April), according to a joint statement released on Thursday (16 April). The statement said the EU remains committed to the United Nations-led process in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2797 (2025), and supports efforts to reach a "just, lasting and mutually acceptable" political solution.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/eu-backs-morocco-autonomy-plan-most-feasible-solution-western-sahara-1414426>

Many ships still avoiding Hormuz transit as 'situation is unclear'

April 19, 2026

- Uncertainty continues to disrupt maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, with many vessels hesitant to pass despite Iran's claim that the route remains open.
- Mixed signals about the situation are causing ships to reconsider their movements. Ships have been attempting transit since the announcement but it seems like many of them are heading back because the situation is unclear.

From: <https://www.tbsnews.net/worldbiz/middle-east/many-ships-still-avoiding-hormuz-transit-situation-unclear-1414376>

Global lenders vow deeper cooperation to shield economies

April 19, 2026

- The heads of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) yesterday underscored the importance of close cooperation to support stability and safeguard development progress amid heightened global uncertainty and mounting pressures on member economies.
- Meeting on the sidelines of the World Bank Group–International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings, the heads noted that the impacts of current global developments, including the evolving situation in the Middle East, are being felt through higher energy costs, supply chain disruptions, and tighter financial conditions.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/global-lenders-vow-deeper-cooperation-shield-economies-4154466>

US buyers redirect imported fertilizer overseas

April 19, 2026

- US fertilizer buyers are redirecting shipments out of the country, as higher overseas prices give them an incentive to divert critical supplies, a fertilizer analyst said.
- Barges of imported urea nitrogen fertilizer were purchased this week at the Port of New Orleans for export overseas, said Josh Linville, vice president for fertilizer at financial services firm StoneX.

From: <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-economy/news/us-buyers-redirect-imported-fertiliser-overseas-4154681>

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