



True extent of bad loans emerges

NPLs hit record Tk 3,45,765cr in 2024

MD MEHEDI HASAN

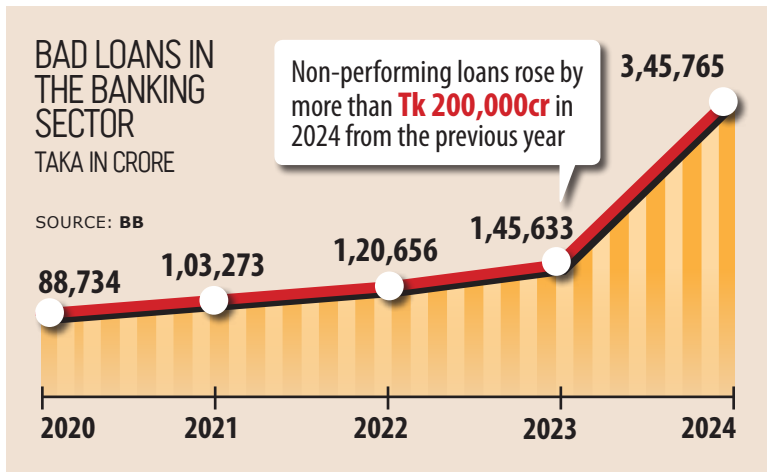
Defaulted loans in the country's banking sector reached a record Tk 3,45,765 crore at the end of 2024 as toxic loans increased sharply following the political changeover in August last year.

At the end of last year, total outstanding loans stood at Tk 17,11,402 crore, 20.20 percent of which have turned sour, according to the latest data from the Bangladesh Bank, which was released through a press conference for the first time.

However, distressed assets -- which include written-off loans, rescheduled loans and loans tied up in the Money Loan Court -- stood at Tk 6,68,598 crore.

At the end of September last year, bad loans stood at Tk 2,82,977 crore. In the following three months, the tally increased by Tk 60,788 crore.

This means defaulted loans increased by a staggering Tk 2,00,132 crore in 2024.



Defaulted loans have increased sharply since the political changeover, as the true picture of the sector, concealed during the Awami League government's 16-year regime, has now come to light. The Daily Star has learnt from bankers.

In a statement, the central bank said that defaulted loans increased due to a decline in new loan disbursements and loan renewals, as well as the rescheduling of the maturity period of term loans by the central bank.

Some loans became defaulted following central bank inspections and the vacating of court-issued stay orders related to loan classification.

Bad loans also increased due to the reclassification of rescheduled loans after non-payment of instalments, the statement added.

The growing trend of bad loans could not be arrested as those loans were concealed under the previous regime but have now come to light, said BB Governor Ahsan H Mansur at the press conference yesterday.

Mansur was appointed the central bank governor on August 13 last year.

Some large borrowers, including S Alam Group and Beximco Group, defaulted heavily after the Awami League's fall, pushing the total to an unprecedented level.

The defaulted loan ratio of state-run banks stood at 42.83 percent, while that of private sector banks was 15.60 percent, BB data showed.

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A ruckus over the launch of Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad, led by several leaders of the Students Against Discrimination, at Dhaka University's Madhur Canteen yesterday. Private university students alleged that they have been sidelined in the new organisation and are seen trying to stop the press conference.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

GAS PRICE HIKE Protests, chaos at BERC hearing Businesses, consumer groups slam 'illogical' proposal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A public hearing organised by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday descended into chaos as business representatives and consumer rights activists strongly opposed a proposed hike in gas price.

The event, held at the capital's BIAM auditorium, saw protests, disruptions, and demands for a fresh hearing on how to lower gas prices instead.

Even before the hearing began, the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB) staged a human chain, against the proposed hike. During the hearing, activists chanted slogans, repeatedly disrupting the proceedings.

They argued that raising gas prices would stifle new investment, hinder job creation, disrupt exports,

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Scuffle mars launch of new student org

Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad committee announced; private univ students protest exclusion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new student organisation named Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad was launched yesterday amid protests by private university students for exclusion despite their role in the July uprising.

Launched at Madhur Canteen of Dhaka University, this organisation, led by former leaders of the Students Against Discrimination (SAD), said it would operate independently based on its own agendas and would refrain from partisan politics.

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NEW POLITICAL PARTY Ex-Shibir leaders to stay away

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

With just a day remaining before the launch of the new political party by the 2024 uprising activists, former Islami Chhatra Shibir leaders in the Jatiya Nagorik Committee have withdrawn from the initiative to form the party amid discord over leadership positions.

Ali Ahsan Zonaid and Rafi Salman Rifat, former presidents of Shibir's Dhaka University unit and leaders of the Nagorik Committee, announced their decision not to join the party on Facebook yesterday.

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WE MOURN

Mr. Abdullah Al Noman

(May 31, 1945 - February 25, 2025)



Eminent politician and former Minister, **Mr. Abdullah Al Noman**, has passed away. (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Rajiu'n). He was the elder brother of Mr. Abdullah Al Ahsan, Honorable Director of **Dhaka Bank**.

Mr. Noman served as a Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh from 1991 to 1996 and 2001 to 2006. Mr. Noman was a dedicated leader whose contributions to our nation will be remembered with deep respect. His unwavering commitment to public service has left an indelible mark on our society.

Dhaka Bank family extends its deepest condolences on his passing away and prays for the salvation of his departed soul. May Almighty Allah grant him Jannatul Ferdous. Ameen.



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