

# House rent climbs for three consecutive quarters

Arbitrary increase, slack law enforcement, high inflation to blame



MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Accommodation costs in Bangladesh have risen for three consecutive quarters this year, adding to the financial strain on middle- and lower-income households already under pressure from high inflation.

The House Rent Index (HRI), which tracks quarterly changes in rental costs, climbed to 5.19 percent in the July-September quarter of fiscal 2025-26, up slightly from 5.16 percent in April-June and 5.14 percent in January-March, according to data compiled by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

On a year-on-year basis, however, rent growth has eased. In the July-September quarter of 2024, the HRI stood at 5.91 percent.

The index reflects rental costs across three types of housing -- pucca, semi-pucca and mud houses. Data are collected nationwide, covering both urban and rural areas.

"Typically, house rents tend to rise either at the beginning or the middle of the year. But that seasonal pattern is no longer holding," said a BBS official familiar with the survey.

"When a tenant moves out, landlords often raise the rent immediately, which puts automatic pressure on the next tenant," the official added.

House rent is part of the non-food component of the consumer price index. With prices of essential commodities also rising, higher rents are compounding the burden on low- and fixed-income households already struggling with

prolonged inflation.

Inflation rose to 8.29 percent in November, driven by non-food inflation of 9.08 percent, according to BBS monthly data.

Bangladesh has been grappling with elevated inflation for nearly three years. Consumer price inflation remained above 9 percent until May 2025 and has stayed above 8 percent since then.

SM Nazar Hossain, vice-president of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh, said landlords are increasing rents arbitrarily, even amid high inflation, exploiting the wide gap between housing demand and supply in Dhaka.

"Although the Premises Rent Control Act was enacted many years ago, there is no implementation," he said. "If the law were enforced, rent levels could be controlled to some extent, but the government is not

playing an effective role."

"There is no system at all, no structured mechanism," Hossain said. "As soon as demand rises, rents are increased immediately."

He said the practice is more prevalent in labour-intensive and high-demand neighbourhoods. "When one tenant leaves, the rent goes up right away. And because demand is strong, another tenant is always willing to move in, even at a higher rate."

"We keep talking about it and the media keeps writing about it, but nothing is changing," he said. "The real problem is that there is a law, but no enforcement."

Hossain, however, welcomed a recent initiative by the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), saying it could provide some relief if implemented effectively.

# IP rights enforcement key to higher investment

AmCham says

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh cannot significantly expand exports or attract foreign direct investment without proper enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), said Syed Ershad Ahmed, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham).

"Effective enforcement of IPRs would bring greater transparency to business... while corruption cannot be completely eliminated, it can be reduced to a manageable and tolerable level, and efforts are underway to achieve that," he said while speaking to journalists yesterday at an event organised by AmCham at the Sheraton Dhaka in Banani.

Ahmed said sustained advocacy has helped push the government from a limited trade office structure toward establishing IPR laws and an industry-focused institutional framework.

He added that logistics, once a neglected sector, has now become central to discussions on competitiveness and investment.

"AmCham is working across several sectors, including logistics, IPRs, digital financing, energy, and agriculture, with logistics set to become a key priority in the coming period. We want to develop the overall ecosystem in Bangladesh. If we can develop the overall business ecosystem, overall investment in Bangladesh will increase," he said.

**AmCham president pointed to the growing number of educated but unemployed young people, saying job creation should be the top priority of the next government**

On employment, Ahmed pointed to the growing number of educated but unemployed young people, saying job creation should be the top priority of the next government.

He cautioned that while entrepreneurship is often encouraged, it requires sufficient capital, and large-scale job creation is more realistically driven by higher investment and export growth.

Discussing the investment climate, Ahmed said policy unpredictability remains a major concern for investors. Although AmCham has submitted detailed, sector-wise recommendations to key ministries through its Research and Advocacy Cell, he said meaningful follow-through has been limited.

"Investors need policy stability and predictability, which are usually supported by a free and fair election and a stable political environment," Ahmed said.

He also highlighted ongoing barriers to foreign direct investment, including corruption, energy shortages, and weak legal and physical infrastructure.

He said wider use of digital systems and stronger IPR enforcement could improve transparency and help reduce corruption. While acknowledging progress in areas such as fully online income tax filing, he said much more needs to be done to create a world-class investment environment.

Ahmed also underscored the importance of national branding, noting that global investors are familiar with countries such as India, Vietnam, and the Philippines, while Bangladesh remains relatively underrepresented.

On women's empowerment, he said female students are performing strongly in higher education but continue to face social and cultural barriers to entering the workforce. "True empowerment requires a change in mindset at both family and societal levels," he said.

Referring to technological development, Ahmed said the IT sector has raised concerns about high taxes and the limited availability of graphics processing unit (GPU) servers needed for artificial intelligence development. These constraints weaken Bangladesh's ability to compete in global technology markets, he added.

AmCham treasurer Al Mamun M Rashel said there is a gap between policy announcements, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, and actual implementation.

He added that import barriers for high-end technologies are further constraining sector growth and called for more specific and actionable reporting to help the government better address these challenges.

# Sylhet Gas Fields holds 43rd AGM

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The 43rd annual general meeting (AGM) of Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, a gas and petroleum products producing company under Petrobangla, was held on December 18.

The meeting took place at Petrocentre, the company's Dhaka liaison office, according to a press release.

The meeting was presided over by the chairman of the board of directors, Abul Mansur Md Faizullah, and attended by Md Rezanur Rahman, chairman of Petrobangla, alongside shareholders, board members, and Managing Director Md Abdul Jalil Pramanik, and the company's general managers.

According to the audited financial statements for fiscal year 2024-25, the company earned Tk 2,740.82 crore in revenue from the production, processing and sale of natural gas and petroleum products, including condensate, petrol, diesel, kerosene, octane, NGL and LPG.

During the period, it deposited Tk 876.53 crore with the government exchequer in the form of supplementary duty, VAT, income tax, dividend and DSL, while posting a net profit of Tk 538.59 crore.

# NCC Bank signs supply chain finance deal with Akij Resource

STAR BUSINESS DESK

NCC Bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with six companies of Akij Resource Group to introduce a supply chain finance (SCF) arrangement for their designated suppliers.

The companies include Akij Essentials Limited, Hashem Rice Mills Limited, Akij Agro Feed Limited, Akij Ispat Limited, Nobayon Traders Limited and Akij Cement Company Limited, according to a press release.

Under the agreement, NCC Bank will extend supply chain financing facilities to eligible suppliers of the companies, enabling them to meet working capital requirements through timely access to finance against buyer-approved invoices.

The signing ceremony was held yesterday at NCC Bank's head office in Motijheel, Dhaka. Md Habibur Rahman, deputy managing director of NCC Bank, and Md Ruhul Islam, director of Akij Agro Feed Limited, signed the agreement on behalf of



PHOTO: NCC BANK

**Md Habibur Rahman, deputy managing director of NCC Bank, and Md Ruhul Islam, director of Akij Agro Feed Limited, pose for photographs alongside officials of both organisations at NCC Bank's head office in Motijheel yesterday.**

their respective organisations.

Among others, M Khurshed Alam, additional managing director, Md Zakir Anam and Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, deputy managing directors, Sharif Mohammad Mahsin, senior vice-president and head of SME, Mufti Mustafizur Rahman, senior vice-president and head of branch and

business at NCC Bank Bhaban branch, and Sheikh Sadi, chief treasury officer of Akij Resource Group, were present at the event.

Sohanur Rahaman Sohan, deputy chief operating officer of Akij Resource Group, along with other senior officials from both organisations, also attended.

# ACI declares 25% cash dividend



**M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman of ACI, attends the 52nd annual general meeting of the company yesterday. Other senior officials were also present.**

PHOTO: ACI PLC

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Advanced Chemical Industries (ACI) PLC has declared a 25 percent cash dividend for the

financial year that ended on June 30, 2025.

The decision was taken at the 52nd annual general meeting (AGM), which was held yesterday through a digital platform, according

to a press release.

The meeting was presided over by M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman of ACI.

Shareholders approved the audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2025, along with the reports of the directors and auditors of the company. They also endorsed the 25 percent cash dividend for the year.

Addressing the meeting, Arif Dowla, managing director of the company, highlighted key business developments and responded to issues raised by shareholders.

He expressed gratitude for the continued support and cooperation of all stakeholders and particularly acknowledged the contribution and efforts of the company's employees.

# Trust Bank unveils annual sustainability report

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Trust Bank PLC has unveiled its first-ever annual sustainability report for 2024, marking a milestone in the bank's commitment to sustainable banking and environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices.

The report was unveiled recently by Chowdhury Liakat Ali, director of the Sustainable Finance Department (SFD) of Bangladesh Bank, and Ahsan Zaman Chowdhury, managing director and chief executive officer of Trust Bank PLC, in the presence of senior executives and officials of the bank, according to a press release.

Among others, Akhlasur Rahman Bhuiyan, deputy managing director and chief risk officer, Md Kamal Hossain Sarker, deputy managing director and head of IBD, and ABM Mizanur Rahman, senior executive vice-president and head of the Credit Risk Management Division and Sustainable Finance Unit, were present at the programme.



**Chowdhury Liakat Ali, director of the Sustainable Finance Department of Bangladesh Bank, and Ahsan Zaman Chowdhury, managing director and chief executive officer of Trust Bank PLC, attend the event in Dhaka recently. Other senior officials of the bank were also present.**

PHOTO: TRUST BANK PLC

*Move your world*

## ENHANCING THE TOYOTA JOURNEY IN BANGLADESH

We, Toyota Tsusho Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd., are now enhancing our nationwide commitment to customers in Bangladesh by delivering Toyota's highest global standards of quality and services through our wholly owned subsidiary Toyota Bangladesh Limited (TBL). Through TBL, we now directly bring new Toyota vehicles, genuine parts, and Toyota quality aftersales services to all our customers in Bangladesh.

Stay connected with us and look forward to what we serve for you in the coming years .

**Happy New Year 2026!**

Follow us at [www.toyota-bd.com](http://www.toyota-bd.com) and [www.facebook.com/ToyotaBangladesh](https://www.facebook.com/ToyotaBangladesh) for the latest updates, offers, and career opportunities.

For more information, please call **+09643333777**  
(Open every day, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM)