

Jute millers threaten shutdown from Feb 1 over raw jute shortage

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's jute millers have warned of a countrywide shutdown from February 1 if the government fails to resolve an acute shortage of raw jute, which they say has already disrupted production and forced several mills to close.

The Bangladesh Jute Mills Association (BJMA) in a press release yesterday said its member mills are facing severe difficulties towards the end of the current 2025-26 fiscal year as they are unable to procure adequate raw jute amid a sharp and abnormal rise in prices.

BJMA and Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSa) jointly wrote to the adviser to the Ministry of Textiles and Jute on January 26, urging government intervention to release stockpiled raw jute at reasonable prices, curb hoarding, and ensure sufficient supply to mills. Without prompt action, they said, mill shutdowns would be inevitable.

Raw jute is now selling at Tk 5,000 to Tk 5,500 per maund, depending on quality, putting it beyond the purchasing capacity of many mills.

During the peak harvesting season in July-August 2025, raw jute was trading between Tk 2,200 and Tk 2,400 per maund. The current price represents a more than 120 percent increase in just six months.

According to the association, prices began rising steadily from September to November 2025 due to a supply-demand mismatch, made worse by continued exports of raw jute, and alleged hoarding by a section of traders and exporters.

BJMA claimed that a handful of middlemen have stockpiled raw jute in warehouses, creating an artificial crisis in the domestic market. The millers said they had earlier raised the issue with the commerce ministry.



Raw jute is now selling at Tk 5,000 to Tk 5,500 per maund, depending on quality.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

In September 2025, the Ministry of Commerce amended the Export Policy 2024-27 to move raw jute onto the "conditional export" list, requiring prior approval for all shipments.

However, the ministry subsequently issued circulars allowing 12 firms to export nearly 3,000 tonnes of raw jute in October alone.

BJMA and BJSa said that these approvals, granted while local prices were already skyrocketing, depleted

the domestic stock and emboldened hoarders.

Following meetings with representatives of BJMA and BJSa in August and September last year, the ministry issued a circular allowing the conditional export of raw jute. However, the measure failed to stabilise the market, the association said.

Several jute mills have already suspended operations due to the shortage, and the remaining ones may follow suit if the situation persists, the release adds.

Chinese firm to invest \$16.34m at Bepza EZ

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Chinese company Huazhu Accessories Co Ltd signed an agreement with the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) to set up an accessories manufacturing factory at the Bepza Economic Zone in Mirsharai, Chattogram.

According to the agreement, signed on Monday at the Bepza Complex in Dhaka, the company will invest \$16.34 million, creating employment opportunities for 1,395 Bangladeshi nationals.

The factory will produce a wide range of items, including bra cups, bra wire, hook and eye, webbing tape, elastic, drawstrings, sliders, snap buttons, logos, hardware for bags and luggage, and ribbons, with a projected annual output of 40 lakh kilogrammes.

The agreement was signed by Md Tanvir Hossain, executive director (investment promotion) of Bepza, and Yang Yanmei, managing director of Huazhu Accessories Co Ltd.

Mohammad Moazzem Hossain, executive chairman of Bepza, welcomed the investor and reaffirmed the authority's commitment to facilitating industrial setup, providing prompt services, and ensuring a business-friendly environment.

Other Bepza officials present at the event included Abdullah Al Mamun, member (engineering); ANM Faizul Haque, member (finance); Md Khurshid Alam, executive director (enterprise services); Samir Biswas, executive director (administration); and ASM Anwar Parvez, executive director (public relations), along with representatives from Huazhu Accessories Co Ltd.

US may cut tariffs

FROM PAGE B1

FTA with the EU, and they have shown interest. But their process is slow."

He said the EU is currently pursuing FTAs with India and may move towards Vietnam next, which could pose challenges for Bangladesh. "Still, there is no reason to panic. We must continue discussions. I will leave detailed notes on this for the next government."

Siddiqi also pointed out that securing GSP Plus facilities in the EU market after Bangladesh's graduation from LDC status will be challenging, and warned that excessive export concentration on a single product could risk losing GSP Plus benefits, noting that Bangladesh's garment exports heavily dominate the EU market, which could create future vulnerabilities.

Referring to talks with World Trade Organization (WTO) Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Siddiqi said future trade policy issues were discussed, where the WTO chief advised Bangladesh to gradually move beyond multilateral trade reliance and focus more on bilateral trade agreements.

In this context, the special envoy to the chief adviser said productive

discussions were held with Japan on an economic partnership agreement (EPA).

Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Akazawa Ryosei informed him that a formal agreement with Bangladesh could be signed within the next one or two weeks.

Bangladesh will also enjoy duty-free transit facilities in Japan for three years after LDC graduation, he said.

"Talks on FTAs are ongoing with South Korea, while negotiations with Singapore are almost at the final stage. In the future global trade environment, surviving without FTAs or EPAs will be difficult," Siddiqi said.

He said discussions with Thai Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow covered potential Thai investment in Bangladesh's food processing sector and the use of Thai ports to boost bilateral trade.

On the Rohingya repatriation issue, Siddiqi said the matter was discussed with UN Special Envoy on Myanmar Julie Bishop in Davos. "As days pass, global geopolitics surrounding Myanmar are becoming more complicated. Bangladesh

must remain focused on its rightful demands."

Highlighting talks with International Organization for Migration Director General Amy Pope, the special envoy said discussions focused on legal migration from Bangladesh.

"There is a perception internationally that Bangladesh is not serious about illegal migration and is content as long as people go abroad. We are trying to change that perception."

He mentioned that 600 holders of fake passports were sent back from Singapore last month. "Previously, no action was taken against them. This time, with support from the CID, each individual will be brought under the law."

Stressing the need for changing Bangladesh's diplomatic approach, Siddiqi said symbolic gestures such as signing MoUs, handshakes, and photo opportunities are no longer sufficient; Bangladesh must make itself more relevant globally.

Corridor diplomacy and issue-based negotiations must be prioritised to clearly present Bangladesh's positions to the world, he said.

Pay hikes for govt staff

FROM PAGE B1

The government is planning a general salary increase, which will double the wage bill.

Speaking about the central bank's efforts to tame inflation, Mansur said bringing down inflation is achievable, but will take time.

Bangladesh, he noted, has already reduced inflation from around 12.5 percent to about 8.3 percent. "Inflation has to come down. But we must give it time. We must be patient."

However, he cautioned that the real challenge lies in breaking inflation expectations, which have

been long-established.

"Historically, Bangladesh has never had low inflation," he said, noting that inflation has typically hovered around 6 percent to 8 percent.

Claims of sustained high growth alongside low inflation, he added, were often more artificial than real.

"This is why interest rates cannot be low," he said, adding that rates can only fall sustainably if non-performing loans are reduced sharply through accountability, good governance, and effective supervision.

"If we can reduce bad loans and

lower expectations, why can't we bring inflation down?" he asked.

He said inflation expectations are visible across the labour market, where workers routinely expect annual wage increases. In many factories, wages rise by 10 percent, 15 percent, or even 20 percent each year - not necessarily because productivity has increased, but because higher inflation is assumed.

"These expectations are deeply ingrained. We have to break that cycle," he said. "Unless expectations change, inflation will not come down to 3 or 4 percent. And that will take time."

Hybrid cars top choice in Europe

AFP, Paris

Hybrid-electric vehicles dethroned purely petrol-powered cars as the top power option among consumers in Europe last year, data showed Tuesday.

Some 1.88 million new vehicles were registered in 2025 in the European Union, an increase of 1.8 percent from the previous year, according to the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA).

LDC graduation

FROM PAGE B1

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, said LDC graduation marked a new phase of development that demands maturity, discipline and vision.

"The banking sector must not remain a passive observer; it must act as an active architect of a more resilient, inclusive and globally competitive Bangladesh," he said.

Meanwhile, offering a contrasting view, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur urged stakeholders not to frame graduation narrowly as a matter of tariff or trade privileges.

"It is part of a larger economic transformation," he said, adding that Bangladesh must decide whether it wants to remain among fragile economies or aspire to stand alongside emerging and developed nations.

"Graduation is inevitable. The policies we need for graduation are the same policies we need for development - growth, human development, a strong currency and a resilient financial system," he said.

Diversification, better logistics, improved ports, roads, communications, ICT, education and

New car sales "remain well below pre-pandemic levels", however, the trade association said in a statement.

Despite the only modest overall sales growth, consumers continued to shift towards hybrid and battery-electric vehicles.

Sales of hybrid-electric vehicles climbed by 13.5 percent last year to account for 34.5 percent of total sales in the EU last year, putting them ahead of petrol cars at 26.6 percent.

Meanwhile, sales of battery-electric

vehicles jumped by 30 percent to account for 17.4 percent of overall sales, although the ACEA noted the gain was from a weak performance in 2024 and needs to rise further to stay on track with the EU's transition goals.

Sales of plug-in hybrids also rose, but sales of petrol and diesel vehicles dropped.

The combined market share of petrol and diesel cars fell to 35.5 percent, down from 45.2 percent in 2024.

Six NBFIs finally set for liquidation

FROM PAGE B1


write to the Ministry of Finance to request a Tk 3,000 crore bailout package, as the number of NBFIs facing liquidation has now decreased.

Earlier, the BB governor had said the Ministry of Finance had verbally approved Tk 5,000 crore for the liquidation of the nine NBFIs.

According to central bank data, the nine institutions hold Tk 15,370 crore in deposits, of which Tk 3,525 crore belongs to individual depositors and Tk 11,845 crore to banks and corporate clients.

As of September 2025, the country's 35 NBFIs had Tk 29,408.66 crore in non-performing loans, equal to 37.11 percent of their total outstanding loans of Tk 79,251.11 crore, according to BB data.

A year earlier, in September 2024, the sector's non-performing loan ratio was 35.52 percent.



Sundarban Gas Company Limited

(A Company of Petrobangla)

Operation Division

218, M.A Bari Sarak, Sonadanga, Khulna

জালাদি নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার

জাতীয় সম্পদ ব্যাসের অপব্যয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন


Tender Invitation Reference No. 28.21.0000.181.61.002.25/MP Date: 25-01-2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Operation Division, Sundarban Gas Company Limited for the procurement of the following work which will be available at e-GP website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) from date 29-01-2026 & time 10:00:

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Reference No. & Procurement Method	Package No.	Description of works	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
01	28.21.0000.181.61.02.25/MP & Open Tendering Method (OTM)	28.21.000 0.181.61.0 02.25	Construction, Transportation & Installation of Marker Post for 33KM Gas Transmission pipeline at Bhola, SGCL.	9 February 2026 17:00	10 February 2026 12:00	10 February 2026 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



Engr. Md. Tauhidur Rahman
General Manager
Operation Division
SGCL, Khulna

GD-104



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Principal
Sylhet Polytechnic Institute, Sylhet-3100
Website: <https://sylhet.polytech.gov.bd>
E-mail: principalsylhetpoly@gmail.com

Accelerating & Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET) Project

Memo No. 57.03.9131.349.004.07.0007.25-71 Date: 27/01/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender Notice will be invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for following procurement.

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Package description	Tender publication date and time	Tender closing & opening date and time
1219430	ASSET-SPI-25-26-WD-01	Refurbishment Work (with Interior) of Academic Building, Principal Room, Conference Room, Lab, Placement Cell, Classroom	27-Jan-2026 17:00:00	10-Feb-2026 17:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline or hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



Mohammed Rehan Uddin
Principal (Additional Charge)
Phone: 02-9966-32529

GD-208