

# Star BUSINESS



## WHAT THE NEW GOVT MUST FIX IN ITS FIRST 100 DAYS

### MAJOR DEMANDS

- Restore law and order
- Stop extortion and muscle power
- Ensure uninterrupted energy for industries
- Restructure troubled banks with credible professionals
- Maintain currency stability and fiscal discipline



### Cool prices, create new jobs

Economists urge the next government



AHSAN HABIB

After assuming office, the new government should focus immediately on taming red hot prices, restoring law and order, and creating a favourable environment for investment to generate new jobs, say economists.

They came up with the call as BNP prepares to form the new administration this week after a landslide victory in the February 12 national election.

Experts say the incoming government will inherit an economy that, despite showing signs of recovery, struggles with stubbornly high inflation, slowing private investment, a vulnerable financial sector, and declining exports.

The economy grew only 3.97 percent in fiscal year 2024-25, the lowest in five years, and subdued growth is expected to continue in 2026.

Economists highlighted supply-side constraints as a major driver of the rising cost of living. The tight monetary policy maintained by the Bangladesh Bank has so far failed to curb inflation.

They recommended keeping import tariffs low on essential goods, ensuring sufficient supply, and strengthening market monitoring. Monetary policy alone, such as maintaining high interest rates, will not be enough to rein in prices.

"Inflation is impacting all amid the erosion of their real wages."

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## Rebuilding business confidence cannot wait

Private sector leaders urge swift action as inflation, fragile banks and inconsistent energy supplies risk derailing investment

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Although the BNP swept to a landslide victory in the February 12 national election, business leaders say the new government will inherit an economy that allows little time for celebration.

According to them, the first 100 days will decide whether the private sector regains its footing or sinks deeper into paralysis after months of

political and economic drift.

Inflation has been stubborn for years and is showing signs of rising again. Investment has slowed since the 2024 uprising that toppled the Awami League government. Tight monetary policy under the interim government has left small factories gasping for credit. Import-dependent industries are struggling under a weaker taka. And bank balance sheets are still fragile.

Against this backdrop, executives point to three urgent priorities. Those are restoring law and order, shoring up the banking system and ensuring an uninterrupted energy supply for industries.

"The incoming government must prioritise restoring business confidence within its first 100 days," said Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, president of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries.

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## Garment exports to EU rise 6% in 2025

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's apparel exports to the European Union (EU), the largest export destination in terms of trade bloc, grew 5.97 percent year-on-year to €19.41 billion in 2025.

Readymade garment (RMG) exports to the block stood at €18.32 billion in 2024.

The 2025 growth was driven by a 10.20 percent surge in volume despite a 3.84 percent decline in unit prices, according to data released by Eurostat, the official statistical office of the EU.

Bangladesh maintained its position as the EU's second-largest clothing supplier after China, benefiting from increased demand across the bloc.

However, December 2025 figures revealed emerging challenges, with year-on-year declines of

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## BTRC to seek govt nod for Starlink's bandwidth export

MAHMUDUL HASAN

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the country's internet regulator, is taking a cautious approach to Starlink Services Bangladesh Ltd's proposal to export unfiltered internet bandwidth to neighbouring countries via local cable providers, and will seek the government's opinion before approval.

After extensive internal discussions, technical reviews, and exchanges of letters with the company and international terrestrial cable companies that operate in the country, the BTRC will submit the matter to the Posts and Telecommunications

Division, according to official documents.

Unfiltered bandwidth, unlike filtered connections, bypasses network controls like firewalls, deep packet inspection, or application blocking, which governments or operators use to restrict access, slow traffic, or monitor data. Industry experts say such unfiltered Internet Protocol (IP) transit is essential for exporting data internationally.

Two international terrestrial cable licensees, Summit Communications Limited and Fiber@Home Global Limited, have applied to the commission for permission to provide Starlink with unfiltered IP transit, which the company plans to use exclusively for customers outside Bangladesh.

Starlink has requested 40 Gbps of committed bandwidth, scalable up to 400 Gbps as needed.

Technology expert Sumon Ahmed Sabir told The Daily Star, "If approved, the arrangement could make Bangladesh a

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## USDA raises Bangladesh's wheat import forecast

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has raised its forecast for Bangladesh's wheat imports by 7.4 percent to 72 lakh tonnes for the 2025-26 trade year ending in June, citing higher demand for food, seed and industrial use.

Earlier, the agency had projected wheat imports at 67 lakh tonnes. Bangladesh produces about 10 lakh tonnes of wheat annually, which meets only around 13 percent of the country's estimated yearly consumption of 77 lakh tonnes.

In its latest Grain: World Markets

and Trade report, released late last week, the USDA said global wheat trade has increased due to higher imports by the European Union, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, offsetting a decline in imports by Mexico.

"It is likely. Wheat prices have fallen in the international market, while rice prices remain high in the domestic market. As a result, wheat consumption is increasing," said Taslim Shahriar, deputy general manager of Meghna Group of Industries, a major commodity processor and importer.

Global wheat prices have declined over the past two years. For example,

US hard red wheat fell 42 percent to \$219.6 per tonne in 2025 from \$340.4 two years earlier, according to the latest commodity price data from the World Bank.

Shahriar said wheat prices may fall further after India eased export restrictions, which could encourage higher domestic consumption.

On Friday, India allowed the export of 25 lakh tonnes of wheat, along with an additional 500,000 tonnes each of wheat products and sugar, to support local growers amid protests over a trade deal between New Delhi and Washington, reports Reuters.

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