



People run to safety as smoke rises following an explosion in Tehran yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Govt urges fuel saving as LNG import cost doubles

Asks people not to panic-buy fuel

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh yesterday secured two LNG cargoes from the international spot market after failing to attract bidders for two consecutive days, although at more than double the normal rate.

The move comes as two scheduled LNG shipments from Qatar remained uncertain due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran, The Daily Star has learnt from Petrobangla officials involved with the proceedings.

One cargo will be delivered at \$24.5 per one million British Thermal Units (MMBtu) by VitolAsia and another at \$28 per MMBtu by Gunvor.

It cost more than double the usual rate: each shipment would cost about Tk 1,300 crore compared with about Tk 500 crore previously, they said.

Besides, with the view to safeguarding the fuel stock amid a looming global energy crisis, the government yesterday called for conservation of natural gas and fuel oil and urged people to shun panic buying and fuel hoarding.

The country currently has 15 days' stock of petrol and 30 days' octane, while diesel reserves stand at about 12 days, according to officials at the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

➤ Adequate petrol, octane in stock

➤ Demand for diesel spikes, two shipments arrive

➤ Supply to be cut by 10 percent from today

➤ Govt secured two shipments of LNG from spot market

➤ LPG importers spend extra

13,000 tonnes, but over the last couple of days, sales have exceeded 20,000 tonnes on average.

About 20 percent of Bangladesh's fuel imports are crude oil shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, while the remaining 80 percent of refined petroleum products are imported from ports in China, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

As a result, although crude oil supply has been disrupted, there is no problem regarding the refined oil. In some cases, the shipments are being delayed, but none of the contracts has been cancelled yet, said an official who was involved with the proceedings.

"There is no major problem with fuel supply, but panic buying is creating some pressure — people should avoid hoarding fuel," Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku, the power, energy and mineral resources minister, told The Daily Star.

The government has taken precautionary steps to conserve energy so that existing stocks can last longer, he added.

In separate notices, the power, energy and mineral resources ministry and the cabinet division asked all government offices, autonomous bodies and corporations

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## Trump backs Kurds for Iran offensive

Says US should have role in choosing Iran's next leader; Tehran says ground invasion would be 'disaster' for foes

AGENCIES

US and Israel pounded Iran and Lebanon yesterday as President Donald Trump encouraged Kurdish opposition groups to go on the offensive against Tehran, potentially opening a dangerous new front in the widening war that may draw in more countries.

Trump, in a telephone interview with Reuters, also said he wants the United States to play a role in choosing Iran's next leader, but opposed the candidacy of late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's son Mojtaba, without elaborating.

His comments came as more tankers were attacked in Gulf waters yesterday amid the escalating war, snarling shipping and energy markets.

Meanwhile, Tehran said it again targeted Kurdish groups in Iraq and warned the "separatist groups" against entering the conflict.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said his country was prepared for any potential ground invasion, saying such a move would spell "disaster" for the Islamic republic's foes.

"We are waiting for them," Araghchi told US broadcaster NBC News. "We are confident that we can confront them and that would be a big disaster for them."

Meanwhile, Azerbaijan became the latest target in the spreading war as Tehran stepped up its attacks on Gulf nations, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain.

"I think it's wonderful that they want to do that, I'd be all for it," Trump said, referring to the floated Kurdish offensive.

Trump declined to say if the United States would provide air cover to Kurdish forces.

Since the United States and Israel launched the war on Saturday, Iran has been striking Iranian Kurdish groups based in autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan whom Tehran accuses of serving Western and Israeli interests.

According to reports, Iranian Kurdish militias have consulted with the US in recent days about whether, and how, to attack Iran's security forces in the western part of the country.

The Iranian Kurdish coalition of groups based on the Iran-Iraq border in the semi-autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan has been training to mount such an attack in

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**Tehran hits Kurdish forces HQ over 'CIA plot'**

**Iran FM says no plan to close Strait of Hormuz, for now**

**US Senate backs Trump's war powers**

**Death toll soars as strikes pound Iran, Lebanon**

**Drones target KSA, UAE, Azerbaijan, Qatar, Bahrain**

**Australia, European powers to deploy war machines in ME, Cyprus**

**US, Israel 'trying to drag' Arab countries into war: Russia**

## Good governance must be your mantra

TIB also urges govt to cancel BB governor's appointment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday urged the BNP-led government to place anti-corruption and good governance at the top of its reform agenda, saying visible control and prevention of corruption is a precondition for delivering its wider pledges.

"If corruption cannot be controlled and prevented effectively and visibly, the government's other pledges and initiatives will not be implemented in reality," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

His comment came at a programme styled "Ensuring the highest strategic priority for implementing the BNP-led government's commitments to good governance and anti-corruption" held at the TIB office in the capital.

TIB's proposals were formulated based on four key references: the BNP's 31-point state reform programme, the party's election manifesto, the prime minister's address to the nation and the July Charter signed by the BNP and other political parties.

Iftekharuzzaman urged the government to prepare an integrated strategy and implementation roadmap so that commitments reflected in the four key references do not remain fragmented.

Anti-corruption and good governance measures must be made mandatory in the mainstream of all action plans under the government's five-year work strategy, he said.

Internal resistance could block reforms, as seen under past governments that declared zero tolerance but failed to implement it, he said.

The authorities should identify and map risks, including resistance from within, and take targeted steps to address them.

TIB stressed the need for independent functioning of oversight bodies, including the Election Commission, the ACC and the National Human Rights Commission, with the appointments based on competence rather than political considerations.

In that spirit, Iftekharuzzaman demanded the cancellation of the appointment of Md. Mostaqur Rahman as the Bangladesh Bank governor, citing possible conflicts of interest.

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## Khaleda among 15 named for Swadhinata Padak

5 institutions also selected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifteen individuals, including late BNP chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia and late Milestone College teacher Maherin Chowdhury, and five institutions have been selected for this year's Swadhinata Padak, the country's highest state honour.

The government will confer the award in recognition of the recipients' "glorious and outstanding contributions at the national level", said a press release issued by the Cabinet Division yesterday.

Three-time prime minister Khaleda Zia has been selected posthumously for her contributions to democracy, women's education, and nation-building. Khaleda passed away in Dhaka on December 30 last year.

She had long suffered from multiple

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## Govt declares 7-day holiday for Eid-ul-Fitr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has extended the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr holidays by a day to include March 18.

This year, the Eid vacation will span seven days, beginning with the Shab-e-Qadr holiday on March 17 and ending on March 23.

The decision to add March 18 as an extra holiday was approved at a cabinet meeting held at the Secretariat yesterday.

After the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani stated that the government took this decision to ensure people can travel home comfortably for Eid and return to work without disruption.

Eid-ul-Fitr is likely to be observed on March 21, subject to moon sighting.

Based on this possible date, the Ministry of Public Administration had earlier fixed five days of holiday from March 19 to March 23.

Under that schedule, March 21 would be a general holiday marking Eid, while March 19 and 20 (before Eid) and March 22 and 23 (after Eid) were to be observed as holidays by executive order.

## Women sidelined in national politics

Experts regret 4% candidates were female

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts and politicians have raised alarm over the fact that women made up only around four percent of the candidates in the 13th national election.

Referring to the seven women who were elected as members of parliament, they said overcoming obstacles to participating and winning in the polls carries special significance for women in politics.

To ensure women's participation in politics and policymaking, coordinated initiatives must be taken, they added.

Speakers made these remarks at a dialogue and award ceremony titled "Ensuring Women's Leadership and Protection in Politics".

Ahead of International Women's Day on March 8, ActionAid Bangladesh and Prothom Alo jointly organised the event at a city hotel yesterday.

At the programme, women who contested the February 12 election shared their experiences.

"If women are vital as voters, why is their leadership always questioned?" asked Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive director, Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE).

"We are yet to accord women the dignity they deserve. Our nation was founded on equality, yet women are being sidelined," she added.

Rumeen Farhana, who won as an independent candidate from Brahmanbaria-2, delivered a scathing critique of societal double standards.

"We are ready to see strong women as daughters or sisters, but not

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### ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

নগর ভবন, ৫, ফিনিক্স রোড, রমনা, ঢাকা

মশক নিয়ন্ত্রণে প্রয়োজন জনগণের অংশগ্রহণ

নিয়মিত প্রতিদিন জমা পানি ফেলে দিন

## গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আওতাধীন এলাকার দীর্ঘদিনের নানাবিধ সমস্যা জনগণের সক্রিয় অংশগ্রহণ ও নাগরিক সম্পৃক্ততার মাধ্যমে টেকসই সমাধানের লক্ষ্যে ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের মাননীয় প্রশাসক বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা মোঃ আবদুস সালাম প্রতি শনিবার সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত (রমজান ব্যতিত সময় ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকা) নগর ভবনস্থ তার কার্যালয়ে সর্বসাধারণের সাথে মতবিনিময়কল্পে 'পাবলিক হেয়ারিং ডে' হিসেবে পালন করবেন।

০২। ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের সম্মানিত নাগরিকগণকে 'পাবলিক হেয়ারিং ডে' তে মাননীয় প্রশাসক মহোদয়ের সহিত মত বিনিময়ের জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

নিজ আদিনা পরিষ্কার রাখি, সবাই মিলে সুস্থ থাকি

কর্তৃপক্ষ

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসি/পিআরডি/১৯১/২০২৫-২০২৬