



Supply crunch worsens at fuel pumps

ASIFUR RAHMAN and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The country's fuel supply chain is under strain as sharp post-Eid surge in demand collides with import uncertainty tied to the US-Israel war on Iran.

While officials insist there is no full-blown crisis and overall stocks remain adequate, the system is showing signs of stress. Reports of shortages, rationing, and long queues at filling stations have emerged across multiple districts.

At the centre of concern lies the import of fuel amid external supply risks, limited stock buffers, and sudden demand spikes.

According to the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), April's import plan includes 14 shipments via the sea and fuel via pipeline totaling 428,000 tonnes – roughly 303,000 tonnes of diesel, 50,000 tonnes of jet fuel, 25,000 tonnes of octane, and 50,000 tonnes of furnace oil.

So far, however, only three diesel shipments of about 90,000 tonnes in total have been confirmed, alongside an additional 20,000 tonnes



Long queues of cars and motorcycles stretching from the Trust Filling Station in the capital's Bijoy Sarani beyond the BAF Officers' Mess in Tejgaon yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Jet fuel prices hiked by 80%

Passengers in for steep fares; airlines warn of flight suspensions

RASHIDUL HASAN and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, in an unprecedented move, yesterday hiked jet fuel prices by a whopping 80 percent at the consumer level, citing volatility in the global market linked to the US-Israel war on Iran.

Experts say the move will deal a blow to air travellers and the country's airline industry.

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War grinds on amid global push for talks

Iran acknowledges US 'outreach', denies Trump's ongoing negotiation claim; Pak PM offers hosting talks

AGENCIES

Iran and Israel traded fresh strikes yesterday as the Middle East war raged on, though a diplomatic push to bring Iran and the United States to the negotiating table appeared to be gathering pace.

Tehran has denied that talks with the US are taking place, and analysts say that even if they do go ahead, reaching a deal will be difficult given the deep distrust between the parties and Iran's hardening stance on conditions.

The war, sparked by US-Israel attacks on Iran that killed its supreme leader, has upended global energy markets, roiled the world economy, and spiralled throughout the region.

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SITUATION IN MARCH

Govt secured shipments of 11 out of 17	Rest shipments uncertain due to suppliers declaring "extraordinary event"	So far 8 shipments reached with 2,14,641 tonnes of diesel	10,000 tonnes of diesel came thru' pipeline
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PLANS FOR APRIL

Total import: 4,28,000 tonnes	Diesel import: 3,03,000 tonnes	Confirmed diesel shipments: 90,000 tonnes	Diesel expected thru' pipeline: 20,000 tonnes
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expected via pipeline.

This has raised fears of a shortfall.

The uncertainty follows disruptions in March. Of 17 planned fuel shipments, 11 have been confirmed, with eight already at Chattogram port. These shipments brought in around 2,14,641 tonnes of diesel and 25,022 tonnes of furnace oil, along with another 10,000 tonnes of diesel via pipeline.

Several of the remaining shipments became uncertain after major suppliers, including Singapore-based Unipac and Malaysia's Petco

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The Kamalapur Railway Station saw a surge of returnees yesterday as families came back to Dhaka after spending the Eid holidays in their village homes.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Bangladesh seeks additional IMF funds for energy imports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has sought additional funds from the IMF as surging global energy prices, driven by the US-Israel war on Iran, threaten to deplete the country's dollar reserves.

At the time of filing the report, Brent crude prices were up almost 4 percent to just below \$104 a barrel as Iran launched fresh strikes. Before the US-Israel strikes on Iran began on February 28, global oil prices were trading at \$66 to \$72 a barrel.

Since then, Bangladesh has purchased seven LNG cargoes from the international spot market at more than double the normal price as long-term supplier Qatar called force majeure.

As of March 12, gross foreign exchange reserves stand at \$29.64 billion, enough to meet about five months' imports.

Besides, freight charges and insurance premiums have surged too.

Subsequently, at a meeting yesterday with an IMF delegation led by its Asia-Pacific Department Director Krishna Srinivasan, Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury sought additional

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASE Ex-Lt Gen Masud on 5-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Masud Uddin Chowdhury, a retired lieutenant general widely talked-about for his role during the army-backed caretaker rule in 2007-08, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday in a case filed over human trafficking and forgery.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Aminul Islam Junaid granted the remand, rejecting defence lawyer Morshed Hossain Shahin's plea for bail and cancellation of the remand.

Masud, also a former Jatiya Party lawmaker from Feni-3, was sued on September 3, 2024, by a proprietor of recruitment agency Afia Overseas, under the Prevention & Suppression of Human Trafficking Act with Paltan Police Station.

The case accuses 103 individuals, including former Awami League government minister Imran Ahmad. Of the accused, 40 are unnamed.

After the police's Detective Branch arrested Masud from Baridhara DOHS early yesterday, the law enforcers said the former general was accused in at least 11 cases, including five in Dhaka city and six in Feni district.

Courts issued arrest warrants against him in at least three of these cases, said Shafiqul Islam, additional commissioner (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

At a press conference at the DMP media centre, Shafiqul said they initially arrested him in the human trafficking case, where he is the third accused. The suspect was hiding within the country and several

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