



Why would we be there for them if they're not there for us? They weren't there for us.

Donald Trump on Nato over Iran war

# The Daily Star

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION



DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 29, 2026

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXVI No. 69

CHAITRA 15, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHAWWAL 9, 1447 HURI

16 PAGES: Tk 15.00



**S&P warns of heightened energy risk for Bangladesh**

B1



**Gaibandha villages mourn 5 lives cut short**

P3



**Unmasking the systemic crisis behind our deadly roads**

P7



**National athletes set for financial boost**

P11

## Bangladesh bled \$68b in 10yrs due to misinvoicing

Says Global Financial Integrity report

- \$32.8 billion flowed to advanced economies
- Annually, illicit outflow was 16% of total foreign trade
- GFI stresses political will to curb customs corruption

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh lost an estimated \$68 billion in illicit financial outflows over a decade between 2013 and 2022, placing it among the top 10 developing Asian countries for discrepancies in their trade with advanced economies.

The Washington-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI) revealed the data in its report "Trade-related Illicit Financial Flows in Developing Asia 2013-2022" released on March 27, highlighting a persistent challenge to the nation's financial stability.

Annually, the amount stands at \$6.8 billion, 16 percent of Bangladesh's trade with the rest of the world, largely caused by trade misinvoicing.

Of the total, around \$32.8 billion flowed to advanced economies, according to the study that analysed data from 24 developing Asian countries across South, East, and Southeast Asia.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## CID brings back \$3.62m sent abroad thru' fraud

TOUSIF KAIUM and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has recovered around \$3.622 million that was collected from people and siphoned abroad through the MTFE scam.

The amount, equivalent to about Tk 44.45 crore, was repatriated last week through the SWIFT banking system to Sonali Bank's principal branch and is expected to be credited to the CID's account today, said Mohammad Bashir Uddin, additional DIG of police.

The funds were deposited on March 14 by Asset Reality Limited, a firm assigned to handle the process of receiving the funds, and routed through JPMorgan Chase Bank to Sonali Bank's head office, a senior CID official said on condition of anonymity.

The money has yet to be credited to CID's account, as additional documentation was sought on March 24, a requirement for transfers exceeding \$20,000.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

**4,587** people killed across the countries involved, including civilians and soldiers

**4 million** people got displaced, 3.2m in Iran, 1m in Lebanon

**17** countries got involved in and around the Middle East

**2%** of global economic growth might be wiped out

---

**85,176** civilian sites damaged in Iran alone, including 282 healthcare facilities, 600 schools and 64,583 homes

**1,400** missiles Iran fired at US bases and Israel, causing much damage

**10,000** US troops may join around 50,000 troops stationed in the region

**ONE MONTH OF WAR**

*Ayatollah Ali Khamenei among top Iranian leaders killed in US-Israeli strikes*

## Fuel hoarders face mobile court heat

STAR REPORT

The government has strengthened its drive against fuel stockpiling to tackle the ongoing nationwide crisis, with mobile courts in several districts recovering large quantities of fuel from hoarders and fining them.

In Netrokona, a mobile court of the Kendua upazila administration seized 800 litres of petrol from a shop, Krishi Kotha, at Rampur Bazar on Friday night. The court, led by Kendua UNO Md Rifatul Islam, also fined the shop owner Tk 40,000.

The seized petrol was sold yesterday at a fair price to consumers from the shop, the UNO said.

In Jamalpur, a mobile court recovered 2,500 litres of petrol from a filling station in Sadar upazila yesterday and fined the manager of M/s Jui Enterprise Tk 50,000.

According to locals and officials, the station used to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Govt moves to digitise fuel sale

Plan aims to curb hoarding, ensure proper distribution

ASIFUR RAHMAN and AHMED DEEPTO

The government is moving to introduce a digital fuel supply system – potentially using QR codes or card-based tracking – to regulate nationwide distribution and curb hoarding amid

(BPC).

He told The Daily Star that the plan is to address the issue where some customers collect fuel multiple times from different filling stations, putting unnecessary pressure on supplies.

The move comes as the government

Under the proposed model that is currently under review, fuel purchases would be digitally recorded against individual users or vehicles, allowing authorities to track how much fuel is being collected and from where.

the ongoing supply crunch.

Under the proposed model that is currently under review, fuel purchases would be digitally recorded against individual users or vehicles, allowing authorities to track how much fuel is being collected and from where.

"A committee has already been formed to design the mechanism, with the work currently underway," said Md Rezanur Rahman, chairman of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation

steps up efforts to stabilise fuel distribution amid a combination of global supply uncertainty, import delays, and rising domestic demand.

Once finalised, the system is expected to be rolled out in phases, potentially reshaping how fuel is generally distributed and monitored across the country.

According to BPC data, filling stations nationwide are being supplied from 19

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

**Iran lauds Pakistan efforts to stop 'aggression'**

**Zelensky agrees air defence co-op with UAE, Qatar**

**12 US troops wounded in Iran strike on Saudi base**

**Rubio says Iran war to last 'weeks not months'**

**Sources say only a third of Iran's missiles, drones destroyed**

## Houthis enter the fray

Launch missile at Israel as concern grows over Red Sea shipping; Tehran hits targets in Israel, US bases across the ME after attacks on residential, civilian areas

AGENCIES

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis launched missiles at Israel yesterday, their first such attack since the start of the Iran war, heightening the risk that a conflict now in its second month could expand further across the region.

Speaking before the strike, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the United States expected to conclude military operations within weeks. The Houthis said they would continue their operations until the "aggression" on all fronts ended.

Meanwhile, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian spoke with Pakistan's prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, whose government is hosting a meeting with the Turkish and Saudi

foreign ministers today to seek to ease regional tensions.

But there is no sign of an immediate diplomatic breakthrough, and the war, launched with US and Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28, has spread across the Middle East, killing thousands and hitting the world economy with the biggest-ever disruption to global energy supplies.

The intervention of Iran's Yemeni allies into the conflict will spark concern about disruption to Red Sea shipping, with trade from the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz already choked off.

The Red Sea has become increasingly important during the new war. Saudi Arabia has diverted a large proportion of its oil exports to the Red Sea port of Yanbu, to avoid Hormuz.

Iran's military yesterday said that it had targeted a US logistics vessel near the Omani port of Salalah on the Arabian Sea. Danish shipping giant Maersk said operations had been temporarily suspended after a drone attack injured one worker and damaged a crane.

Yesterday, Israel said it had carried out a wave of attacks on Tehran, targeting what the military said were infrastructure sites belonging to Iran's government.

It also hit targets in Lebanon, where it has resumed its war against Iran-backed Hezbollah, killing three Lebanese journalists in a strike on a media vehicle, Lebanon's Al Manar TV reported, as well as a Lebanese soldier.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Army personnel stand guard at the gate as a fuel truck leaves Meghna Petroleum Ltd's depot at Fatullah in Narayanganj yesterday. The government deployed troops in the depots and key fuel structures across the nation two weeks ago to tighten security.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

## Shwapno's database hacked, details of 40 lakh customers' at risk

Hackers seek \$1.5m ransom

- Cyber expert warns hacked data risks personal information
- Names, phone numbers, purchase history can increase spam calls
- Using the same number for banking apps raises fraud risk
- Fraudsters may impersonate service providers with those numbers
- Biometric-linked phone numbers are easy targets for attackers

SUKANTA HALDER

The country's largest supermarket chain Shwapno has said hackers breached its customer database and are demanding a ransom of \$1.5 million, or more than Tk 18.3 crore.

The disclosure came after customer names, phone numbers and purchase histories began making round-ups on social media.

Sabbir Hasan Nasir, managing director

of Shwapno, told The Daily Star that hackers had taken control of the company's website and database in December last year.

The attackers were seeking \$1.5 million in exchange for restoring access, he said.

Shwapno has more than 40 lakh registered customers. It runs 812 outlets across 63 districts. The exposed information includes customer names, mobile phone numbers and purchase histories.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2