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GDP growth slows to 3.03% in Q2

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Fuel crisis threatens water taxi shutdown

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US airman rescue may mask bid to steal uranium: Iran

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Bangladesh's obsession with age-level success

P11

PDB'S SUMMER POWER PLAN

60% capacity of gas plants to stay unutilised

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government's underutilisation of power plants is likely to worsen this summer due to shortages of gas, coal, and furnace oil caused by US-Israel war on Iran and financial constraints.

Around 40 percent of the overall capacity is expected to remain idle during peak demand between 7:00pm and 9:00pm. Gas-fired plants are likely to be used the least.

Out of the total 12,204 megawatts (MW) of gas-fired capacity, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) will be able to use at best 5,200MW, leaving nearly 7,000MW offline.

This means about 60 percent of gas-fired capacity may remain unutilised throughout the summer, while capacity charges will continue to be paid, according to the PDB's summer plan.

Even yesterday, at least 17 gas-fired power plants, out of a total of 57, were either not running or producing less than their capacities due to gas shortages.

To fully utilise the country's gas-fired power capacity, the PDB requires around 2,524 million cubic feet of gas per day (MMcf/d).

With the overall gas supply now at 2,650 MMcf/d, Petrobangla, the state-owned supplier, must ration allocations to power plants, industries, fertiliser factories, and homes.

An internal PDB analysis states that it needs at least 1,200 MMcf/d of gas to run power plants during the summer peak projected demand of



A farmer harvesting half-ripe paddy in Hakaluki Haor of Moulvibazar yesterday, as heavy rains and upstream water have submerged Boro on thousands of hectares. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

INSTALLED CAPACITY VS GENERATION (IN MW)

FUEL TYPE	CAPACITY	POSSIBILITY*
Gas	12,204	5,130
Coal	6,203	5,700
Furnace Oil	5,634	3,500
Diesel	768	0
Solar & wind	829	20
Hydro	230	40
Imported power	1,200	1,000
Import from Adani	1,436	1,436
Total	28,504	16,826
Demand in peak		18,500
Shortfall		1,674

* Maximum production during peak time

11 of top 20 loan defaulters linked to S Alam Group

MD MEHEDI HASAN

The top 20 loan defaulters whose names were disclosed yesterday in parliament owe more than Tk 35,000 crore, with the majority of the companies belonging to the controversial S Alam Group.

Among the top 20 defaulters, 11 defaulting companies directly or indirectly belong to the Chattogram-based business group, and a major portion of the loans was taken from Islami Bank and state-run Janata Bank.

Founded in 1985 by Mohammed Saiful Alam, a relative of former Awami League politician Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu and former Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group has grown into one of the largest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

The group accounted for 80 percent of Islami Bank's total loans as it dominated its board from 2017 to August 2024. It also dominated the board of Social Islami Bank.

Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday provided

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Bad loans stand at Tk 5.45 lakh crore

Finance minister in JS names top 20 loan-defaulter companies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The total defaulted loans in the banking sector reached Tk 5.45 lakh crore at the end of last year, said Finance Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday.

The amount is four times the total project cost of the Rooppur nuclear power plant, Bangladesh's most expensive project.

In his response to a query from National Citizen Party MP Hasnat Abdullah, Khosru also provided a list of the top 20 loan defaulters, with nine of them being subsidiaries of the controversial Chattogram-based sprawling conglomerate S Alam Group.

The nine S Alam companies are S Alam Super Edible Oil, S Alam Vegetable Oil, S Alam Refined Sugar Industries, S Alam Cold Rolled Steels,

The amount is four times the total project cost of the Rooppur nuclear power plant, Bangladesh's most expensive project.

Sonali Traders, Global Trading Corporation, Chemon Ispat, S Alam Trading Company, and Infinite CR Strips Industries.

The other defaulters in the list are Bangladesh Export Import Company (Beximco), Keya Cosmetics, Deshbandhu Sugar Mills, PowerPac Mutiara Keraniganj Power Plant, PowerPac Mutiara Jamalpur Power Plant, Pacific Bangladesh Telecom, Karnafuly Foods, Murad Enterprise, CLC

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2 bills tabled to repeal judicial ordinances

Another to reintroduce NHRC law of 2009

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Md Asaduzzaman yesterday placed two bills in parliament, seeking to repeal three ordinances on judicial independence, judges' appointments, and the budgetary authority entrusted to the Supreme Court Secretariat.

He also tabled the National Human Rights Commission (Repeal and Reinstatement) Bill, 2026, to reintroduce the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009.

Discussions on the three bills would take place later in the House, Asaduzzaman said, as there are notes of dissent from members of the parliamentary special committee tasked with scrutinising the 133 ordinances adopted by the interim government.

Three Jamaat-e-Islami MPs issued notes of dissent on all three.

The law minister placed the Supreme Court Judges Appointment (Repeal) Bill, 2026, to repeal the Supreme Court Judges Appointment Ordinance, 2025.

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'HISTORIC DAY' Astronauts farther than any human ever gone

AFP, Houston

The four astronauts embarking on Nasa's lunar flyby yesterday became the humans to travel furthest from our planet, as they get set to view areas of the Moon never before seen by the naked eye.

The Artemis II team broke the previous record set by 1970's Apollo 13 mission, which they are expected to surpass by approximately 6,606 kilometers when they reach this journey's furthest distance from Earth -- 252,760 miles (406,778 kilometers) -- later today.

The astronauts are journeying around the Moon for a monumental flyby, in which they'll spend more than six hours analysing and documenting lunar surface features.

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To get relief from the scorching sun, bikers stand in the shade of roadside trees, covering their vehicles with cloth, as they wait in queue for fuel at a filling station in Khulna's Dumuria yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

US can 'take out' entire Iran in a day

Says Trump, threatens to destroy all of its bridges, power plants in 4 hours if Tehran ignores deadline

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump yesterday said the US military can destroy all of Iran's bridges and power plants in four hours, or even take out the entire country, if Tehran does not meet his deadline to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, as Tehran

of sanctions, and reconstruction, the agency added.

"We have a plan -- because of the power of our military -- where every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12 o'clock tomorrow night, where every power plant in Iran will be out of business, burning, exploding and never to be used again,"

Israeli strikes kill Iran Guards intel chief

EU chief says targeting civilian infrastructure 'illegal'

Iran rejects ceasefire, demands end to conflict

Trump says Tuesday's deadline final

pushed back against pressure to accept a ceasefire.

Responding to a US proposal through mediator Pakistan, Tehran rejected the ceasefire and said a permanent end to the war was necessary.

The Iranian response consisted of 10 clauses, including an end to conflicts in the region, a protocol for safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, lifting

Trump said at a press conference. "I mean complete demolition by 12 o'clock (midnight), and it'll happen over a period of four hours -- if we wanted to."

Trump, who has threatened to rain "hell" on Tehran if it did not make a deal by 8:00pm EDT Tuesday (midnight GMT) to open the vital route for global energy supplies, rejected the Iranian proposal

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