

star

BUSINESS



Bangladesh stocks jump as ceasefire hopes boost sentiment

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Dhaka stocks surged yesterday amid renewed optimism among investors about the economy after US President Donald Trump announced a two-week ceasefire with Iran, subject to the immediate and safe reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

Oil prices plunged below \$100 per barrel, and stocks and bonds surged in global markets yesterday, on hopes for a resumption of oil and gas flows through the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's oil and gas and 30 percent of global fertiliser are transported.

Bangladesh's stocks have gained in line with the global markets. The DSEX, the benchmark index of the key bourse, the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), climbed 161.08 points, or 3.12 percent, to close at 5,317.96.

This marks the highest point for the premier bourse after March 16, when the index finished at 5,353.94.

The benchmark index of Dhaka Stock Exchange climbed 161.08 points, or 3.12 percent, to close at 5,317.96

"Market sentiment shifted from caution to optimism overnight as easing Middle East tensions and falling oil prices ignited a wave of relief and bargain-hunting for beaten-down stocks," said SM Galibur Rahman, head of research and strategic planning at Shanta Securities.

Market participation saw a boost, with turnover reaching Tk 991.59 crore, representing a 66 percent spike from the previous session, according to the DSE.

"DSEX jumps as ceasefire news boosts market sentiment," said Shanta Securities Research in its daily market review.

The surge was mirrored across other indices. The DSES, representing shariah-compliant companies, advanced 30.16 points, or 2.88 percent, to 1,075.97. Similarly, the DS30, which tracks blue-chip stocks, also gained.

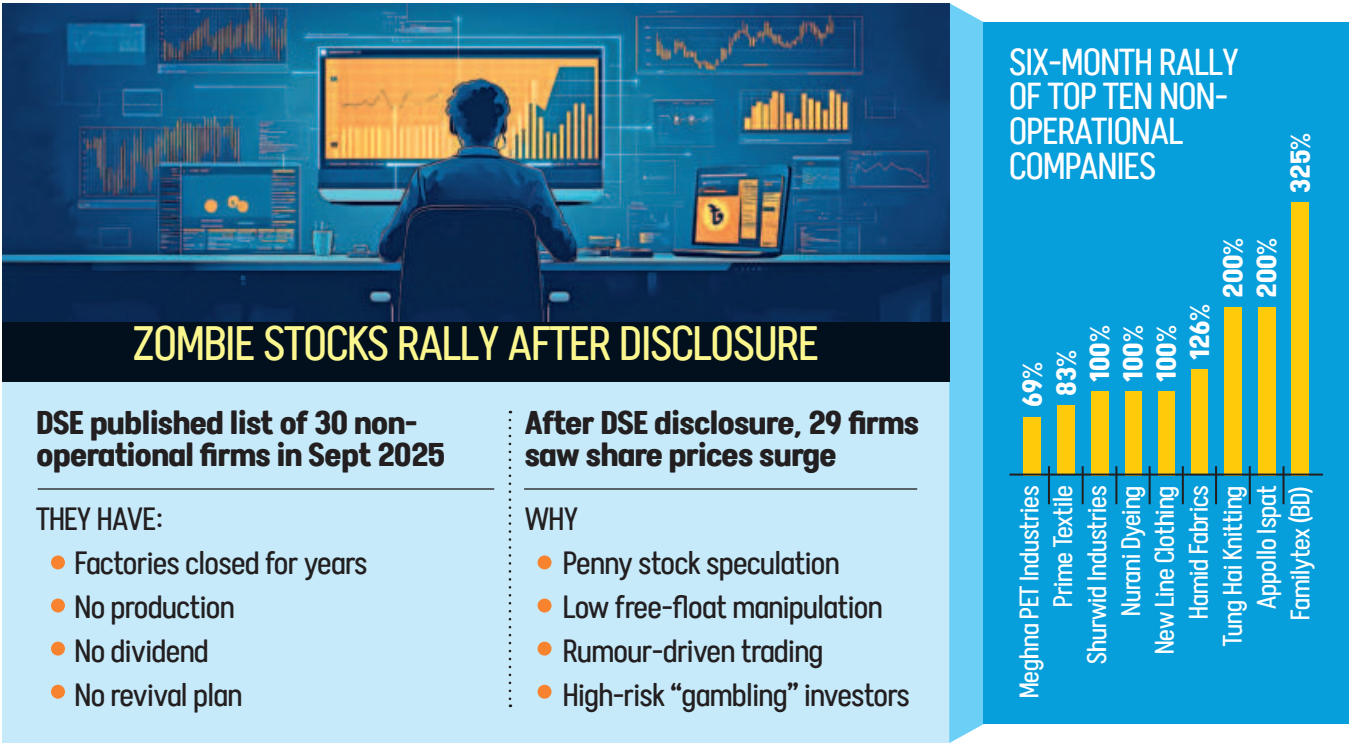
Of the traded issues, 367 advanced, 15 declined, and 11 remained unchanged.

Shanta Securities Research said market movement was driven by positive

READ MORE ON B2

Dead firms, rising shares

Twenty-nine shuttered companies post sharp gains after DSE names non-operational entities



AHSAN HABIB

In a rare step in September last year, the Dhaka bourse published a list of 30 companies that had long been out of production. The move was meant to inject transparency into the market, check rumour-driven trading and warn investors chasing whispers rather than market fundamentals.

Instead, it had the opposite effect.

After the disclosure, share prices of 29 of those zombie firms, whose factories are padlocked, machines are gathering dust, and workers have long since left, surged. Some doubled. Others tripled.

Market analysts say allowing companies with no operational heartbeat to trade freely undermines confidence. For the sake of ordinary investors and the long-term health of the market, the regulator should move quickly to clean house.

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) says it is now preparing to delist companies with no realistic prospect of revival in phases.

But the obvious question is, why did the shares race ahead even though production has been halted for years?

Saiful Islam, president of the DSE Brokers Association of Bangladesh (DBA), said the answer lies in speculation. "Globally, there are always some investors

who prefer to invest in penny stocks," he said, referring to low-priced and highly speculative shares of small companies.

"There is a class of traders who are heavy risk takers and essentially enjoy gambling," said Islam.

"They believe that if prices start to rise for any reason, the relatively low number of shares in these companies makes it easier to play in their favour," he added.

DISCLOSURE TRIGGERS SURGE

After the disclosure by the DSE, shares of Familytex BD, Appollo Ispat and Tung Hai Knitting have more than tripled in the past three months, even though operations have been shut for years.

Other dormant firms have also seen sharp gains.

Hamid Fabrics, New Line Clothing, Nurani Dyeing and Shurwid Industries have more than doubled. Prime Textile rose 83 percent, while Meghna Pet Industries and Northern Jute climbed 69 percent each.

Meghna Pet Industries has been out of operation for 24 years. Its rally has left many analysts baffled.

"Why did this company's stock rise to that extent?" asked Al Amin, an accounting professor at Dhaka University and a market analyst.

"Why did the company remain in the stock market for two decades despite

having no operation, no dividend, nothing?" he questioned.

"These are surging absolutely due to manipulation and rumours by a vested interest group," he added.

"By allowing trading of closed companies, the DSE and the BSEC [Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission] are basically allowing investors to burn their hands," he further said.

Among the 30 companies, only GBB Power reported positive news, announcing that it had signed a power purchase contract with the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPPDB) for the installation of an 18 MW solar power plant.

Of the other dormant firms, Zaheen Spinning Mills rose 63 percent, Emerald Oil gained 55 percent and Regent Textile advanced 52 percent.

Prof Al Amin said the DSE cannot avoid its responsibility simply by publishing the status of the companies, especially when the securities regulator operates surveillance software.

In his view, both DSE and the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) should dig deeper and suspend trading in such shares.

When asked whether suspension would hurt small investors, he said those

READ MORE ON B3

Taka gains as dollar demand softens on US-Iran truce

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The taka edged up against the US dollar yesterday, buoyed by a two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran that eased pressure on the foreign exchange market.

The weighted average exchange rate stood at Tk 122.75 per dollar, down from Tk 122.84 the previous day, according to Bangladesh Bank (BB) data.

A senior treasury official at a private commercial bank said the market turned volatile in recent weeks as importers rushed to buy dollars amid fears of a prolonged war. That anxiety appears to have subsided following the ceasefire.

When importers scramble for forward buying, rates tend to climb. As tensions cool, demand for forward trading of US dollars is expected to ease, he said.

Forward buying means agreeing today to purchase dollars at a fixed rate on a future date. Forward trading refers to buying or selling dollars now at a pre-agreed rate for delivery later, usually to hedge against exchange rate swings.

In its Bangladesh Bank Quarterly published yesterday, the central bank, however, cautioned that the economy remains exposed to external oil price shocks and currency depreciation.

"A sharp increase in global oil prices, particularly when combined with exchange rate depreciation, could exert significant upward pressure on inflation and lead to a decline in foreign exchange reserves," it said.

The BB report said that allowing some exchange rate flexibility could help ease pressure on reserves. At the same time, balancing fiscal costs and inflationary pressures may require a partial adjustment to global oil prices.

"Rising geopolitical tensions – particularly the Iran-Israel-USA conflict – have already disrupted global energy and food supply chains and may exert additional pressure on both the external balance and domestic inflation. These developments pose near-term risks to price stability, export demand, and import costs," said the report.

Mirza Elias Uddin Ahmed, managing director of Jamuna Bank, told The Daily Star

READ MORE ON B3

Scanner glitch stalls 500 containers at Ctg port

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A malfunctioning scanner at the Patenga Container Terminal (PCT) of Chattogram Port has disrupted import and export operations, leaving more than 500 containers stuck without clearance since Monday (April 6).

Importers have been unable to receive delivery of goods, affecting the supply of raw materials to various industries, including the readymade garment sector.

Port insiders said the disruption has not only stalled import clearance from the port but also hindered the transfer of depot-bound containers, creating congestion at the jetties and adding pressure to the supply chain.

"We have to suspend production at some lines of our plastic factory, which makes bottles for fruit juices and drinks," said Kamrumzzaman Kamal, director of marketing at PRAN-RFL, one of the leading food and plastic processors and exporters of the country.

The PRAN-RFL Group alone owns 360 out of the 500 containers stuck at the terminal, carrying raw materials for food and plastic.

Sharif Mohammad Al Amin, assistant commissioner at Chattogram Custom House, told The Daily Star that a technical fault developed in the scanner two days ago.

"A team of experts is working to fix the issue, and the scanner is expected to be operational soon. As a temporary measure, a special order is being issued to allow physical inspection of the containers that could not be scanned," he added.

As per National Board of Revenue data, scanners were installed at various gates of Chattogram Port in 2009 to curb smuggling, security risks, and the import and export of goods through false declarations. Currently, scanners

are operational at six out of the port's 12 gates.

Only goods from selected industrial units, including the readymade garment sector, are directly released from the port, provided that the containers undergo scanning. This process helps avoid lengthy physical inspection and significantly reduces clearance time, customs sources said.

C&F agents, who clear goods from the port on behalf of importers, claimed that the glitch at PTC has significantly delayed cargo clearance. The issue affects exporters as well.

Ziaur Rahman, a C&F agent working for SB Traders, noted that at least six containers belonging to two exporters at the Chattogram EPZ have remained



PHOTO: STAR/FILE

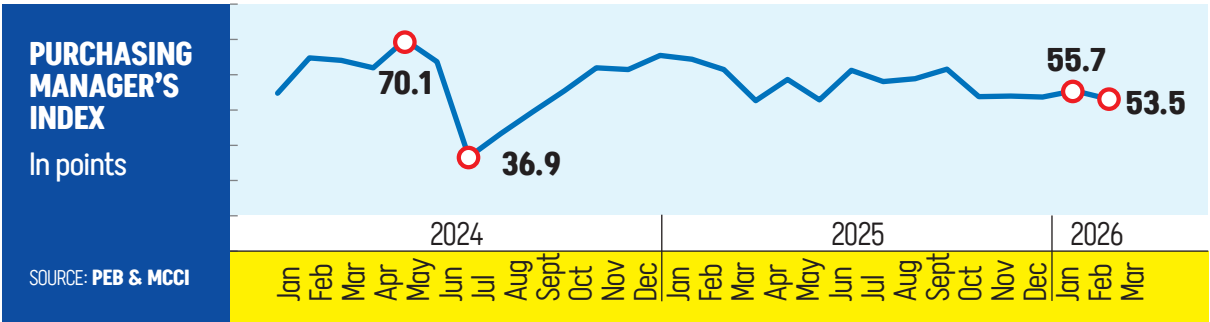
uncleared over the past two days at PCT.

"Delays in clearance could lead to missed delivery deadlines and additional port charges," he added.

He also said similar issues arise at other gates from time to time, suggesting that authorities could install alternative scanners to avoid such disruptions in the future.

Economy saw sluggish growth in March: PMI

Manufacturing contracted after 18 straight months, services maintained momentum



STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's economy may have expanded at a slower pace in March, primarily driven by the manufacturing sector's first contraction after 18 consecutive months of growth, according to the latest Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI).

Bangladesh's PMI declined by 2.2 points to 52.5 in March compared to the previous month, according to the report issued yesterday by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) and Policy Exchange Bangladesh (PEB).

The PMI is a forward-looking indicator used globally to gauge economic direction. A reading above 50 indicates expansion, while a reading below 50 indicates contraction.

"The March PMI readings point to moderate economic growth, largely driven by a manufacturing sector

slowdown due to extended holidays and global demand uncertainties stemming from the Middle East crisis," said M Masrur Reaz, chairman and CEO of PEB.

He added that the US-Israeli war on Iran has weakened economic momentum through heightened inflationary pressures and risks of supply disruptions, increasing the economy's vulnerability.

A decline in new orders, exports, finished goods, imports, and employment fuelled the downturn in the manufacturing sector. However, factory output and input purchases continued to expand, and order backlogs returned to growth.

The construction sector remained in the downtrend for the second consecutive month, while the agriculture sector saw its seventh month of expansion, albeit at a slower pace.

Agriculture reported slower expansion in business activity and

input costs. While order backlogs grew, the sector faced tightening in new business and employment.

Construction continued its decline, with new business and activity levels falling. While employment and order backlogs in the sector rebounded, input costs rose at a faster pace.

The services sector continued its momentum, recording its 18th consecutive month of expansion with slightly accelerated growth across new business, employment, and business activity.

Looking ahead, the future business index signals continued expansion across all key sectors, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and services, reflecting sustained business optimism, the report said.

The MCCI and PEB began publishing the PMI in January last year. Initiated by the UK government, the index covers over 500 private sector firms.

Internet may slow for 4 days from today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Internet services in Bangladesh may experience slower speeds or partial disruptions for four days from today due to scheduled maintenance work on the country's second submarine cable system, SEA-ME-WE-5.

According to a press release issued by Bangladesh Submarine Cables PLC, the SEA-ME-WE-5 (SMW5) consortium has undertaken maintenance work.

The work will begin at 10:00pm (Bangladesh time) today and continue until 6:00am on April 13.

During this period, maintenance is expected to affect traffic, particularly circuits connected to Singapore through the SMW5 submarine cable. As a result, users may face slower internet speeds or intermittent service disruptions.

However, the company noted that services will continue through the country's first submarine cable, SEA-ME-WE-4, which will help maintain connectivity during the maintenance period.

The authorities said they will coordinate closely with the consortium to complete the work within the scheduled timeframe

READ MORE ON B2



Md Ali Hossain Prodhania, chairman of NRBC Bank PLC, poses for a group photograph with the bank's newly recruited management trainee officers at its head office in Dhaka recently. PHOTO: NRBC BANK

NRBC Bank organises orientation programme for trainees

STAR BUSINESS DESK

NRBC Bank PLC has arranged a daylong orientation programme for its 107 newly recruited management trainee officers (MTOs). Md Ali Hossain Prodhania, chairman of the bank, inaugurated the programme as the chief guest at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release. Addressing the participants, Prodhania emphasised the

importance of integrity, discipline, and continuous learning in professional life. He encouraged the newly recruited officers to build a strong foundation in banking operations and remain committed to ethical standards while performing their duties. Md Touhidul Alam Khan, managing director and CEO, highlighted the responsibility of the new officers in maintaining the bank's operational standards and

customer service quality. He advised them to focus on practical knowledge, accountability, and consistent performance to contribute effectively to the bank's future growth. Mohammad Abdul Qaium Khan, deputy managing director and chief operating officer, presided over the programme. Senior officials of the bank and relevant division heads were also present at the event.

Pubali Bank Securities holds 16th annual general meeting

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Pubali Bank Securities Limited held its 16th annual general meeting (AGM) virtually yesterday. Md Abdur Razzak Mondal, chairman of the company, presided over the meeting, according to a press release. Habibur Rahman, Azizur Rahman, M Kabiruzzaman Yaqub,

Mustafa Ahmed, Ayesha Farha Chowdhury, Runa Fowzia Hafiz, Asif A Choudhury, Ahmed Salah Sater, Nadir Ahmed, Mohammad Naushad Ali Chowdhury, and Mohammad Ali, directors of the company, joined the event. Mohammad Anisuzzaman, a shareholder of the company and deputy managing director of Pubali Bank PLC, and Mohammad

Liton Miah, general manager and chief financial officer (CFO) of Pubali Bank PLC, were present at the AGM. Mohammed Ahsan Ullah, managing director and chief executive officer (CEO) of the company; Md Shah Alam, general manager; and Ganapati Kumar Biswas, company secretary, among others, also attended.



Md Abdur Razzak Mondal, chairman of Pubali Bank Securities Limited, second from the top right, presides over the company's 16th annual general meeting (AGM) virtually yesterday. PHOTO: PUBALI BANK SECURITIES

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (HED)
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
F-14/F-1, AGARGAON, SHER-E-BANGLA NAGAR, DHAKA.
www.hed.gov.bd

Memo No. 45.02.0000.000.006.07.0067& 0068.26-45 Dated : 08/04/2026

e-Tender Notice

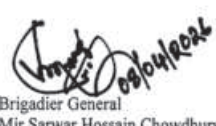
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following Goods, details are given below:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Work	Last Date & Time of Selling Tender Document	Tender Closing date & Time
1.	1255175	GD-HED-BCPS-02	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Fire Fighting System under Construction of 12 (Twelve) Storied Multipurpose Building with 03 (Three) Basements accommodating an Auditorium having capacity of 1500 seats for Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) at Mohakhali in Dhaka.	28.04.2026 16.00	29.04.2026 14.00
2.	1255176	GD-HED-BCPS-03	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Lift & Escalator under Construction of 12 (Twelve) Storied Multipurpose Building with 03 (Three) Basements accommodating an Auditorium having capacity of 1500 seats for Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) at Mohakhali in Dhaka.	28.04.2026 16.00	29.04.2026 14.00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Brigadier General
Mir Sarwar Hossain Chowdhury, afwc, psc
Chief Engineer
e-mail: hedho@yahoo.com

GD-769

Bangladesh stocks jump

FROM PAGE B1

changes in the market capitalisation of travel and leisure, banks, and paper and printing scrips amid negative changes in the market capitalisation of debenture, information technology (IT), and service and real estate scrips.

Khan Brothers PP Woven Bag Industries Ltd, Summit Alliance Port Ltd and City Bank PLC were the most active shares at the DSE, followed by CME Pesticides Ltd and BRAC Bank PLC. All five except Summit Alliance gained.

The CSE All Share Price Index at the Chittagong

Stock Exchange soared 328 points, or 2.26 percent, to close at 14,818.

Sheikh Mohammad Rashedul Hasan, managing director and CEO of UCB Asset Management, said it is not uncommon for investors to position their capital based on both local and global headlines -- often overreacting in both directions.

"In my view, today's (yesterday) surge in the index and trading volume is nothing but a reflection of renewed investor confidence amid expectations of de-escalation in the conflict," he said.

Internet may slow

FROM PAGE B1

and restore normal services promptly.

Bangladesh Submarine Cables PLC also expressed regret for the temporary inconvenience caused to users and stakeholders.

Bangladesh's total bandwidth consumption currently exceeds 10,000 Gbps. Of this, the SEA-

ME-WE-5 submarine cable supplies around 1,488 Gbps, while the country's first submarine cable, SEA-ME-WE-4, provides about 2,704 Gbps as of March.

The remaining capacity is sourced from India through international terrestrial cable operators via land-based connectivity.

Bangladesh Power Development Board
Office of the Senior System Analyst
Dhaka Computer Center
Wapda Building (4th fl.), Motijheel, Dhaka.
Phone no. 47113484

Ref No. 27.11.0000.716.77.26.625 Dates: 06/04/2026.

Invitation for e-Tenders

e-Tender are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following work.

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Ref. No.	Name of Works	Tender Publication Date	Tender Closing Date
1.	Tender ID: 1253457 Ref. No: 27.11.0000.716.77.26.624 Dt.: 06.04.2026	Works for Installation and commissioning of 220 (Two Hundred Twenty) MBPS broadband redundant internet service & Data for connectivity with monthly recurring charge for 2 (Two) Years at (i) 120 Mbps Data Center of DCC (ii) 100 Mbps ERP Data Center at Bidyut Bhaban. (iii) Data connectivity from DCC to NID server, Election Commissioning, Agargaon, Dhaka.	06.04.2026	23.04.2026 Time: 12:00

বিদ্যুৎ/জন- ৯৮০(২)/০৮/০৪/২৬

Signed
(Mriganka Mohan Paul)
Senior System Analyst
Dhaka Computer Center
BPDB, Dhaka.

GD-774

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director
Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, Bogura
Email: szmch@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

Memo No: 1473 Date: 7/4/26

e-Tender Notice (NCT)

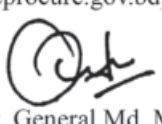
e-Tender is in the e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procuring of following goods.

Tender ID	Name of Tender	Invitation Reference No	Last Selling Date	Closing & Opening Date	Remarks
1254091	Supply of Medicine (MSR Group: A -Lot-4) (Code No. 3252105) at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, Bogura during the FY: 2025-26	SZMCH/Tender/25-26/23	22/04/2026	23/04/2026	OTM
1254092	Supply of MSR Group-E: Chemical Re-agent, X-ray films etc (Lot-2) (Code No. 3252105) at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, Bogura during the FY: 2025-26	SZMCH/Tender/25-26/24	22/04/2026	23/04/2026	OTM
1254093	Supply of MSR Group-B: Surgical Instrument-Lot-4 (Code No. 3252105) at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, Bogura during the FY: 2025-26	SZMCH/Tender/25-26/25	22/04/2026	23/04/2026	OTM

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and any offline/hard copies will not be accepted.

01. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

02. Detail about the Tender have shown in e-Tender notice and e-Tender document. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Brig. General Md. Mohsin
Director
Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital
Bogura.

GD-752

Dhaka North City Corporation
Waste Management Department
Plot No: 23-26, Road No: 46
Gulshan-2, Dhaka-1212
www.dncc.gov.bd

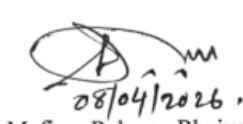
Memo No: 46.10.0000.047.07.086.26-85 Date: 08 April, 2026

E-Tender notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

SN	Tender ID/ Ref. No.	Name of the Works	Tender Closing Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
1.	Tender ID: 1253475 Ref: 46.10.0000.047.07.086.26	Engaging contractor for removal of waste from the areas covered by 8 wards of Zone-2 of Dhaka North City Corporation through special drive (FY 2025-26)	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM
2.	Tender ID: 1253621 Ref: 46.10.0000.047.07.087.26	Engaging contractor for removal of waste from the areas covered by 4 wards (22,23,35,36) of Zone-3 of Dhaka North City Corporation through special drive (FY 2025-26)	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM
3.	Tender ID: 1254020 Ref: 46.10.0000.047.07.088.26	Engaging contractor for removal of waste from the areas covered by 7 wards of Zone-4 of Dhaka North City Corporation and waste management in Aminbazar Landfill through special drive (FY 2025-26)	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM
4.	Tender ID: 1254085 Ref: 46.10.0000.047.07.089.26	Engaging contractor for removal of waste from the areas covered by 9 wards of Zone-5 of Dhaka North City Corporation through special drive (FY 2025-26)	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM	Date: 5 May 2026 Time: 11:30 AM

This is an online Tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, do registration in the National e-GP System Portal.


(Md. Mafizur Rahman Bhuiyan)
Deputy Chief Waste Management Officer (DCWMO)
Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC)
Email: deputy.cwmo@dncc.gov.bd

GD-769

Bangladesh can increase duty-free exports to UK

Trade envoy calls for utilising Developing Countries Trading Scheme

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The United Kingdom's visiting trade envoy, Baroness Rosie Winterton of Doncaster, has called on Bangladesh to increase exports to her country utilising the Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), which offers duty-free access.

During a meeting with Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury at the Secretariat yesterday, she pointed to scope for increasing exports beyond ready-made garments, including processed foods, seafood, light engineering and leather goods.

She also encouraged Bangladesh to make use of approximately £2 billion

in export credit facilities available under UK Export Finance for increased infrastructure and other investments, according to a commerce ministry press statement.

During the meeting, both sides agreed to reactivate the Bangladesh-UK Trade and Investment Dialogue, the statement adds.

The DCTS, which replaced the UK's Generalised Scheme of Preferences, came into force on 19 June 2023. Under the scheme, the UK cuts tariffs, removes conditions and simplifies trading rules for 65 developing countries.

The scheme heavily benefits UK businesses and consumers by reducing the import cost of

thousands of products from around the world. Importers enjoy zero percent import tariff on 99.8 percent of products from 47 eligible least developed countries (LDCs), including Bangladesh, under the scheme's Comprehensive Preferences tier.

The UK has confirmed it will maintain duty-free access for Bangladeshi goods under DCTS even after Bangladesh graduates from LDC status.

During the meeting with the UK envoy, Minister Chowdhury said the government has been working to improve the investment climate, cut logistics costs and ease doing business.

He said Bangladesh is pursuing free trade agreements and economic

partnership agreements with several countries and intends to deepen trade ties with the UK.

The UK is Bangladesh's third-largest export destination after the United States and Germany.

In the last fiscal year 2024-25, Bangladesh exported \$4.62 billion worth of goods to the European country, accounting for 9.57 percent of total exports, according to data from the Bangladesh High Commission in London.

The major exportable items include ready-made garments, frozen food, IT engineering, leather and jute goods, and bicycles, with knitwear and woven garments accounting for 90 percent of total exports.

Airline, travel industries see no immediate relief from ceasefire

REUTERS

US President Donald Trump's two-week ceasefire with Iran is unlikely to provide immediate relief to the global aviation industry as it reels from its worst crisis in years, executives said on Wednesday, even as airline shares rallied after the deal.

Willie Walsh, director general of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), warned it would take months for jet fuel supply to recover even if Iran reopened the Strait of Hormuz, given disruptions to Middle East refining capacity.

Delta Air Lines forecast lower-than-expected profit for the second quarter and said it would cut capacity across the board to make up for the \$2 billion in extra fuel costs it expects to book in the second quarter.

Fuel is the second-largest expense for airlines after labour, typically accounting for about 27 percent of operating expenses.



Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz has choked supplies of jet fuel globally, and news of a ceasefire and the possibility of safe passage through the Strait sent airline stocks soaring.

Oil fell below \$100 per barrel after Trump said he had agreed to a two-week ceasefire with Iran, subject to the Strait's immediate and safe reopening.

But comments from executives and experts across the industry highlight deepening pain for airlines facing a doubling of jet fuel prices and worries about constrained supplies.

Carriers across the world have been hiking fares, cutting flights, carrying extra fuel from home airports and adding refueling stops as the Middle East conflict squeezes supply.

Walsh told reporters that while he expected crude oil prices to fall, jet fuel costs were likely to remain slightly elevated due to the impact on refineries.

"If it were to reopen and remain open, I think it will still take a period of months to get back to where supply needs to be given the disruption to the refining capacity in the Middle East," Walsh said.

Taka gains as dollar demand softens

FROM PAGE B1

Bangladesh's external position has not fundamentally weakened, although panic driven demand had unsettled the market.

The country's gross foreign exchange reserves stand at about \$34.35 billion, which the central bank described as a strong buffer for external trade payments. Usable reserves were \$29.81

billion on April 2, enough to cover more than five months of imports.

The BB report said the central bank has maintained monetary tightening in response to stubbornly high inflation.

"However, inflation remains above the comfort threshold, disproportionately affecting low- and middle-income households,"

it said, adding that the government and the central bank have taken several steps to rein in price pressures.

The BB has withdrawn LC margin requirements for imports of essential commodities, including rice, onions, dates, sugar, pulses and edible oil, it added.

Alongside truck sales by the Trading Corporation of

Bangladesh (TCB), relevant agencies are working to curb hoarding, syndication and other illegal practices to ease supply bottlenecks.

On money and credit markets, the report said the near-term outlook depends on striking a balance between maintaining adequate liquidity, containing inflation and reviving private sector credit growth.

It said that public sector

credit is likely to remain the main driver of overall credit expansion in the short term, potentially crowding out private investment and complicating efforts to sustain growth.

"A recovery in private-sector credit will depend on further moderation of lending rates, improved investor confidence, and greater political stability," said the BB.

trying to reopen factories. The DSE will allow them time," he told The Daily Star.

For the rest, the exchange will assess whether operations can realistically resume. If not, it will review assets and liabilities before making a decision. Some companies will be delisted gradually if there is no prospect of revival, he said.

Gold climbs to three-week high

REUTERS

Gold prices climbed to a nearly three-week high on Wednesday as markets reassessed near-term risks after US President Donald Trump agreed to suspend bombings and attacks on Iran for two weeks, easing fears of energy-driven inflation.

Spot gold was up 2.5 percent at \$4,819.52 per ounce, as of 0726 GMT. Earlier in the session, bullion rose more than 3 percent to its highest level since March 19. US gold futures for June delivery gained 3.4 percent to \$4,845.30.

Trump said Washington had agreed to a two-week pause in attacks and received what he described as a "workable" 10-point proposal from Iran as a basis for negotiations.

Dead firms, rising shares

FROM PAGE B1

who bought the shares should have had supporting information.

DBA President Islam also advocated for stronger action. The DSE's responsibility, he said, does not end with labelling companies as non-operational.

He said investor protection is a core duty of the market regulator.

If firms have remained dormant for years, the DSE could have suspended trading, summoned management, explored mergers or restructuring and engaged merchant banks to assess options.

AXE FINALLY LOOMS OVER THEM

Abul Kalam, spokesperson of the BSEC, said the regulator has placed the companies

under surveillance. If it finds manipulation, insider dealing or regulatory breaches, it will act.

On whether the companies will continue trading despite years of closure, he said listing and delisting are fully in the hands of the stock exchange.

"Stock exchange can delist the companies complying with listing

regulations; it is their task," he added.

Mominul Islam, chairman of the DSE, said the exchange has asked the non-operational companies about plans to resume operations. Some have replied, others have not.

"A few cited political disruptions over the past decade as the reason for closure and said they are

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Administrator
Sathkira Pourashava: Sathkira
Project Implementation Unit
Climate Resilient Infrastructure Mainstreaming (CRIM) Project
Incorporating Climate Change-Adapted Urban Development Programme (CCAUD)
Sathkira Component, Phase 1
www.sathkhiramunicipality.org.bd

e-Tender Notice No. Re-Tender. SAT/CRIMP/02/2025-26 (Open Tendering Method) (OTM)

Memo No. 46.00.8766.010.20.001.01.26-102

Dated:02-04-2026

Country: People's Republic of Bangladesh

Project: Climate Resilient Infrastructure Mainstreaming (CRIM) Project incorporating Climate Change-Adapted Urban Development Programme (CCAUD) Sathkira Component, Phase 1

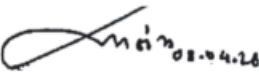
Date : 02-04-2026

NCB No.: CRIM/SATPOU/SAN-1 Procurement no: 508670

- The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from KfW toward the cost of the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Mainstreaming (CRIM) Project incorporating Climate Change-Adapted Urban Development Programme (CCAUD) Sathkira Component, Phase 1, and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for "(1) Construction of 42 nos. School Latrines (2) Construction of 4 nos. New Public Toilets with water connection; and (3) Rehabilitation of 3 nos existing Public Toilets in Sathkira Pourashava, District Sathkira under Package No. SAN-01."Procurement no: 508670".
- The Administrator Sathkira Pourashava, District Sathkira ("the Employer") invites bids (e-Tenders) for the following Works ("the Works"): from eligible Bidders "(1) Construction of 42 nos. School Latrines (2) Construction of 4 nos, New Public Toilets with water connection; and (3) Rehabilitation of 3 nos. existing Public Toilets in Sathkira Pourashava, District: Sathkira, under Package No. SAN-01."Procurement no: 508670" as detailed below:

Package No	e-GP Re-Tender ID No	Description	Tender Security BDT	Duration
CRIM/SATPOU/SAN-1 Procurement no: 508670	1247666 (APP ID 214298)	"(1) Construction of 42 nos. School Latrines; (2) Construction of 4 nos, New Public Toilets with water connection; and (3) Rehabilitation of 3 nos. existing Public Toilets in Sathkira Pourashava, District: Sathkira, under Package No. SAN-01."Procurement no: 508670".	Taka 920,000 (Nine Lac Twenty Thousand Taka Only)	18 calendar months

- National Competitive Bidding (NCB) will be conducted through electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) in compliance with qualification as specified in the KfW Guidelines for the Procurement of Consulting Services, Works, Plant, Goods and Non-Consulting Services in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries ("KfW Guidelines, January 2021") and is open to all Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Documents.
- Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications should participate in this bidding:
A) **Specific Similar Experience:** At least 1 (one) contract of similar nature, complexity and methods/construction technology successfully completed within the last 5 (five) years, with a value of BDT 34,500,000(Thirty-four million five hundred thousand).
B) **Average Annual Construction Turnover:** The required average annual construction turnover shall be greater than BDT 46,000,000(Forty-six million) over the last 5 (Five) years.
C) **Liquid Assets or Credit Facilities:** The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit facilities of the Bidder shall be BDT 10,200,000(Ten million two-hundred thousand only).
The complete qualification criteria are described in the bidding documents.
- This is an online bidding where only e-Tender (e-bid) will be accepted in the Bangladesh National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To obtain further information and to submit e-Tender for this works package bearing e-tender ID no 1247666, registration in the e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
- The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the e-GP portal, is TK. 4000.00(Four Thousand) and the tender security amounting Taka 920,000 (Nine Lac Twenty Thousand Taka Only) have to be deposited online through any branch of the banks registered in the e-GP system by 14:00 hours 07/05/2026.
- An on-line Pre-Tender Meeting will be held on 20-04-2026, 10:00h. The zoom meeting link is contained in the Tender Data Sheet ITT Clause no. 11.2. Join Zoom Meeting <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85978029572?pwd=emxNL3dSUfNhV1N6bWl2TTZxY0Y5Zz09>
Meeting ID: 85978029572
Pass code: crimp Also, Pre-tender meeting will be held through e-GP system from 08-04-2026;10:00 to 20-04-2026;15:00.
- The deadline for submission of e-Tenders (bids) is on 07-05-2026, 15:00 hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST), and online opening will be done on the same date at 15:00 hours BST.
- Last selling Date & Time will be 06-05-2026,17:00 PM.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the e-GP portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). To obtain further information, please contact the official inviting the tender as follows.


Sheikh Moinul Islam Moin
Administrator
Sathkira Pourashava, Sathkira

GD-771

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Project Director
Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment
of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division
Department of Environment
E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

Memo. No: 22.02.0000.020.30.003.26.52

Date: 08/04/2026

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change		
2	Agency	Department of Environment		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Project Director, Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division		
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka		
5	Invitation For	Supply of Office Furniture		
6	Issued Date	08-04-2026		
7	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM); National Competitive Tender (NCT);		
8	Budget and Source of Funds	Development Budget		
9	Project/Program Name	Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division		
10	Tender Package No.	GD-02		
11	Tender Package Name	Supply of Office Furniture		
12	Tender Publication Date	09/04/2026		
13	Tender Document Last Selling Date	21/04/2026 (at office time)		
14	Tender Closing Date and Time	22/04/2026 & 10:30 am		
15	Tender Opening Date and Time	22/04/2026 & 11:00am		
16	Name and Address of the Office of Selling the Tender Document	Department of Environment, Room No: 202, 1 st Floor, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka		
17	Name and Address of the Office of Receiving & Opening Tender Document.	Office of the Project Director, Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division, Department of Environment 1 st Floor, Room-211, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka		
18	Pre-Tender Meeting Place, Date and Time	N/A		
19	Eligibility of Tenderer	As per Tender Documents.		
20	Brief Description of Works	Supply of Office Furniture		
21	Price of Tender Document	TK.1000/- (One Thousand) Only [non-refundable]		
22	Identification of Tender package	Location	Tender security amount (in Taka)	Completion Time
	GD-02	Department of Environment 1 st Floor, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka	TK. 32,000/- (Taka Thirty-two Thousand) only	90 days
23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Samsuzzaman Sarker		
24	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Project Director, Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division		
25	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Department of Environment, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka		
26	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Telephone:88-(02)-223-375062, E-mail: helpdoepd@gmail.com		
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings				

Md. Samsuzzaman Sarker
Project Director
Department of Environment
E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

GD-762



Workers carry baskets of hilsa at the Cox's Bazar Fishery Ghat. In areas like Cox's Bazar, hilsa can complete their full lifecycle in the sea and reach greater maturity. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Bangladesh getting smaller hilsa due to aggressive fishing

Average size now six-year low, says expert

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Overfishing, use of illegal nets, and capturing juvenile hilsa – locally known as jatka – contribute towards lowering the average size and egg production of hilsa, a fisheries expert said yesterday.

Intense fishing in the rivers significantly reduces the population size of larger fish, whittling the pool down to only contain smaller fish. In comparison, hilsa in the sea can complete their lifecycle without such interference, resulting in improved growth and reproduction. Lower pollution levels in the sea also help in the process.

Mohammad Ashrafal Alam, senior scientific officer at Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute, said that a variation in hilsa size is perceived across regions, which is primarily linked to environmental conditions and migration patterns.

He made the remarks during his presentation at a seminar marking Jatka Conservation Week 2026, April 7-13, observed under the theme: “Stop catching jatka, and rivers and seas will be full of hilsa,” held at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council

Auditorium in Dhaka.

The average length of hilsa has shown fluctuations over the years, the presentation showed. It remained steady at 35.7 cm in the fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21, then increased to 37.0 cm in 2021-22 and 37.2 cm in 2022-23.

However, the trend reversed in the following years, with the average length declining to 36.6 cm in 2023-24, 34.7 cm in 2024-25, and further dropping to 34.0 cm in 2025-26.

Alam said that the overall decrease in average hilsa length in recent years is the result of multiple combined factors, including overfishing, catching jatka, human interventions, environmental changes, declining water quality, and reduced food availability in rivers.

In areas like Cox's Bazar, where fish can complete their full lifecycle in the sea, they reach greater maturity, resulting in higher average length and weight, he said.

The largest hilsa in the country are found in the Cox's Bazar region, with an average length of 38.5 centimetres (cm) and an average weight of 780 grams.

In contrast, the smallest hilsa are

found in the Rajshahi region, with an average length of 29 cm and an average weight of 340 grams. Here, fish are confined to river systems, where growth conditions are less favourable, he added.

High intensity of fishing in the rivers, as well as the use of illegal nets, leads to frequent capture of larger fish, while smaller ones remain. Over time, this selective removal causes a decline in the population of large-sized fish in river systems, he added.

During migration from the sea to the rivers, overfishing in coastal areas further reduces the number of mature fish, as many are caught before they can reproduce, he said.

Rising levels of pollution and scarcity of food in the rivers also negatively affect hilsa growth and development.

Meanwhile, the estimated egg production of hilsa has increased over the years, starting at 599,720 kg in 2015, rising steadily to 786,314 kg in 2021, 805,515 kg in 2023, 811,711 kg in 2024, and reaching 884,802 kg in 2025.

However, projections for 2025 show a mixed trend, with one estimate reaching 884,802 kg, indicating an increase, while another estimate of

791,564 kg reflects a decline.

The recent drop in projected egg production is linked to the same underlying causes explained before, as the reduction in large, mature breeding fish directly affects reproductive output, Alam added.

Fisheries, Livestock and Agriculture Minister Mohammad Aminur Rashid said that scientists need to engage more actively in research and work systematically to maximise jatka production and accurately induce egg hatching in hilsa to increase their numbers.

The minister said that scientists must explore ways to boost hilsa production while preserving their taste and quality, ensuring the country's demand is met.

Terming hilsa shortage as a nationwide problem, he stressed that production must be increased to make this fish accessible to the general public.

In his speech as a special guest, State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Sultan Salahuddin Tuku said that when jatka fishing is completely stopped, hilsa production will increase significantly, which can contribute greatly to the country's economic prosperity.

Time to scale solar power is now

TARIQ ALAM

Solar power is often discussed as a policy ambition in Bangladesh, one which has become more pertinent given the ongoing global energy uncertainty and price volatility.

Bangladesh's energy security depends on how quickly renewable ambitions translate into real projects – spearheaded by solar.

Developing around 5,000 Megawatt peak (MWP) of solar could require over Tk 35,000 crore in generation investment, excluding land and supporting infrastructure – making bankable projects and investor confidence essential.

In Bangladesh, 1 MWP of solar capacity can generate roughly 1.4 million kilowatt-hour (kWh) annually, highlighting solar's potential contribution to the national power supply.

International experience shows that countries can scale solar from negligible levels to 20-30 per cent of installed capacity within a decade or even faster when supported by clear policy frameworks, bankable procurement structures and coordinated infrastructure planning.

Despite repeated policy commitments and long-term energy planning, solar deployment in Bangladesh has remained limited – and this is solely because of an incomplete implementation framework.

In several cases, projects were awarded without confirmed land access, grid interconnection or developers demonstrating the financial and technical capability required to deliver utility-scale projects.

As a result, many projects lacked the capacity to achieve financial closure or progress to construction within expected timeframes.

Solar prices are influenced by technology costs but, in Bangladesh, are primarily driven by financing conditions, land constraints, infrastructure requirements and project risks.

While concessional financing is available, the challenge is deploying it at scale. Lower financing costs require reducing project risk through bankable power purchase agreements (PPAs), strong payment security and credible project pipelines.

Institutions such as Infrastructure Development Company can play a role through blended finance and credit enhancement structures, particularly if scaled and aligned with utility-scale project requirements, while foreign exchange risk mitigation can help unlock international capital.

The transition toward competitive solar tenders represents an important step forward.

Successful projects require key fundamentals from the outset. Developers should demonstrate secure land rights, confirm sites are dispute-free and obtain preliminary grid interconnection approval.

Financial capability should be supported by credible commitments from experienced institutions, with bid bonds and performance guarantees discouraging speculative participation.

Once a project is awarded, clear and enforceable timelines should govern each stage of development.

Power purchase and implementation agreements should be executed within three months of award, followed by financial closure within six months of PPA signing. Construction should then be completed within 12-18 months, depending on project size and site conditions.

Delays at any stage should trigger defined penalties, including encashment of performance guarantees.

Without disciplined timelines, projects risk remaining in prolonged development phases without progressing to construction.

Land and grid access remain two of the biggest barriers to scaling solar in Bangladesh.

Utility-scale solar is inherently land intensive: every 1,000 MWP of ground-mounted capacity typically requires roughly 2,200-2,300 acres. In a densely populated country, securing suitable sites becomes a major challenge. The 'solar park' model offers a practical solution.

Under this approach, government agencies prepare land and supporting infrastructure such as roads, drainage and substations before leasing plots to private developers.

By addressing land and grid constraints upfront, solar parks can significantly reduce development risk, lower costs and accelerate project timelines. Targeted fiscal incentives can help accelerate investment during the early stages of solar expansion.

Policies such as tax holidays, reduced or zero import duties on solar modules, inverters and key balance-of-system components and accelerated depreciation for renewable energy assets can significantly lower capital costs.

Because much solar equipment is imported, such measures can materially improve project economics and support more competitive tariffs. Rooftop solar offers a fast-track pathway for expansion. Approximately 6,000 square metres of roof space can support around 1 MWP of solar capacity.

Large factory rooftops provide suitable space for distributed generation, while net metering and third-party PPAs can enable deployment without upfront investment.

As solar capacity grows, complementary technologies such as battery storage will help manage intermittency and support grid stability.

Bangladesh has both the demand and the opportunity to scale solar power rapidly. The challenge now is execution.

The author is a strategic consultant across technology, media and infrastructure industries

India central bank holds rates, assesses war

AFP, Mumbai

India's central bank left interest rates unchanged on Wednesday as it assessed the fallout of the Middle East war on the world's fastest-growing major economy.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the benchmark repurchase rate, the level at which it lends to commercial banks, would remain at 5.25 percent after a unanimous vote by a six-member panel.

A majority of analysts had forecast a pause, given that the bank reduced rates by a cumulative 125 basis points over 2025, before stopping in February.

But some experts had not ruled out a surprise move.

Since beginning on February 28, the Iran war has battered India's rupee, raised inflation risks and clouded New Delhi's economic growth outlook.

But a two-week ceasefire announced by US President Donald Trump on Tuesday, and a temporary re-opening of the critical Strait of Hormuz, may help reduce fuel pressures and ease cooking gas shortages in the world's most populous nation.

RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra said the monetary policy committee acknowledged risks to India's inflation outlook but added that the economy's fundamentals gave it “greater resilience to withstand shocks now than in the past”.

“It felt, therefore, prudent to wait and watch the changing circumstances and the evolving growth-inflation outlook,” Malhotra said in a televised address from Mumbai. India, which depends on the Middle East for a significant chunk of its oil and liquefied petroleum gas needs, was one of the “most vulnerable economies within Asia to an energy price shock”, according to analysts at Nomura.

Solar push helps Pakistan temper Gulf energy shock

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's solar power push has cushioned the full impact of the war in the Middle East, analysts said, despite lingering concerns over fuel supplies and rising prices.

A study published last month assessed that the uptake of solar around 2018 helped the country avoid more than \$12 billion in oil and gas imports up to February this year.

At projected market prices, it could save a further \$6.3 billion by the end of 2026, said Renewables First and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

In the bustling side streets of Lahore, in northeast Pakistan, shopkeeper Aftab Ahmed, 49, was out shopping for solar panels to install at home to help him cut costs.

“The current fuel situation in our country is such that fuel has gone beyond the reach of the common person,” he told AFP last Friday.

“It has become so expensive that an average person can no longer afford fuel for a motorcycle or a car. Fuel prices are also affecting electricity bills, leading to further increases.

“If we shift towards solar energy, at

least some savings can be achieved from one side.”

Hours earlier, the government in Islamabad announced an eye-watering 42.7-percent hike in the price of petrol and 54.9 percent on diesel.

That brought protesters onto the

streets, sparked queues at fuel stations, and led the government to announce free state-run public transport for a month.

BOOM

Rooftop solar panels are everywhere in Pakistan, helping to provide uninterrupted power and avoid often



PHOTO: REUTERS/FILE

Men load solar panels on a rickshaw at a market in Karachi. Rooftop solar panels are everywhere in Pakistan, helping to provide uninterrupted power and avoid often lengthy cuts in grid supply, particularly when temperatures soar.

lengthy cuts in grid supply, particularly when temperatures soar.

Nabiya Imran, an energy analyst with Renewables First in the capital Islamabad, said they have also helped ease the burden caused by the disruption to shipping in the Gulf.

“Because people in Pakistan have adopted solar over the past several years, this... is providing a cushioning effect against the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, particularly in the power sector,” she said. “Had we not adopted solar in the first place to the extent that we have, the impacts in the power sector would be much worse.”

Pakistan's solar surge does not mean it is immune to the supply shortages that have hit countries across Asia.

Last month, the government introduced austerity measures. The working week for public sector employees was cut to four days and schools were shut.

The Pakistan Super League cricket tournament was also cut from six venues to two, and crowds were banned, to save fuel.

But solar has made working from home more viable and affordable for Pakistanis because it cuts reliance on the grid and imported gas.