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FUEL, FERTILISER IMPORTS Govt needs \$2.61b extra until June

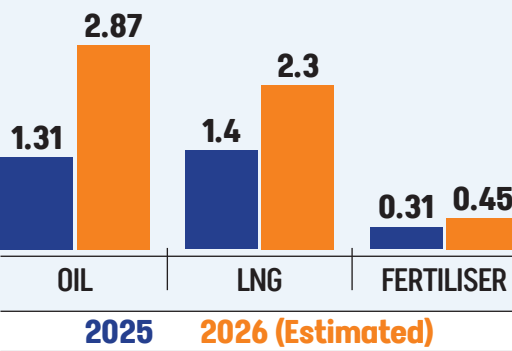
REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh will need an additional \$2.61 billion in foreign exchange to pay the surging energy and fertiliser import bills for March-June period.

The total import costs for oil, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and fertiliser will be around \$5.62 billion, up from \$3.01 billion in the corresponding period of last year, according to a finance ministry impact analysis.

Subsequently, the government is aiming to secure about \$3 billion in emergency assistance from development

REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORT BILLS In billions of dollars (March-June)



partners, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury already placed the request during a meeting with officials of the two multilateral lenders on the sidelines of the ongoing IMF WB Spring Meetings in Washington DC.

The WB has assured Bangladesh of both policy guidance and financial support, Khosru told reporters after the meetings.

"I hope we will receive the extra financing by June and in the next budget. Overall, the discussions have been successful," he said.

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A photograph taken from the Israeli side of the border with Lebanon shows destroyed buildings in a town in southern Lebanon yesterday. Rights groups say there are significant indications that Israel is implementing a strategy in southern Lebanon that closely mirrors its military actions in Gaza.

PHOTO: AFP

Tarique on Time's list of 100 most influential

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has been featured on Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people of the world for 2026.

The list published yesterday by the New York-based magazine includes prominent leaders such as US



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Diplomatic bid to end war gains momentum

Pak army chief lands in Tehran as rivals acknowledge backchannel talks

AGENCIES

Diplomatic efforts to end the US-Israel war on Iran gathered pace yesterday, as Pakistan's army chief arrived in Tehran for mediation and US President Donald Trump announced that the conflict was "close to over".

The diplomatic push came as US and Iranian officials weighed a return to Pakistan for further talks after

negotiations there ended on Sunday without a breakthrough.

Iran yesterday said that exchanges with the US via Pakistan continued after the failed negotiations.

In return, the White House also said the US is discussing holding a second round of peace talks with Iran in Pakistan.

"We feel good about the prospects of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Fuel for April, May secured

Says govt; queues at pumps getting longer

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government yesterday said it has secured enough fuel supplies for this and next month.

"We have made our highest efforts to activate all alternative sources. As a result, the government can now confidently say that there is sufficient fuel in stock, including diesel, for April and May," said Monir Hossain Chowdhury, spokesperson for the Energy Division.

Octane stock is sufficient for about 27 days, while a 30,000-tonne shipment is expected to arrive by April 18.

Speaking at a regular briefing at the Secretariat, the joint secretary warned that the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran could take a new turn in the coming week. "If that happens, the government will brief the media accordingly. But at this moment, we are saying that the stock is sufficient."

However, long queues at filling stations continue with little sign of easing.

In Dhaka and on the outskirts, long queues usually spill onto roads adjacent to filling stations, disrupting traffic. In several cases, motorists reported waiting for hours on end to get fuel. Most pumps are rationing fuel.

Yesterday, queues at most pumps in Tejgaon, Paribagh, Motijheel, and Matsya Bhaban in the city were huge.

A recent visit to pumps in Gazipur and Mymensingh showed long lines, particularly of cars and motorcycles.

In rural areas, multiple bikers said they were forced to limit their travel due to the fuel crisis.

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Energy crisis disrupts apparel production **B1**



Pakistan cuts power to control energy prices **P5**



'Lot of room to improve' in batting **P11**

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