



"You have about 300 million people who suffer from acute food insecurity already. That'll go up by about 20 percent very, very quickly."

WB chief economist Indermitt Gill on economic fallout of ME conflict

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Govt mulls hike in power price as subsidy mounts

Proposal sent to cabinet amid worsening outages

ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government is preparing to raise bulk and retail electricity tariffs, citing an "unsustainable surge in subsidies" amid the ongoing fuel crunch triggered by the US-Israel war on Iran.

A power division proposal, issued in early April and now awaiting cabinet approval, seeks to increase the bulk tariff by up to Tk 1.20 per unit from the current Tk 7.04.

The plan is in motion at a time when the national power deficit widened to 1,900MW yesterday afternoon, nearly double last week's shortfall, leaving large parts of the country under prolonged outages in the sweltering heat.

Regions including Khulna, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, and Cumilla have been facing prolonged and unannounced power cuts, making daily life increasingly unbearable, with households, hospitals, and businesses

According to a power division proposal – issued earlier this month and now awaiting cabinet approval – a Tk 0.50 hike in wholesale prices would cut subsidies by Tk 5,000 crore, a Tk 1 hike by Tk 10,000 crore, and a Tk 1.20 hike by Tk 12,500 crore.

struggling to cope.

In Noakhali, nearly 9.5 lakh consumers across nine upazilas are receiving only a fraction of the required supply.

Power officials say supply in some areas has fallen to less than half of demand due to reduced generation stemming from fuel shortages.

"In 24 hours, we get no more than five to six hours of electricity," said Poli Akhter, a resident of Chatkhil. "We only get 30 to 40 minutes of power before the next outage."

Students preparing for exams are struggling to study or sleep during prolonged outages, while hospitals are incurring additional costs to run generators.

In Khulna, demand stood at 1,800MW on Wednesday against supply of 1,500MW, leaving a deficit of 300MW, according to PDB. Residents yesterday reported outages every hour, even at night, with children, the elderly, and the sick suffering the most. In rural Dhaka, consumers of the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board faced a shortfall of up to 300MW.

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Motorcyclists are now required to use the "Fuel Pass" app to purchase octane at Trust Filling Station at Bijoy Sarani and Shonar Bangla Filling Station at Asad Gate. The photo was taken at the latter yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

World being ravaged by a 'handful of tyrants': pope

REUTERS, Bamenda

Pope Leo b l a s t e d leaders who spend billions on wars and said the world was "being ravaged by a handful of tyrants", in unusually forceful remarks in Cameroon yesterday, days after US President Donald Trump attacked

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Hope rises as Trump claims Lebanon truce

US-Iran talks focus on interim deal as progress reported on 'sticky issues'

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump yesterday announced that Lebanon and Israel had agreed on a 10-day ceasefire and said the next meeting between the United States and Iran may take place over the weekend, adding to optimism that the Iran war may be nearing an end.

Though there was no indication whether Iran-backed Hezbollah was on board.

Meanwhile, a key Pakistani mediator said US and Iranian officials are close to a

breakthrough on "sticky issues". However, Iran warned that the fate of its nuclear programme remains unresolved.

Two Iranian sources told Reuters that US and Iranian negotiators have scaled back ambitions for a comprehensive peace deal and are instead seeking a temporary memorandum to prevent a return to conflict.

A senior Iranian official said the two sides had started to narrow some gaps, including over how to manage the Strait of Hormuz.

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PM urges austerity amid global crisis

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday assured the country's people not to be worried about the global crisis caused by the US-Israel war on Iran and urged them to be frugal and avoid extravagance in state functions and family spending.

"Even amid the global war situation, we are trying to keep everything normal. Although fuel prices, including diesel, have increased in all countries across the world, the current government has not raised prices to avoid public suffering," he said.

Addressing the Independence Award-2026 ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital, the PM said the government is spending hundreds of crores of taka every day on subsidies in the fuel and energy sector to maintain stability and keep the situation normal.

He said the BNP-led government has started its journey amid a fragile

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