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Star BUSINESS

Budget to include support for every group

Finance minister says

SOHEL PARVEZ

The government will include provisions or support for every community in the budget for the fiscal year 2026-27 as part of its pledge to democratise the economy.

"Many groups appeared to have been excluded from past budgets. There were no programmes for them-- no support. We will address every group in this budget," said Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury.

He made the remarks in an interview with The Daily Star on the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank's annual general meeting in the first week of May in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Khosru, who previously served as commerce minister during the BNP's last tenure in power more than two decades ago, is now overseeing both the finance and planning ministries.

The current government's slogan is the democratisation of the economy. If the economy is to be democratised, every group must be included, and the benefits of the economy must reach their homes, he said.

"We are planning the budget with this in mind."

Khosru said the government had little

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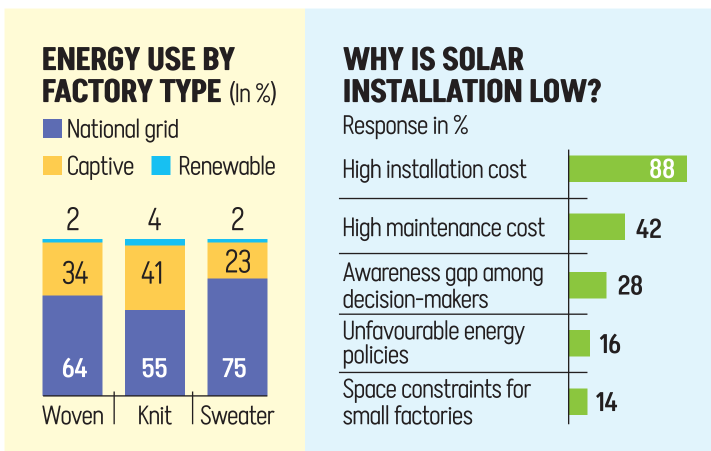
Garment sector far off renewable energy target

Finds new study on 2035 EU due diligence rules



SOURCE: MAPPED IN BANGLADESH

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Local garment factories remain far from meeting clean energy consumption targets, held back by high renewable energy costs, limited rooftop space and policy bottlenecks that are slowing adoption across the sector, according to a new study.

The findings come as global buyers tighten sustainability requirements and increase pressure on exporters to cut emissions across supply chains under the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD).

The directive, which came into effect last year, requires garment factories in Bangladesh to generate 35 percent of their power from renewable energy sources by 2035 for smooth Western exports.

On the ground, however, just 3 percent of electricity used by garment factories currently comes from renewable sources, according to the study.

It was prepared by Mapped in Bangladesh (MiB) of the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) at BRAC University after surveying 878 factories in Gazipur and Narayanganj.

The findings, presented at an event at Sheraton Dhaka yesterday, show that the apparel sector remains heavily dependent on conventional energy despite the 2035 deadline.

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Don't manipulate dollar rates

BB warns treasury heads as forward bookings surge

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has warned the treasury heads of commercial banks against manipulating the US dollar exchange rate in order to keep the foreign exchange market stable.

Governor Md Mostaqur Rahman issued the warning at a meeting with commercial bank treasury heads at BB headquarters yesterday, after a surge in forward dollar bookings by several banks affected the market and prompted the central bank to act, sources confirmed to The Daily Star.

Treasury heads of three private commercial banks, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the governor asked them for suggestions on how to stabilise the forex market and exchange rate.

According to them, the governor said the banking regulator does not want to intervene directly in the market and therefore asked banks to behave responsibly.

One of the treasury heads said BB officials raised questions about forward selling and asked banks to rationalise the practice, saying it contributes to volatility in the forex market.

The official also said it would be difficult to stop forward selling as it works like insurance.

Forward selling in the forex market involves entering into an over-the-counter contract to sell a specific amount of one currency for another at a predetermined exchange rate on a fixed future date. It allows businesses and investors to lock in exchange rates and eliminate currency risk.

The treasury heads also told the central bank that there is little scope for banks to manipulate the market, arguing that exchange houses and exporters are more likely to be responsible for volatility.

They also informed the governor that central bank officials had verbally instructed lenders not to increase the US dollar rate, which they described as a form of intervention.

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KEY POINTS

- BB warns against forex manipulation
- Meeting held over dollar booking concerns
- Banks say forward booking hard to stop
- Banks blame exchange houses, exporters
- BB keeps buying dollars to steady market

Listed firms face stricter governance rules

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Listed companies in Bangladesh may soon have to overhaul their boards under rules that would limit independent director tenures, bar executives from holding dual roles and give the securities regulator direct power to remove directors.

The changes have been proposed in the draft "Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (Corporate Governance) Rules, 2026" published by the commission for stakeholder feedback recently.

The draft, open for comments until May 31, would replace the existing corporate governance code with a more comprehensive rule-based framework, tightening oversight over board composition, executive appointments, subsidiary operations and documentation requirements.

INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS

Some of the major proposed changes relate to independent directors.

The draft states that an independent director can serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms, after which a three-year gap is required before reappointment.

The post of independent directors cannot remain vacant for more than 90 days, it also states.

The BSEC has also proposed giving itself direct authority to directly remove independent directors found to pose "a risk to the future of the company."

The commission may make a pool of eligible candidates for independent director positions, with remuneration governed by board-approved policy and specified in appointment letters, according to the draft.

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