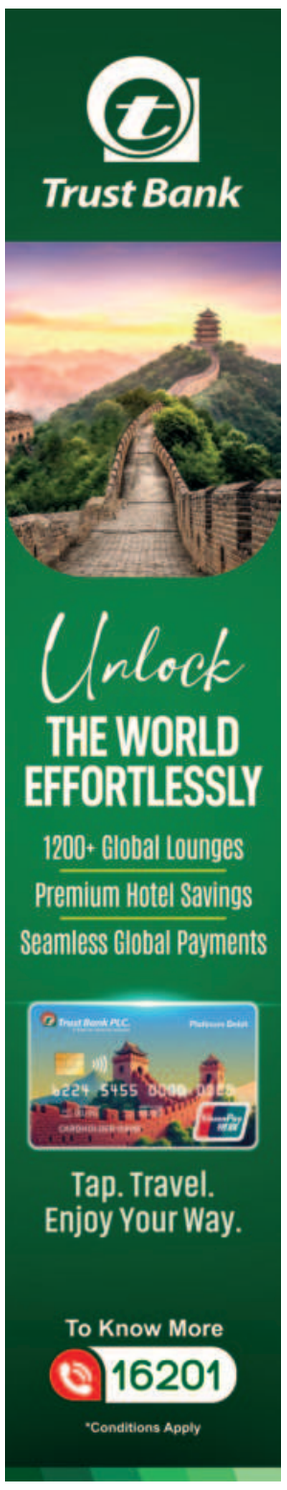
DHAKA MONDAY OCTOBER 12, 2026, ASHWIN 27, 1433 BS
starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Business



B4 BTRC SETS BASE PRICE FOR LOWER-BAND SPECTRUM





Mohammed Amirul Haque
President, LPG operators' assoc

"We cannot monitor every retail outlet. Local administrations, law enforcement agencies and consumer rights authorities must act against sellers charging above the government-set prices.



M Shamsul Alam
Energy adviser, CAB

"BERC should have used its formal dispute-resolution process. Failing to address such complaints leaves distributors caught between supplier prices and mandated retail rates.



Matheendra De Zoysa
COO, Omera LPG

"Consumers are paying 30-40 percent above BERC-approved prices, although we sell at the regulated rates. Operators have limited control over the final retail prices.



Abu Sayed Raza
CMO, Fresh LPG

"We sell cylinders to distributors at government-set rates; overcharging happens further down the supply chain. Only about 10 of 23 operators imported LPG last month.

Price discrepancy
- 12kg cylinder price up by Tk 252 to Tk 1,837 in Oct
- But retail consumers are paying Tk 2,300-Tk 2,500

Supply and market
- Registered operators around 28
- Importing LPG regularly: Only 6-10
- Monthly demand: 150,000-160,000 tonnes

Recommendations
- Order local administrations, law enforcers to curb retailer overcharging
- Let operators import more under long-term contracts
- Provide land in Moheshkhali for LPG terminal, make it open to multiple companies

BUSINESS AND BEYOND

Consumers paying the price for lax LPG monitoring

Private operators say they can't control retail prices; blame weak government supervision for overcharging and shortages

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Consumers are paying Tk 400 or more than the government-set rates for a cylinder of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), as weak market monitoring allows retailers to overcharge, according to local LPG operators.

Amid recent price hikes and supply shortages of cooking gas in the domestic market, private operators said they could neither monitor every retail outlet nor reasonably ensure that retailers are charging customers the approved prices. Instead, the government should direct local administrations and law enforcement agencies to crack down on overcharging, they said at a dialogue at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

Representatives of the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB) and the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) attended the event, titled "LPG Crisis, Price Volatility and Consumer Rights". It was the seventh episode in The Daily Star's "Business and Beyond" series.

In the first week of this month, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) raised the official price of a 12kg cylinder by Tk 252, from Tk 1,585 to Tk 1,837. But consumers in major cities are paying up to Tk 2,500 a cylinder, well above the government rate.

"It is not possible for operators to monitor every retail outlet across the country," said Mohammed Amirul Haque, president of the operators' association.

The latest increase in household energy costs comes as stubbornly high inflation has been eroding the purchasing power of low-income people for around four years. Global energy supply disruptions and price volatility caused by the conflict in the Middle East have added to the pressure.

READ MORE ON B3



Foreign debt rises to $114.98b

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's foreign debt grew by 3.65 percent from the previous quarter to reach $114.98 billion at the end of the April-June quarter of fiscal year 2026, according to central bank data.

At the end of the final quarter, public sector foreign debt increased by $4.19 billion to hit $95.10 billion. In contrast, private sector foreign debt declined by $140 million to stand at $19.89 billion.

Earlier, public sector foreign debt had experienced a downward trend, sliding from $93.74 billion in June of the previous year to $90.91 billion by the end of March.

READ MORE ON B3

SPOTLIGHT

Walton to expand in Kenya

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Walton Hi-Tech Industries is set to expand its market presence in Kenya through a partnership with Nairobi-based North Light Holdings.

The two companies have signed a memorandum of understanding to that end, according to a disclosure published on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) website yesterday.

Under the deal, the two companies will collaborate to sell, market and promote Walton products in the African country and provide customer care services.

READ MORE ON B3

Net FDI inflows drop 28% in first half of 2026

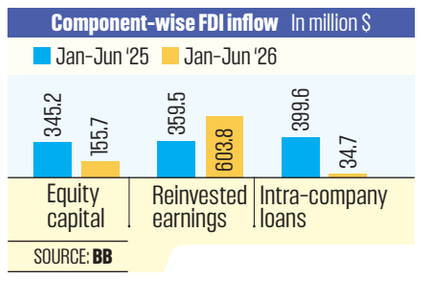
STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh recorded a sharp decline in net foreign investment inflows in the first half of 2026 as fresh equity inflows from international investors slumped, raising concerns.

During January-June this year, net foreign investment declined 28 percent year on year, from over $1,100 million to roughly $795 million, according to the latest Bangladesh Bank (BB) data.

Abdur Razzaque, chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID), said Bangladesh had struggled for many years to attract FDI at a scale proportionate to the size of its economy.

"A sizeable further decline from an already low base is therefore particularly concerning," he said.



In 2025, FDI inflows into Bangladesh rose 45 percent year on year to $1.78 billion, ending two consecutive years of decline, according to a report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released in July.

READ MORE ON B3

Marubeni eyes new investments in Bangladesh

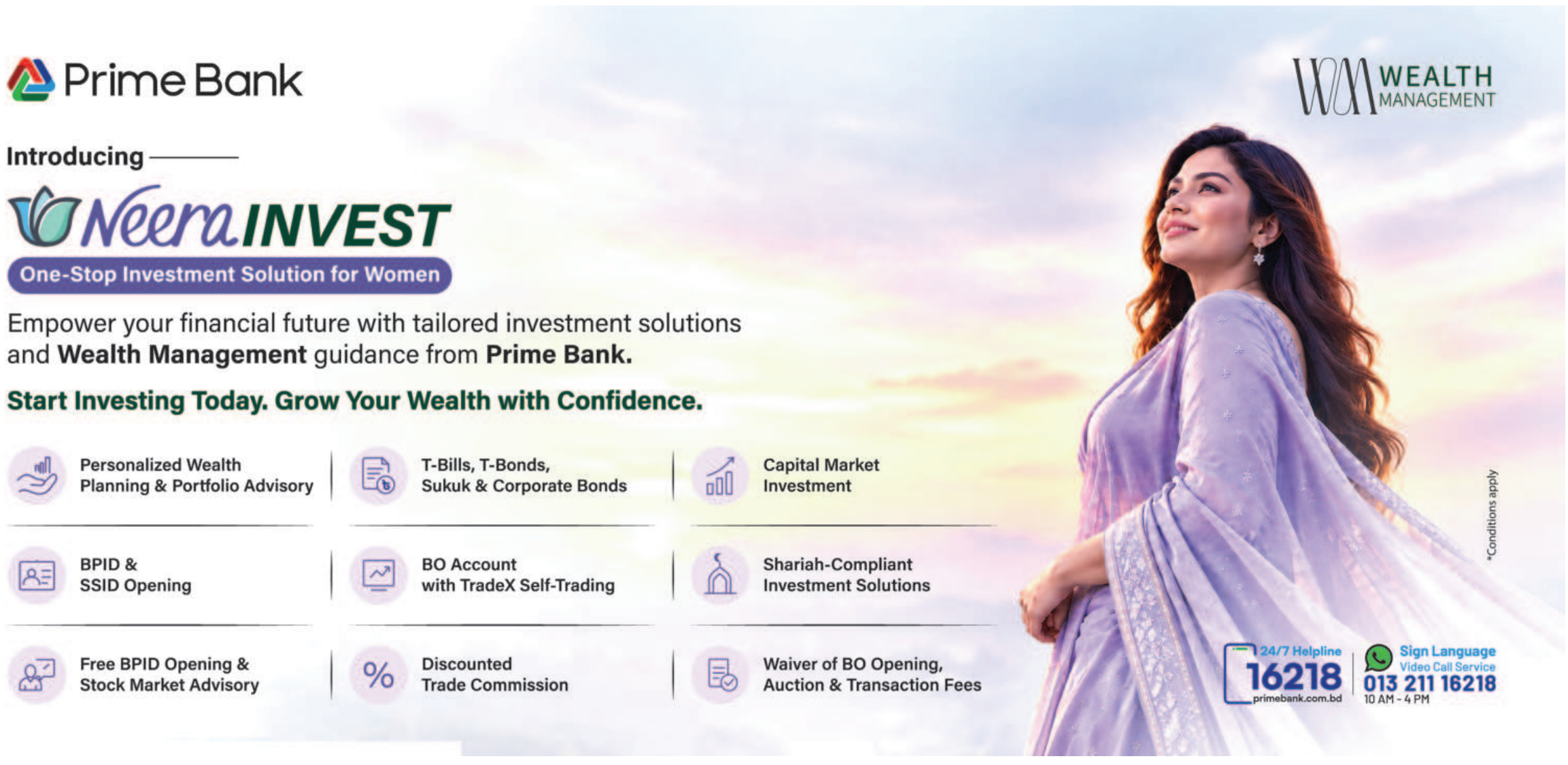
STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Japanese conglomerate Marubeni Corporation is interested in expanding its existing investments in Bangladesh and entering new industrial sectors, including fertiliser production, information technology and ship recycling.

The corporation also sees opportunities to modernise the Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company (KAFCO), improve natural gas efficiency and increase fertiliser production capacity. The Japanese trading group is an equity investor in KAFCO.

Marubeni President and CEO Masayuki Omoto discussed the investment opportunities at a meeting with Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir at

READ MORE ON B3



Govt, European bank to invest €250m in women's healthcare



Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain, minister for health and family welfare, and Ziauddin Hyder, special adviser to the prime minister on health, pose for a photograph at the meeting, titled "Women's Health and Enhancing Healthcare Resilience", held at the Bangladesh Embassy in Berlin, Germany on Saturday. PHOTO: PID

BSS, *Dhaka*

The government of Bangladesh and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have taken an initiative to invest €250 million to improve women's health and strengthen the country's healthcare system.

Under the programme, named the "Women's Health Initiative", healthcare services will be expanded to around 47 million women and adolescent girls from 2027 to 2031, said a press release issued on Saturday.

The initiative was unveiled at a meeting, titled "Women's Health and Enhancing Healthcare Resilience", held at the Bangladesh Embassy in Berlin, Germany, on the occasion of the World Health Summit (WHS) 2026.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain and Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Health Ziauddin Hyder led the Bangladesh delegation at the meeting.

The programme will improve maternal and newborn healthcare, treatment for cervical and breast cancer, and emergency obstetric services. It will also strengthen primary healthcare, district hospitals, patient transfer and referral systems, and critical care services.

The initiative will also support preparedness for future pandemics and other health emergencies.

During the meeting, Sakhawat said protecting the health of women and adolescent girls was extremely important for Bangladesh's future.

"The government is working to ensure quality healthcare for all by prioritising disease prevention. Partnership with the European Investment Bank and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will play an important role in achieving this goal," the health minister added.

Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Health Ziauddin said the investment would play an important role in transforming the healthcare system from a treatment-oriented model to one focused on disease prevention and health promotion.

EIB Vice-President Marek Mora said investing in women's health meant investing in stronger families, more resilient communities and sustainable economic development.

UNFPA and its innovative programme, "WomenX Collective", supported the development of the initiative and will also provide technical assistance during its implementation.

UNFPA Executive Director Diene Keita said the initiative was important in addressing the long-standing funding gap in women's health.

"It will make it possible to bring lasting improvements in healthcare for millions of women and adolescent girls," Keita said.

According to the release, as part of health-sector reforms, the government of Bangladesh has pledged to gradually increase public expenditure on health from 1 percent to 5 percent of GDP.

Bank Asia holds cybersecurity awareness training for employees

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bank Asia PLC has organised a daylong training programme to raise cybersecurity awareness among its employees and enhance their skills in protecting the bank's digital assets in observance of "National Cybersecurity Awareness Month".

Md Sabbir Hossain, additional managing director of Bank Asia PLC, inaugurated the programme at the Bank Asia Institute for Training and Development (BAITD) in Lalmatia, Dhaka on Saturday, according to a press release.

SM Tofayel Ahmad, additional director (ICT) of Bangladesh Bank, conducted the training session.

The session covered key aspects of cybersecurity governance, regulatory expectations, management responsibilities, cybersecurity risks and threats, employee responsibilities, and good security practices.

Team leaders at different levels, including the heads of various departments and branches of the bank, attended the programme in person, while other employees participated online.



Md Sabbir Hossain, additional managing director of Bank Asia PLC, poses for a photograph with participants of the cybersecurity awareness training programme at the Bank Asia Institute for Training and Development in Lalmatia, Dhaka on Saturday. PHOTO: BANK ASIA

ICMAB, UAE firm tie up to boost accountants' global careers



Mohsena Khanom, founder and CEO of the UAE-based global advisory firm de tempête, and Md Kausar Alam, president of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh, pose for a photograph after signing a memorandum of understanding in Dhaka recently. PHOTO: ICMAB

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh (ICMAB) has signed a three-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) with de tempête, a global accounting BPO and business growth advisory firm based in the UAE, to support international career opportunities for ICMAB members, affiliates and students, particularly in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets.

The collaboration aims to bridge the gap between professional education and international workplace requirements through career counselling, market-focused training, professional development and recruitment coordination, according to a press release.

Md Kausar Alam, president of ICMAB, and Mohsena Khanom, founder and CEO of the global advisory firm, signed the MoU in Dhaka recently.

Commenting on the partnership, Kausar said, "Preparing our members, affiliates and students for international careers requires strong technical foundations and an understanding of target markets."

"This collaboration will provide practical learning, professional exposure and career guidance to help them pursue opportunities in the Gulf with greater confidence," he added.

At the event, Mohsena said the initiative would help Bangladesh's accounting professionals translate their expertise into international career readiness through practical training, local insight and professional connections.

Planned initiatives include workshops, webinars and country-specific courses on taxation, value-added tax (VAT), anti-money laundering (AML), compliance, accounting and financial reporting.

Citizens Bank organises quarterly business review meeting

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Citizens Bank PLC recently held its "Quarterly Business Review Meeting for September 2026" at its head office in Motijheel, Dhaka to review business performance during the third quarter of 2026.

The bank also formulated strategies to address emerging business challenges and achieve its targets for the remaining months of the year. Alamgir Hossain, managing director of the bank, presided over the meeting, according to a press release.

The session featured a comprehensive review of the bank's business performance, highlighting key achievements, identifying areas for improvement and assessing progress towards its strategic objectives.

The participants held detailed discussions on the prevailing macroeconomic situation, emerging challenges and their potential implications for the banking sector.

Emphasis was placed on adopting proactive business strategies, strengthening risk management practices and enhancing operational efficiency to navigate the evolving economic landscape.

Particular attention was given to expanding business in the SME, agriculture and other priority sectors, recognising their vital role in promoting inclusive economic development and contributing to the country's overall economic growth.



Alamgir Hossain, managing director of Citizens Bank PLC, poses for a group photograph with participants of the bank's "Quarterly Business Review Meeting for September 2026" at its head office in Motijheel, Dhaka recently. PHOTO: CITIZENS BANK

Meghna Bank launches 'Bangla QR' payment service

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Meghna Bank PLC has launched its "Bangla QR" payment service through MeghnaPay, marking another step towards expanding integrated digital payment facilities and contributing to the vision of a cashless Bangladesh.

Syed Mizanur Rahman, managing director of the bank, inaugurated the service at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

With this service, Meghna Bank customers can make payments through the MeghnaPay app by scanning any merchant's "Bangla QR" code, allowing them to pay for goods and services directly from their smartphones.

Md Sadiqur Rahman, additional managing director of the bank, and Momtazul Karim N Ahmed, deputy managing director, along with other senior officials, were also present at the launching ceremony.



PHOTO: MEGHNA BANK

Syed Mizanur Rahman, managing director of Meghna Bank PLC, poses for a photograph after inaugurating the "Bangla QR" payment service at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RHD
NAOGAON ROAD DIVISION, NAOGAON.
☎ : +88-02588881693, E-mail: rhdnaogaon@gmail.com/eenao@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. NRD. 35.01.6400.449.0000.07.001.26-2321 Dated: 11-10-2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders is invited in the National e-GP System portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the below works.

Tender Name & ID No.	Name of Work	Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Security Submission Date & Amount	Opening Date & Time	Remarks
ID No: 1350586 15/e-GP/OTM/NONRB/ 26-27	Necessary Repair of Executive Engineer Office, Sub-Divisional Engineer's Office and Inspection Banglow (IB) Naogaon under Road Division Naogaon, During the year 2026- 2027.	25-Oct-2026 17:00	26-Oct-2026 12:30 & Tk. 100000.00	26-Oct-2026 13:00	Please follow the TDS and PCC.

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (http:/www.eprocure.gov.bd).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank Branches up to above Mentioned date & time.

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

11.10.26
(Abul Monsur Ahmed)
ID No. 602288
Executive Engineer(C.C), RHD
Road Division, Naogaon.

GD-2471

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Office of the Superintendent of Police
District: Chuadanga

Memo No-3114/E Date- 10/10/2026.

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Works, NCT) (OTM)
e-Tender Notice: 03/2026-2027

e-tender is invited in the national e-GP portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works.

SL. No	Tender ID No	Name of Work	Type, Method	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing Date and Time
1.	1346317	Installation of 907 feet of barbed wire within the 2407 feet of the police lines boundary wall of Chuadanga district and painting of the entire boundary wall including 1000 feet of plaster.	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
2.	1346311	Work on the Bishnapur temporary police camp under Damurhuda police station in Chuadanga district (canteen, washroom-toilet tiles, replacement of the barracks roof with industrial sheets and ceiling replacement, civil sanitary, electrical and painting).	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
3.	1346308	Work on the Osmanpur temporary police camp (dining room window grills, corridor and detention room ceilings) (civil sanitary, electrical and painting) under Alamdanga police station in Chuadanga district.	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
4.	1346289	Civil, sanitary and painting work (including kitchen, washroom and toilet tiles) of Panchkamalapur temporary police camp under Alamdanga police station in Chuadanga district (including changing the kitchen roof with industrial sheets and changing the ceiling of the barracks).	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
5.	1346284	Construction of Kutubpur temporary police camp (including canteen, washroom-toilet tiles) (civil sanitary, electrical and painting) under Sadar police station of Chuadanga district.	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
6.	1346274	Work on the women's barracks (Aparajita) inside the Police Lines (plaster, civil sanitary, electrical and painting).	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
7.	1346232	Work on the construction of the Constable Quarter (Nabganga) (ground floor glass, floor tiles, stair railing repair, interior and exterior plaster and painting) within the Police Lines of Chuadanga District.	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00
8.	1346225	Floor tiling, plastering and painting work of the deal shed inside the Police Lines in Chuadanga district.	NCT, OTM	25 Oct 2026 17:00	26 Oct 2026 12:00

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 natiomal e-GP system portal (https://www.rprocure.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 banks branches.
Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

09.10.26
Mehedi Saharyar
BP-8210126912
Superintendent Of Police
Chuadanga District
Tel-02477788764
E-mail:spchuadanga@police.gov.bd

GD-2467

Olympic recommends 35% dividend

Plans Tk 3.38cr land purchase for expansion

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Olympic Industries has recommended a higher dividend even though its earnings fell marginally to Tk 199 crore during the financial year 2025-26 ended on June 30.

The leading biscuits and confectionery maker said it would pay a 35 percent cash dividend to its shareholders for the financial year 2025-26, higher than the 30 percent paid a year earlier, according to a price-sensitive disclosure.

Olympic's earnings per share (EPS) declined marginally to Tk 10 for the year, against Tk 10.06 a year earlier.

The company, which has been buying land in recent years, said it would buy a total of 138 decimals of land in Narayanganj for Tk 3.38 crore to develop facilities to accommodate the future expansion of its operations.

Olympic said its revenue rose by more than 6 percent year on year to Tk 2,955 crore in the financial year 2025-26.

Shares of the company rose 1.26 percent to Tk 141.30 as of 1:27pm yesterday on the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Sponsors and directors held 37.38 percent of Olympic Industries' shares as of September 30, 2026, while institutional and foreign investors held the remaining shares, according to data from the DSE.



Mohammad Nayeem Akhtar, chief operating officer of Turaag Active, and Md Jafar Sadeq, deputy managing director of Shahjalal Islami Bank PLC, pose for a photograph after signing the agreement at the bank's corporate head office in Dhaka yesterday. PHOTO: SHAHJALAL ISLAMI BANK

Shahjalal Islami Bank cardholders to get discounts on Turaag products

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Shahjalal Islami Bank PLC yesterday signed an agreement with Turaag Active, a performance and lifestyle activewear brand in Bangladesh, to offer discounts on Turaag Active products.

Md Jafar Sadeq, deputy managing director of the bank, and Mohammad Nayeem Akhtar, chief operating officer of the activewear brand, signed the agreement at the bank's corporate head office in Dhaka, according to a press release.

Under the agreement, Shahjalal Islami Bank's Visa debit and credit cardholders will be entitled to a 20 percent discount on purchases from Turaag Active.

AKM Hasan Rahim, head of the human resources division of the bank; Md Khirkil Nowaz, head of retail business; SM Mohiuddin, head of the retail investment department; Md Riad Hossain, head of the cards division; and Md Shafiul Islam, assistant vice-president of the cards division, attended the event.

KM Harunur Rashid, head of public relations and bank foundation, and Mohammad Monsur Rouf, chief operating officer of Wave Riders Ltd, along with senior officials of both organisations, were also present at the signing ceremony.

Consumers

FROM PAGE B1

Amirul said local administrations, law enforcement agencies and consumer rights authorities should take action against retailers charging more than the government-approved prices.

Explaining the operators' role in the supply chain, he said they are responsible for importing, bottling and marketing LPG.

"Many small retailers do not require licences to sell limited quantities of LPG cylinders. So, it is difficult for operators to monitor their activities," he said.

Amirul added that LOAB issued a press release in September warning operators, distributors and retailers against hoarding and price manipulation. He urged the authorities to take legal action against anyone found selling LPG above the approved prices.

At the discussion, the participants cited several reasons for the supply crunch, including volatility in international markets, the limited number of active importers, restrictions on import volumes and, more recently, the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation's decision to import LPG itself.

Amirul, however, said there have been no updates on the BPC imports after its announcement.

Abu Sayed Raza, chief marketing officer of Fresh LPG, said operators are selling cylinders to distributors at government-approved rates, but overcharging is occurring further down the supply chain.

He questioned whether the margins set for distributors and retailers, at Tk 50 and Tk 100 respectively for a 12kg cylinder, are sufficient to cover their operating costs. However, he said this does not justify charging consumers above the approved price.

Abu Sayed said only around 10 of Bangladesh's 23 LPG operators imported the fuel in the previous month, leaving much of the country's storage capacity unused.

Bangladesh has storage capacity of about 178,000 tonnes, against estimated monthly demand of 150,000-160,000 tonnes, he added.

He attributed the decline in imports to inactive operators, saying years of price competition have weakened some companies' ability to continue importing LPG. With fewer companies bringing in cargoes, the sector's storage and bottling capacity may remain underused even as consumers struggle to find cylinders at regulated prices.

Stevan Matheendra De Zoysa, chief operating officer of Omera LPG, said only six to eight of the country's 27-28 registered operators have imported cargoes in recent months because geopolitical disruptions have made supplies harder to secure.

"Consumers are paying 30-40 percent above BERC-approved prices, although Omera is selling at the regulated rate," he said. "Operators have limited control over the final retail price."

The shortage of liquefied natural gas (LNG) has also increased demand for LPG in industry recently, with consumption rising from around 15,000-16,000 tonnes a few months ago to 30,000-32,000 tonnes, Zoysa said.

He said the shift by industries to LPG, along with higher autogas consumption, had pushed up demand, while import volumes have not increased at the same pace.

Matheendra added that, apart from regular importers, most registered operators have lost the capacity to import LPG, further affecting supplies.

Meanwhile, LOAB President Amirul said volatility in international markets and disruptions to supply routes have made it harder to secure cargoes at predictable prices.

He urged the government to allow operators to increase import volumes so they could secure long-term supply contracts instead of relying on the more expensive spot market.

Some operators are paying premiums of around $320 per tonne in the spot market, compared with about $95 under long-term arrangements, Amirul said.

He said operators sought permission to increase their import volumes under the interim government but faced restrictions that prevented them from committing to longer-term purchases.

The operators have also called for land at Moheshkhali to develop terminals, saying that greater storage and import capacity would improve supply security. Amirul urged the government to make such facilities available to multiple companies rather than concentrate the infrastructure in the hands of a single operator.

The industry's explanation of supply constraints and retail overcharging drew criticism from M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser to CAB, who questioned BERC's role in setting prices and addressing complaints.

Shamsul said BERC should have investigated the complaints through its formal dispute-resolution process rather than allowing the dispute to deepen.

He argued that failing to address such complaints leaves distributors caught between the prices charged by suppliers and the rates they are expected to maintain at the retail level.

He also alleged that a handful of companies dominated LPG imports. Citing a report submitted to the government, he said it has reportedly identified five firms as major suppliers and called for an investigation into possible supply restrictions.

Arun Devnath, deputy editor of The Daily Star, moderated the event. The newspaper's consulting editor, Kamal Ahmed, was also present.

Foreign debt

FROM PAGE B1

This earlier reduction was primarily attributed to sluggish implementation of foreign-funded development projects.

However, the public sector debt stock rebounded significantly after the government secured nearly $3 billion in crucial budget support from multilateral and bilateral development partners, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to navigate the economic fallout from the Middle East conflict.

Meanwhile, the contraction in private sector foreign debt was driven by reductions in short-term loans, buyer's credit and trade credit.

Marubeni eyes

FROM PAGE B1

the commerce ministry office in Dhaka yesterday, according to a press ministry statement.

Omoto also expressed interest in new investments and technological cooperation in the production of diammonium phosphate (DAP) and triple superphosphate (TSP) fertilisers.

Highlighting Bangladesh's potential in the information technology sector, he noted that hundreds of Bangladeshi engineers employed by Bangladesh Japan Information Technology (BJIT), a joint investment venture, were providing services to international markets, including Japan.

He said there were further opportunities to expand cooperation in artificial intelligence and IT offshoring.

The discussions also covered investment in modern, environmentally friendly technologies for the ship recycling industry, a proposal for Toyota vehicle manufacturing and ensuring an uninterrupted electricity supply to economic zones.

Small modular reactor (SMR) technology was also discussed as a potential option for ensuring long-term energy security, the ministry statement said.

Muktadir said the government was prioritising the simplification of company registration, trade licensing and investment approval procedures. It was also working to ensure that foreign investors could repatriate profits and capital.

He assured that Japanese companies looking to expand their investments in Bangladesh would receive the necessary government support.

The minister said Japanese technology, expertise and investment could play a significant role in developing Bangladesh's manufacturing industries.

There were opportunities to expand joint ventures in shipbuilding and ship recycling, automobiles, agro-based industries and high-technology sectors, he said, adding that the government was advancing necessary reforms to facilitate investment in these areas.

He also said efforts were underway to move the jute industry beyond conventional products towards diversified, higher-value goods. Priorities included developing new products by blending jute fibres with cotton, viscose and polyester, improving seeds and expanding research activities.

Both sides also discussed the importance of deepening Bangladesh-Japan economic relations, capitalising on the potential benefits of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the two countries, and expanding long-term partnerships in industry and technology.

Marubeni, one of Japan's major general trading companies, operates across sectors ranging from food and agriculture to energy, infrastructure and technology. The group reported revenue of ¥7.79 trillion in the fiscal year ended March 2025 and employed more than 52,000 people worldwide, according to its Integrated Report 2025 and financial results.

In Bangladesh, Marubeni has a business and capital alliance with local IT service company BJIT Group. Under the alliance announced in April 2023, Marubeni invested in BJIT Ltd, the group's core company, and BJIT Global Pte Ltd, which manages overseas sales, to expand offshore digital transformation services, according to a Marubeni announcement.

Marubeni has also installed about 1,300 megawatts of gas-fired and hydropower plants in Bangladesh and supplied the entire railway system for Dhaka Metro Rail's MRT Line 6, according to a company statement issued in April 2023.

বাংলাদেশ অভ্যন্তরীণ নৌপরিবহন কর্তৃপক্ষ
BANGLADESH INLAND WATER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
www.biwta.gov.bd

বি,আই,ডব্লিউ,টি,এ ভবন
১৪১-১৪৩, মতিঝিল বা/এ
পোস্ট বক্স ৭৬, ঢাকা-১০০০

BIWTA BHABAN
141-143, MOTIJHEEL C/A
POST BOX 76, DHAKA-1000

Record No.: 18.11.0000.311.14.163.2026-665 Date: 07-Oct-2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders have been invited in the national e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following goods:

Sl. No.	Tender Name	Tender ID No.	Last selling date & time
01	Procurement of 05 (five) Nos. 20-inch Cutter Suction Dredgers and Ancillary Vessels with Other Accessories	1346529	22-Nov-2026 16:00
02	Procurement of 04 (four) Nos. 18-inch Cutter Suction Dredgers and Ancillary Vessels with Other Accessories	1346578	22-Nov-2026 16:00

These are e-GP tenders, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the national e-GP system portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (www.eprocure.gov.bd).

07-10-2026
(Md. Moznu Miah)
Addl. Chief Engineer (Marine)
Dredging Department, BIWTA
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

GD-2468

Net FDI

FROM PAGE B1

However, the latest BB data showed that net equity capital inflows dipped 55 percent, from $345 million in the first half of 2025 to $155 million in the same period this year.

During the same period, net intra-company loans plunged 91 percent year on year, while reinvested earnings by firms operating in Bangladesh rose 68 percent.

Razzaque said the weakness in equity capital inflows was particularly serious.

"Equity investment represents a clearer commitment of fresh capital to new or expanding business activity. Its sharp decline suggests that fewer investors are currently prepared to make substantial new commitments in Bangladesh," he said.

In his view, investor confidence was being affected by both domestic and global conditions.

"In an unusually uncertain environment, with geopolitical tensions, trade disruptions and weaker global growth prospects, investors are more cautious. In such circumstances, attracting new funds in relatively less-established investment destinations such as Bangladesh is extremely difficult," Razzaque said.

"At the same time, our own macroeconomic strains, persistent energy shortages and wider business-environment difficulties are hardly sending reassuring signals to prospective investors."

The RAPID chief said the near-term outlook looked discouraging given these trends.

"Unless there is a noticeable turnaround in the remaining months, 2026 appears likely to be another disappointing year for Bangladesh's efforts to attract FDI."

Walton

FROM PAGE B1

North Light Holdings is a private company with its registered office in Nairobi, the disclosure said.

Walton shares were unchanged at Tk 331.10 as of 1:30pm yesterday on the DSE floor.

The listed manufacturer of electrical and electronic products reported a net profit of Tk 1,124 crore for FY2025-26, up 8.5 percent year-on-year, according to its financial statements. The increase was mainly driven by a sharp fall in bank interest expenses.

According to DSE data, sponsors and directors held 71.09 percent of Walton's shares as of September 30, 2026, while institutional investors, foreign investors and the public held the remainder.

The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Office of the Commanding Officer
Special Response Battalion-2
Bosila, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207

Invitation For e-Tender

For financial year 2026-2027, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of :

SL	Tender ID No & Reference No	Description of goods	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1.	1350758 SRB-2/2026-27/Qtr-2/Dal	Local Moshur Dal	22 Oct 2026 09:00	22 Oct 2026 12:00
2.	1350480 SRB-2/2026-27/Qtr-2/Oil	Edible Oil (Soyabean Oil)	22 Oct 2026 09:00	22 Oct 2026 12:00

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 (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 branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). Tender having clarity requirements are requested to contact at 01777710205 (Assistant Director, QM, SRB-2).

NAIMUL HASSAN
Additional DIG,
Commanding Officer,
SRB-2, Bosila, Mohammadpur, Dhaka,
Tel : 02-41022060

GD-2473

BTRC sets base price for lower-band spectrum

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has proposed a base price of Tk 214 crore per MHz for a block of E-GSM spectrum with limited interference, a lower-frequency band that helps mobile operators extend network coverage and improve indoor connectivity.

It has also proposed a price of Tk 178 crore per MHz for another block with higher interference.

The telecom regulator has decided to seek government approval for the proposed prices before holding the auction, which it intends to conduct this year.

For customers, the additional spectrum could improve network coverage and capacity, particularly in areas where mobile networks face congestion or coverage gaps. It could also support more reliable mobile internet services as operators deploy additional capacity.

A total of 8.4MHz of E-GSM spectrum will be up for auction.

According to BTRC documents, the 3.4MHz block with limited interference has a proposed base price of Tk 214 crore per MHz for 15 years, down 10 per cent from the benchmark price of Tk 237 crore.

The other 5MHz block, which faces higher interference from neighbouring India, has been priced at Tk 178 crore per MHz, a 25 per cent reduction from the same benchmark.

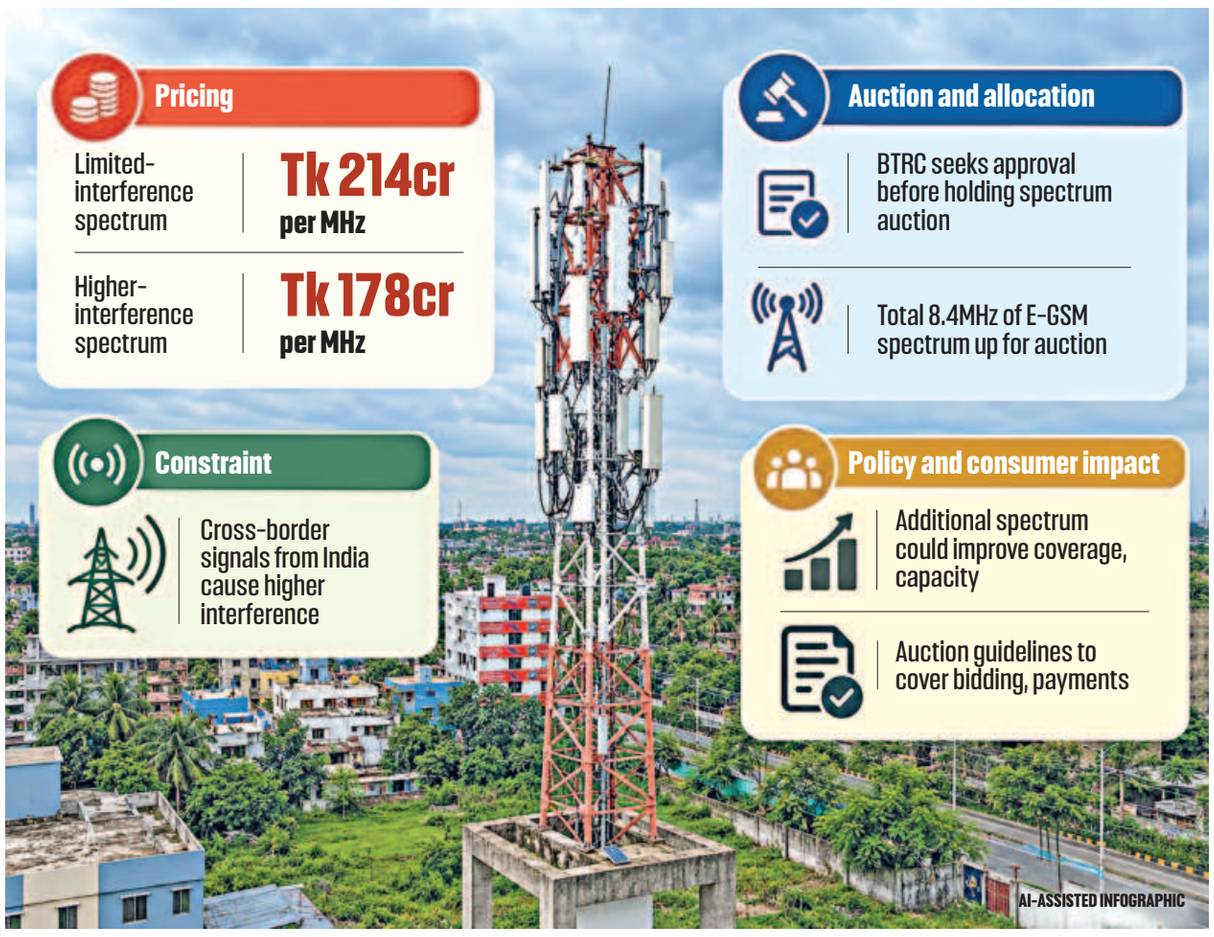
The commission has also formed a committee to prepare auction guidelines covering the bidding process, bid increments, spectrum tenure, payment arrangements, application processing fees, bid earnest money and annual spectrum charges.

The pricing decision comes as the telecom regulator seeks to make additional lower-band spectrum available to mobile operators to improve network quality and expand coverage, particularly in remote areas.

The proposed rates reflect differences in interference levels and the limited period for which the spectrum would be available. Both blocks are expected to be allocated only until 2030.

After 2030, spectrum allocation from this band would shift to the 850MHz band in coordination with neighbouring countries to achieve a lasting resolution.

The 3.4MHz block covers the paired frequency ranges of 885–888.4MHz and 930–933.4MHz. The 5MHz block covers 880–885MHz and 925–930MHz.



According to the BTRC, the latter block experiences significantly higher interference across substantial parts of the country because of cross-border signals from India. As a result, it cannot be used as effectively nationwide as the other block.

The regulator believes the proposed discounts would account for these technical limitations and the short allocation period while ensuring that the spectrum benefits consumers and generates revenue for the government.

The pricing proposal follows consultations among the BTRC, the Posts and Telecommunications Division and the Finance Division of the Ministry of Finance.

In a letter dated September 7, the Posts and Telecommunications Division asked the BTRC to proceed with the auction in line with the Finance Division's opinion, as well as recommendations from the Spectrum Management Committee and applicable laws, regulations and guidelines. The division also instructed the regulator to obtain government approval wherever required.

The Finance Division said determining the base price of spectrum for auction falls within the BTRC's statutory management process under the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulation Act, 2001, and does not constitute the fixing of rates, charges, tariffs or fees that would require its consent on that basis.

Since the actual spectrum price would be determined through competitive bidding, the Finance Division had no objection to the BTRC addressing technical interference issues in accordance with applicable standards recommended by the International Telecommunication Union.

"The Finance Division and the Posts and Telecommunications Ministry have already opined that setting spectrum prices falls within BTRC's jurisdiction. Despite that, we have decided to seek government approval, specifying the proposed price for the spectrum," said BTRC Chairman Major General (retd) Md Emdad Ul Bari.

Of the 10MHz E-GSM band under consideration, 1.6MHz has already been allocated to Robi Axiata PLC, according to BTRC documents. The regulator is now preparing to auction the remaining 8.4MHz.

The Spectrum Management Committee recommended auctioning the available spectrum after finding that multiple operators had expressed interest in the same blocks.

The BTRC has argued that additional lower-band spectrum is urgently needed to improve mobile network quality and expand coverage.

The commission has also formed a committee comprising officials from its spectrum management, legal, engineering and finance-related departments to prepare the auction guidelines.

Airlines business and procurement of aircraft

AF NESARUDDIN

Operating an airline is not just a business or a service; it also represents a country as its flag carrier. Over the past several years, Bangladesh has seen significant growth in air traffic, exports and per capita income, which is now close to $3,000. Non-resident Bangladeshi passengers account for a significant share of this traffic. Many reputed international airlines operate successfully in Bangladesh, some with more than one daily flight, alongside cargo services.

The airline business is highly technical, risky, complex and globally competitive. It is capital-intensive, with many factors, including fuel prices and airport charges in different countries, beyond an airline's control. Many airlines worldwide operate at a loss, and bankruptcies are common among private operators. Some rely on government subsidies because air services are integral to economic activity. Passenger and cargo operations require different strategies, while reputation and efficiency are vital to attracting passengers and cargo customers.

Much of the business that Bangladesh could capture goes to others because of our weaknesses. Given its geographical and strategic advantages, Bangladesh could become an airline hub, following the examples of Singapore, Dubai and Turkey, and generate additional revenue.

A feasibility study and a realistic business plan are essential for any business, and airlines are no exception. Fleet size is a crucial factor in an airline's viability. Usually, 20 percent to 25 percent of aircraft remain out of operation for regular maintenance. Since fixed costs, including overheads, remain constant, determining the number, capacity and quality of aircraft requires careful consideration. Ultimately, a sizeable fleet is necessary to minimise operational disruptions and manage crises before they damage passenger confidence and the airline's reputation.



A feasibility study, a realistic business plan, proper technical assessment, risk evaluation, sound financing, good governance and competent management are essential for aircraft procurement.

Aircraft selection, particularly in terms of capacity and category, is equally important. It should reflect country-specific requirements, including routes, passenger mix, demand and funding availability. Risks associated with aircraft must also be properly assessed and mitigated. Contractual terms, including post-delivery services, require careful evaluation to ensure aircraft can operate smoothly throughout their estimated useful lives, if not longer.

Financing under a well-designed business plan is fundamental, particularly in a country facing challenges in managing funds, financing and the payment and repayment of foreign loans, where applicable.

Public concern and frustration cannot be overlooked. Bangladesh has witnessed the siphoning off of huge sums of money from public procurement, particularly in mega projects, under the previous government. White papers on the matter were published in 2024. Past experience points to a lack of transparency and good governance, inefficient deal-making and decisions sometimes driven by ulterior motives rather than professional scepticism. Public procurement rules must be followed without compromise. All transactions must be conducted at arm's length, with full transparency, accountability and compliance, leaving no scope for corruption.

There is no doubt that Bangladesh needs to procure more aircraft to give Biman a sizeable fleet. At the same time, it must ensure satisfactory due diligence, a convincing feasibility study, a realistic business plan, proper technical assessments, risk evaluation, funding that matches inward remittances and domestic resources, an effective marketing and branding strategy, good governance and competent management.

Modernising airports, improving immigration procedures, speeding up passenger and baggage transfers, providing spacious lounges across classes, expanding food options and duty-free shopping, and ensuring efficient overall management are prerequisites for establishing Bangladesh as an aviation hub in South Asia. With these measures in place, the country could enter a new era of aviation and fulfil its ambition.

The writer is a senior partner of Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co and past president of ICAB

US consumer sentiment dips as cost worries mount: survey

AFP, *Washington*

US consumer sentiment ticked down in October, survey data showed Friday, with sharp declines seen among those with lower incomes as cost of living worries in the world's largest economy soar.

The University of Michigan's consumer sentiment index stood at 46.3 this month, down from 48.1 in September.

While this marked just a small monthly dip, the preliminary report flagged that "sentiment for lower-income consumers and those with smaller stock portfolios dropped steeply."

Survey director Joanne Hsu added that those groups have fewer resources to withstand price hikes.

"Frustration over cost-of-living continues to mount, as consumers across the political spectrum believe that the trajectory of the economy has weakened since the beginning of the year," she said.

October's consumer sentiment reading was 13.6 percent below the same period last year.

Meanwhile, expectations of inflation ticked up, bolstered by rising costs due to war in the Middle East.

Year-ahead inflation expectations rose from 4.6 percent to 4.7 percent this month, Hsu said.

This is substantially higher than the 3.4 percent reported in February, before US-Israel attacks targeting Iran sparked Tehran's blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, sending energy costs rocketing.

Prices at US gasoline pumps have since surged, with steeper costs cascading through the US economy.

Trump's trade wars sting US manufacturers ahead of midterm elections

AFP, *North Jackson*

For Doug Rende, who runs an aluminum product manufacturer in the US state of Ohio, President Donald Trump's tariffs have meant millions of dollars more in annual costs -- and recently, the Iran war has made shipments even more expensive.

Rende is chief executive at Shapes Unlimited, one of many American producers smarting from Trump's economic policies as midterm elections approach.

"Frustrating would be one word," Rende told AFP.

"And I think that we're sensing a lack of trust in not only the administration but the governmental process, the role of Congress to rein in executive power," he added.

Since returning to the presidency in January 2025, Trump has wielded executive authority to slap tariffs on various products and countries.

Besides aluminum, the duties hit steel and autos too, while US trading partners face additional tariffs that vary by country.

Even as some American manufacturers have benefited as their foreign competitors encounter higher barriers, others struggle with ballooning costs and persistent uncertainty.

Trump's spiraling trade fight with Canada and war with Iran have only deepened worries.

Grievances over Trump's trade policies are among fault lines that Democrats hope will work in their favor as they push to flip control of the Senate and House of Representatives in November's vote.

Rende's company in North Jackson, Ohio, makes and distributes aluminum building products used in fixtures like fences.

Trump's tariffs on aluminum have steadily climbed, from 10 percent during his first presidency to 25 percent and then 50 percent last year, and Rende has felt the impact.

"This year alone, it's upwards of $4.5 million to $5 million in additional costs," Rende said.

"There's only so much that the end consumer is willing to eat," he added. "So, we absorb a healthy portion."

These added costs include steeper transportation fees, as fuel prices surged with the US-Israel war on Iran. Surcharges are "upwards of $6,500 per container" of goods from suppliers, Rende said.

As a result, he has paused recruitment for new jobs while investing in more robotic assembly.

Sam Miller, another Ohio manufacturer who makes kitchen and bathroom products, has been hit on both fronts in Trump's trade wars, paying tariffs on imported materials from Asia while finding it harder to expand into Canada because of trade tensions.

"It's been difficult for businesses to manage," Miller told AFP from his factory floor in Warren as a machine hummed nearby, cutting countertop material. "I do think that there will be a shift away from Republican views."

Although Miller received refunds after the Supreme Court struck down many of Trump's duties, the US leader has since reinstated many of them.

Deteriorating US-Canada ties add to his challenges, with Washington and Ottawa slapping tariffs on each other's products after trade negotiations collapsed in August.

"We're selling into Canada and it is particularly straining on both us and our customers," Miller said.

He originally planned on opening a distribution facility in Canada this year, but progress has slowed.

Guy Coviello, president of the Youngstown Warren Regional Chamber, told AFP he is monitoring tariffs, the Iran war and immigration very closely.

These are a "mixed bag" for firms but negative overall, said Coviello, whose business group has some 3,000 members.

Some firms have lost customers or had to downsize, he said. Canada is also Ohio's biggest export market, with a third of Ohio's exports going to the country.

"Where it gets even more complicated is that there are some goods that go back and forth across the border multiple times," he said.

The Iran war adds to stresses, raising freight costs and hitting aluminum supplies due to drone attacks in the Middle East.



An overview of aluminum profiles and building materials stored at Shapes Unlimited, a US manufacturer facing millions of dollars in additional costs due to President Donald Trump's aluminum tariffs, in North Jackson, Ohio. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Gold hits one-week high

REUTERS

Gold rose for a second straight session on Friday, touching a one-week high, as bargain buying emerged after bullion fell to two-month low earlier this week, while traders assessed the likelihood of further US Federal Reserve interest rate hikes.

Spot gold rose 1.5 percent to $4,194.36 per ounce by 03:29 p.m. EDT (1929 GMT), heading for a weekly gain of about 1.3 percent.

The metal fell to a two-month low on Wednesday as a stronger dollar and rising US Treasury yields weighed on the non-yielding metal.

US gold futures for December delivery gained 1.4 percent to settle at $4,216.3. Bullion gained due to "bargain hunting at the lows, as a floor has been building in the $4,000-region," said Rhona O'Connell, head of market analysis at Stone X.

"It is arguable that a further Fed hike is already priced in but so is the expectation for continued official sector net purchases. Without any Black Swan event I find it hard to see gold breaking convincingly higher."

US 10-year Treasury yields were off over two-decade highs hit on Wednesday.

St. Louis Fed President Alberto Musalem said on Thursday the US central bank [will need to hike rates again to bring inflation back to its 2 percent target](https://www.reuters.com/world/india/gold-rises-softer-dollar-easing-yields-fed-outlook-focus-2026-10-09/).

Traders are pricing in a 19 percent chance of a rate hike in October and an 84 percent probability of at least one 25-basis-point increase by December, according to the CME's FedWatch tool.

Gold tends to lose its appeal compared to yield-bearing assets in a high interest-rate environment.

"The coming week's CPI release may act as a catalyst for gold's next big move... Still-stubborn inflation that pushes the Fed into a steeper rate-hike cycle may force spot gold to re-test the psychological $4,000 support once more," said Han Tan, chief market analyst at Bybit.

Meanwhile, gold demand in India was sluggish this week as prices rebounded, while trading in top consumer China was subdued during the holiday-truncated trading period.