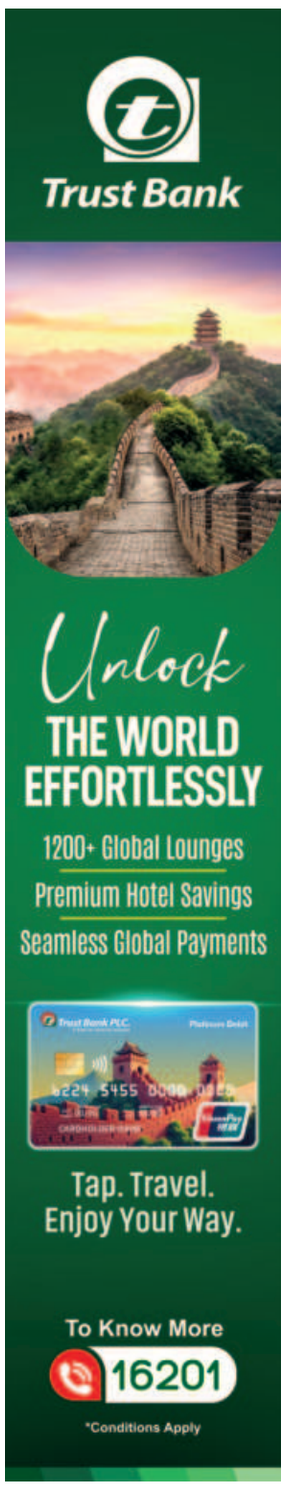
DHAKA MONDAY OCTOBER 12, 2026, ASHWIN 27, 1433 BS
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Business



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.

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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.

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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.

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Net FDI inflows drop 28% in first half of 2026

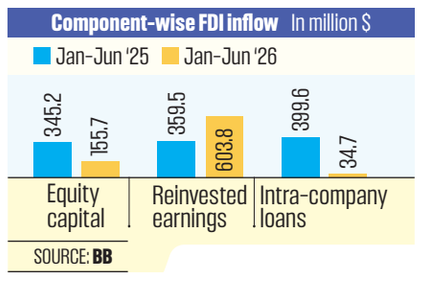
STAR BUSINESS REPORT

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

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