TOP NEWS

Fuel prices hiked by Tk20 per litre

The government raised the retail prices of diesel, octane, petrol and kerosene by Tk20 per litre each, with the revised rates effective from 21 September, the Energy and Mineral Resources Division said in a gazette notification. Diesel now costs Tk135 per litre, up 17.4% from Tk115; octane rises to Tk165 from Tk145 (13.8%); petrol increases to Tk160 from Tk140 (14.3%); and kerosene climbs to Tk155 from Tk135 (14.8%). This marks the second fuel-price hike under the BNP-led government since it assumed power in February, and comes amid elevated global oil prices and continued pressure on the energy import bill.

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Taka strengthens against dollar after 5.5 years: BB

The Bangladeshi taka has shown signs of appreciation against the US dollar, ending an unbroken depreciation streak that ran from 2021 through 17 September this year, according to a Bangladesh Bank report. The exchange rate had surged from Tk85.80 to a record Tk123.95 per dollar over that period, a 45.05% devaluation, but eased to Tk123.00 by 17 September, a 0.77% gain for the taka since peaking on 30 August; on a point-to-point basis from June 2025 to June 2026, the taka appreciated 0.06%. Regionally, the Indian rupee, Sri Lankan rupee and Indonesian rupiah all depreciated by roughly 9-10% over the same period, while the Malaysian ringgit and Chinese yuan gained nearly 4% and the Pakistani rupee rose about 2%. Bangladesh Bank noted that a stronger taka eases import costs and the local-currency burden of foreign debt servicing, though the outlook still depends on trends in imports, exports, remittances and reserves.

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Islamic banks' deposits, investment grow in July

Islamic banks in Bangladesh posted mixed results in July, with deposits rising 3.30% year-on-year to Tk4.69 trillion and investments up 7.75% to Tk6.12 trillion, even as remittances and export receipts declined year-on-year, according to Bangladesh Bank data. Mudaraba-based deposits made up about 87% of the deposit base, with private-sector deposits accounting for roughly 90% of the total. Workers' remittances channelled through Islamic banks rose to $543 million in July from $448 million in June but were down 18.47% from a year earlier, while export receipts of $684 million and import payments of $933 million both fell on both a monthly and yearly basis. Total assets grew 7.25% year-on-year to Tk9.96 trillion, even as Bangladesh Bank continues to tighten supervision of the Islamic banking segment through liquidity support and governance measures aimed at stabilising weaker institutions.

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Foreign investors offload Tk85cr Marico shares in six months

Foreign investors sold roughly 3.15 lakh shares of Marico Bangladesh Limited worth about Tk85 crore between March and August, cutting their combined stake from 1.91% to 0.91%, according to DSE data, with Norway's sovereign wealth fund also trimming its holding to 0.52% from 0.67%. Analysts attributed the exit mainly to broader macroeconomic headwinds rather than a deterioration in the company's fundamentals, though Marico still ranks third among listed multinationals by foreign ownership, behind BAT Bangladesh and Bata Shoe. The sell-off coincided with a 12.38% year-on-year drop in net profit to Tk170.47 crore for the April-June quarter, its first quarterly profit decline in four years, driven by higher raw-material costs and lower finance income, even as revenue grew 4% to Tk531.86 crore; EPS fell to Tk54.12 from Tk61.77. Despite the earnings dip, the board declared a 500% interim cash dividend, continuing its pattern of large payouts to parent Marico Limited in India.

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Costs to cool Bangladesh garment factories can be recovered within four years: Study

Cooling investments at Bangladesh's garment factories - reflective roof paint, insulation and airflow ventilation - are commercially viable and pay back within four years, according to a study by Cornell University's Global Labor Institute based on temperature readings at eight Dhaka factories over six months. Heat stress erased 4.1% of these factories' annual revenue on average, with workers in ironing and finishing sections most exposed, and the report urged apparel brands to share the cost burden by easing prices for suppliers that invest in cooling measures. The findings follow earlier Cornell research warning that heat and flooding could cost Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan and Vietnam a combined $65 billion in apparel export earnings by 2030, and come as the American Apparel and Footwear Association separately released a toolkit calling on brands to help fund climate-resilience investments that manufacturers cannot justify funding alone.

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BSEC fines Sikder Insurance board Tk11 lakh over IPO fund misuse

The BSEC has fined 11 individuals - including the chairman, vice-chairman, nine directors, the managing director and CEO, and the company secretary of Sikder Insurance Company Limited - Tk1 lakh each, totalling Tk11 lakh, over violations tied to the utilisation of its 2023 IPO proceeds. A regulatory inspection found the insurer exceeded its permitted FDR investment limit by Tk20 lakh without the required shareholder approval, left Tk1.40 crore of capital-market allocations unutilised (which it blamed on dishonoured cheques from National Bank), and failed entirely to deploy Tk6.08 crore earmarked for office space, despite later reallocating the funds to treasury bills. The company also diverted Tk21 lakh in IPO-expense savings into FDRs without proper disclosure. The BSEC rejected the company's explanations, holding its board and management responsible, and has directed the fines be paid from personal accounts within 30 days.

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Investor hurdles drag Bangladesh startup funding to 5-year low in Jan-Jun

Bangladeshi startups raised just $6 million in January-June 2026, down 95% from $120 million a year earlier and a five-year low, according to LightCastle Partners' H1 2026 startup investment report, even as global venture funding hit a record $510 billion in the same period. All funding came from foreign investors, with none from domestic sources, and nearly 90% went to early-stage deals; software attracted the largest share at 35%, followed by financial services and healthcare. Industry executives cited persistent forex volatility, dollar shortages, fragmented regulatory approvals for foreign investment and share transfers, and weak exit opportunities as key deterrents, noting that Bangladesh has drawn only around $1 billion across 485 deals since 2013 – equivalent to about $0.30 per capita – with more than 92% of that from overseas investors. Executives called for a more business-friendly, "startup-first" policy approach similar to India's to reverse the country's widening gap with regional peers such as China, India and Singapore.

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Banks fret over deposit buildup sans investment scope

Bangladesh's banking sector is grappling with a paradox of rising deposits but shrinking investment avenues, as deposit growth climbed to 11.36% in July from 7.77% a year earlier while private-sector credit growth stayed near record lows at 4.62%, according to Bangladesh Bank data. With loan demand weak, banks are increasingly parking surplus funds in the central bank's low-yielding Standing Deposit Facility (SDF), which held a record roughly Tk1.50 trillion in June; the sector's excess liquidity has risen from under Tk2.80 trillion to about Tk3.37 trillion in recent months. MTB's CEO Syed Mahbubur Rahman warned that persistent excess liquidity could eventually force banks to cut both deposit and lending rates further, potentially turning depositors' real returns negative, while Southeast Bank and Shahjalal Islami Bank executives said they are focusing on reducing deposit costs. BIBM Director-General Ezazul Islam described the liquidity glut as a temporary problem tied to weak loan demand, expressing cautious optimism that credit demand would pick up from the last quarter of the year.

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