

FUEL CRISIS IN BANGLADESH

Sheikh Hasina's **Masterful** Crisis Management
vs. the **BNP's Reckless Incompetence**



2022 - Russia-Ukraine Global Oil Shock
Supply Stable, Pumps Operating Normally

2026 - Middle East Conflict
Rationing, Queues, Distribution Breakdown



Awami League Leadership - 2022

BNP Government - 2026

- ✓ Stable Fuel Supply
- ✓ Normal Pump Operations
- ✓ No Queues
- ✓ Clear Communication

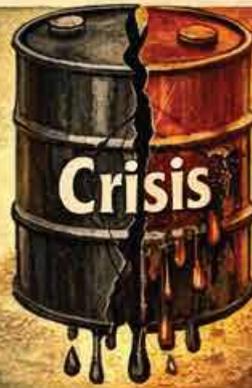
- ⚠ Fuel Shortages
- ⚠ Early Closures
- ⚠ Long Queues
- ⚠ Public Confusion



TWO GLOBAL ENERGY SHOCKS, TWO DIFFERENT RESPONSES

2022

2026



Russia-Ukraine war

Middle East conflict

Global Event

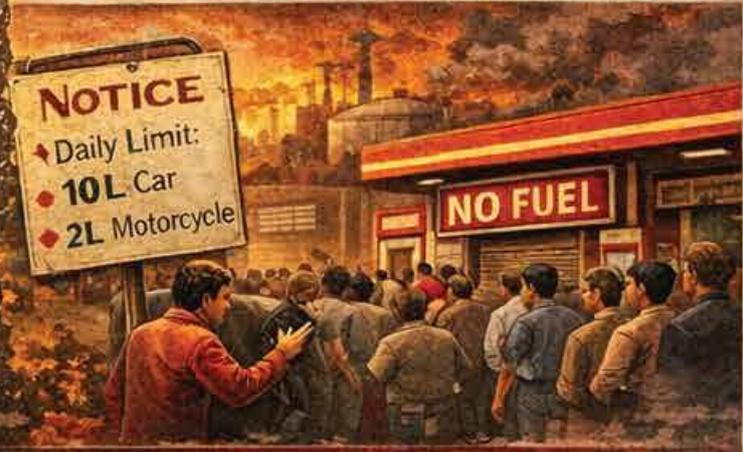
Response

Russia-Ukraine war

Middle East conflict

Stable fuel supply

Fuel rationing begins



Stable fuel supply

Fuel rationing begins

Bangladesh Response:

Bangladesh Response:

Stable fuel supply

Fuel rationing begins

No queues at pumps

Long queues and pump closures

In the shadow of yet another global energy shock, Bangladesh stands at a crossroads that exposes the stark difference between visionary leadership and reckless governance. The ongoing US-Israeli war on Iran has triggered panic at petrol pumps across the country, with motorists queuing for hours, daily rationing imposed, and desperate citizens staring at "Petrol/Octane Unavailable" signs.

This is not an unavoidable tragedy. It is the predictable result of the BNP government's abysmal crisis management, a government that inherited a resilient energy sector built over 15 years by Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League, only to watch it unravel in months through denial, dithering, and outright negligence.



*Bangladesh Navigates
Fuel Crisis Amid
Middle East Tensions*



*The PM says prices of fuel,
oil will be adjusted*

Contrast this with 2022. When Russia invaded Ukraine and global oil prices skyrocketed from around \$90 to a peak of \$139 per barrel, Bangladesh faced an identical external shock. Yet under Sheikh Hasina's decisive leadership, pumps operated on normal schedules, supply chains held firm, and citizens filled their tanks without chaos or bloodshed. The difference is not the crisis; it is the competence of the leader at the helm.

The Gold Standard of Crisis Management (2022)

When the Russia-Ukraine war erupted, Sheikh Hasina did not panic or deny reality. She acted. The government absorbed the shock through strategic LNG imports, sustained subsidies (over Tk 262 billion in the power sector alone in prior years), and diversified supply routes. Petrol pumps remained open on regular schedules. Citizens did not spend hours in the scorching sun. There were no reports of widespread "no fuel" boards or violent clashes at stations. The Awami League's crisis management was textbook: anticipate, plan, execute, protect the people.



*Awami League Govt. signed new deal with
Qatar to import up to 1.8 MTPA LNG for 15 yrs*

Hasina's government had spent 15 years building energy infrastructure, power plants, LNG terminals, and a diversified import basket. When global prices spiked, that foundation held. Inflation rose, yes, but the state intervened decisively to prevent collapse. No one was left hahakar (in despair). This was leadership that put citizens first, not political survival.

2026: The Anatomy of a Manmade Disaster

Fast-forward to March 2026. The Iran conflict disrupts the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant portion of Bangladesh's oil and LNG passes. Prices surge again. But instead of Hasina-style preparedness, the BNP government under Tarique Rahman offers denial and half-measures.



Bangladesh shuts universities, limits fuel sale as Iran war causes shortage



BPC imposes strict daily limits

Energy Minister publicly insists "there is no fuel shortage" while BPC imposes strict daily limits and depots struggle to meet demand. Pump owners warn that the entire distribution system has "completely collapsed." Motorists queue overnight. Fights break out. Some stations shut early with "No Fuel" signs. Universities are closed and Eid holidays have been advanced to save electricity, measures that scream panic, not planning.



Fuel distribution system 'collapsed', petrol pump owners warn of closures amid supply strain



Global oil shock reaches Dhaka streets as gov't imposes fuel limits

The contrast could not be sharper. Sheikh Hasina's government treated energy security as a national priority. The BNP treats it as an afterthought until voters notice the queues.



Two Global Shocks, Two Starkly Different Responses

The numbers tell the story before any political spin begins.

Aspect	Awami League under Sheikh Hasina (Russia-Ukraine War, 2022)	BNP Government (Iran-Israel War, 2026)
 International Oil Price Spike	Rose from ~\$90 to \$139 per barrel	Rose from ~\$90 to over \$108 (and climbing past \$100–\$115 in peaks)
 Pump Operations	Normal opening/closing hours; no premature shutdowns	Pumps closing early; widespread (No Fuel) signs
 Supply Management	Adequate and consistent supply ensured	Severe shortages; rationing imposed (10 litres/car, 2 litres/motorcycle daily)
 Pump Owners' Security	No atmosphere of fear; owners operated normally	Owners in panic, pleading for security as distribution "collapsed"
 Public Experience	No long queues; citizens bought fuel as usual	Hours-long queues, chaos, fights, injuries reported
 Government Rhetoric vs Reality	Statements matched ground reality; effective measures taken	"No shortage" claims while people queue overnight and depots run dry
 Overall Crisis Management	lanned, proactive, people-centric	Chaotic, denial-driven, irresponsible

The Human Cost of BNP Mismanagement

Under Hasina, no one died fighting for diesel. No mother missed work because she couldn't fuel her rickshaw. No student lost precious study hours because campuses were shut to conserve fuel. The Awami League's proactive steps, subsidies, timely imports, and clear communication protected the vulnerable.

Today, under the BNP, the human toll is undeniable. Long queues breed frustration and violence. Daily limits cripple small businesses and daily wage earners. The very people who suffered under previous misrule are suffering again, this time because the BNP, in power for mere weeks, has already proven incapable of basic governance. Their ministers lecture the public to "stay calm" while their own policies fuel the panic. This is not crisis management. This is crisis creation.



*Fuel crisis disrupts product supply,
drives up transport costs*

Sheikh Hasina's Legacy: Competence That Withstood Global Storms

Let us be clear: Sheikh Hasina did not merely react; she anticipated. Her administration diversified energy sources, invested in infrastructure, and shielded citizens from the worst of global volatility. The 2022 crisis proved her mettle. The energy sector she built over 15 years was a bulwark against external shocks. Independent analyses and even post-2024 reflections acknowledge that scarcity was managed through foresight, not denial.

The BNP, by contrast, has dismantled that legacy in record time. Their governance is defined by the same old playbook: blame external factors, deny ground realities, and leave ordinary Bangladeshis to suffer. While Hasina's leadership turned potential disaster into a manageable challenge, the BNP's ineptitude has transformed a price spike into national humiliation.

Time to Recognize True Leadership

Bangladesh does not deserve this. A nation that has shown remarkable resilience deserves leaders who match its spirit, leaders like Sheikh Hasina, who proved that competent crisis management is possible even in the harshest global headwinds.

The current fuel crisis is not just about petrol. It is a referendum on governance. It exposes the BNP's hollowness and reaffirms the Awami League's proven ability to protect the people. As queues lengthen and tempers flare, one truth rings clear: Sheikh Hasina's leadership was not luck. It was excellent. The BNP's failure is not misfortune. It is incompetence.

The people of Bangladesh remember who stood with them in 2022. They are seeing, painfully, who abandoned them in 2026. History and the pumps do not lie.

Crisis



BANGLADESH
PERSPECTIVES