



Govt to buy more from farmers

Each grower to be able to sell 6 tonnes of paddy or wheat instead of 3 tonnes

SOHEL PARVEZ

In the wake of a sluggish progress in the government's Boro procurement programme, the food ministry has lifted the ceiling for paddy and wheat purchase from an individual farmer to six tonnes from the previous three tonnes.

The relaxation of the current restriction came as the Directorate General of Food (DGF) has so far bought 29,000 tonnes of Boro paddy, which is only 4 percent of the annual procurement target of 800,000 tonnes, said a notification issued by the ministry on June 14.

The DGF, however, is supposed to procure 30 percent of its total target by the end of June.

The drive, which began on April 26, would end on August 31.

"Initially, we focused on buying from small and marginal farmers so that they get fair prices. Now to speed up the procurement, we have widened the scope so that the big farmers can also provide paddy to us," said Sarwar Mahmud, director general at the DGF.

The government has doubled its Boro procurement target this year compared to the last year's target of 400,000 tonnes in an attempt to tackle the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

Food officials claimed farmers were more interested

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Those are tears of relief of cancer patient Al Amin's mother. She started crying after learning that her son can be admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Several hospitals in the capital and Jashore refused to treat the 16-year-old as he is also Covid-19 positive. He along with his parents came to the capital from Jashore's Jhikargachha as the hospitals there referred him to Mohakhali Cancer Hospital, which denied him admission.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

'It's a threat to free press'

TIB about DMP summons on journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has expressed grave concern over the summoning of journalists by a police probe committee.

The summons were issued after the media run reports based on a leaked letter the Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner wrote to the police chief with allegations of corruption against a DMP high-up.

"It's a threat to free press," said TIB in a statement asking the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to play a vital role in this regard.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said it is an established rule that journalists will not disclose their sources.

"Now, if journalists are summoned to disclose sources then no one will dare to reveal graft incidents in the future, which is tantamount to creating a barrier for free press," he said.

He said that keeping journalists under pressure

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Standing by red-zoned residents

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Around 11:30pm on Tuesday, a volunteer guarding East Rajabazar received a phone call from a resident asking for some essentials -- half a kilogram of malta and four packets of oral saline.

Another volunteer was contacted around 12:00pm on June 11, a day after the trial lockdown was enforced, with a few residents, who were holding a rooftop Bar-b-que party, asking for a broiler chicken.

No matter what the requirements, these volunteers are working round the clock to ease life under lockdown for those living in red zoned areas.

Dhaka's East Rajabazar area, with 50,000 residents, was categorised as a "red zone" by the government and put under experimental lockdown from June 10.

The zoning system measures were taken as the country is still struggling with ever-increasing cases of Covid-19. Police, locals and volunteers have been helping the residents, while army personnel have been patrolling the area to monitor security.

Masud Hossain Suman, coordinator of the volunteers, explained that 80 people have volunteered to cater to those living in the area in two shifts while the residents

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES



June 19, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CABINET MEETS

The Cabinet today meets for about two hours. The cabinet meeting presided over by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is understood to have discussed several issues including distribution of food and other essentials, and rehabilitation plan.

FIRST ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DRAFTED Planning Commission has prepared a draft of the annual development plan, which is the first of its kind after the liberation of Bangladesh. It will be soon placed before the cabinet for approval. Urgent development projects, reconstruction and rehabilitation are the three main pillars of the development plan.

The government has also decided to hold an economic conference in October, 1972 to discuss its long-term economic plan. A panel of experts will be formed who will prepare policy reports on the draft of the long-term plan, and the policy reports will be presented at the conference. The government will seek

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Another doctor dies from Covid-19

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Another doctor died with Covid-19 infection at Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar on Wednesday night.

Dr Rafiqul Haider, an endocrinologist of the hospital, was being treated at home after he tested positive for coronavirus a couple of days ago, said Saemul Huda, Upazila Health and Planning Officer at Savar.

As his condition deteriorated with acute breathing difficulties at his Mirpur residence last night, he was rushed to the hospital where doctors declared him dead, he added.

Dr Rafiqul was buried at Shaheed Buddhijibi Graveyard at Rayerbazar through Quantum Foundation, said sources.

The doctor was born in Rangunia upazila of

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INDIA-CHINA STAND-OFF

Tensions still run high

Delhi, Beijing trash each other's claims of sovereignty over Galwan Valley

AGENCIES

Tensions remain high between India and China after Monday's border clashes that left 20 Indian soldiers killed as both sides blame each other and claim sovereignty over the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh.

China has said that India must not underestimate its firm will to safeguard its territorial sovereignty. The comments were made by Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying on Twitter.

"India must not misjudge the current situation or underestimate China's firm will to safeguard its territorial sovereignty," Hua said in her first tweet.

"Indian front-line troops broke the consensus and crossed the Line of Actual Control, deliberately provoking and attacking Chinese officers and soldiers, thus triggering fierce physical conflicts and causing casualties," she said in a follow up tweet.

The remarks came a day after India's external affairs ministry rubbished the Chinese military's claim of sovereignty over the Galwan Valley, at the heart of a border stand-off.

External affairs minister spokesperson Anurag Srivastava yesterday again rejected the Chinese side's claim that the

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Youth killed in 'gunfight' with police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A youth was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Kaliakair upazila of Gazipur early yesterday.

The dead -- Md Hanif, 30 -- was accused in at least 10 cases filed over different charges including of robbery and drug peddling, claimed Alamgir Hossain Majumdar, officer-in-charge of Kaliakair Police Station.

Four policemen were injured during the "gunfight" which took place on Jhikjhak ground in the

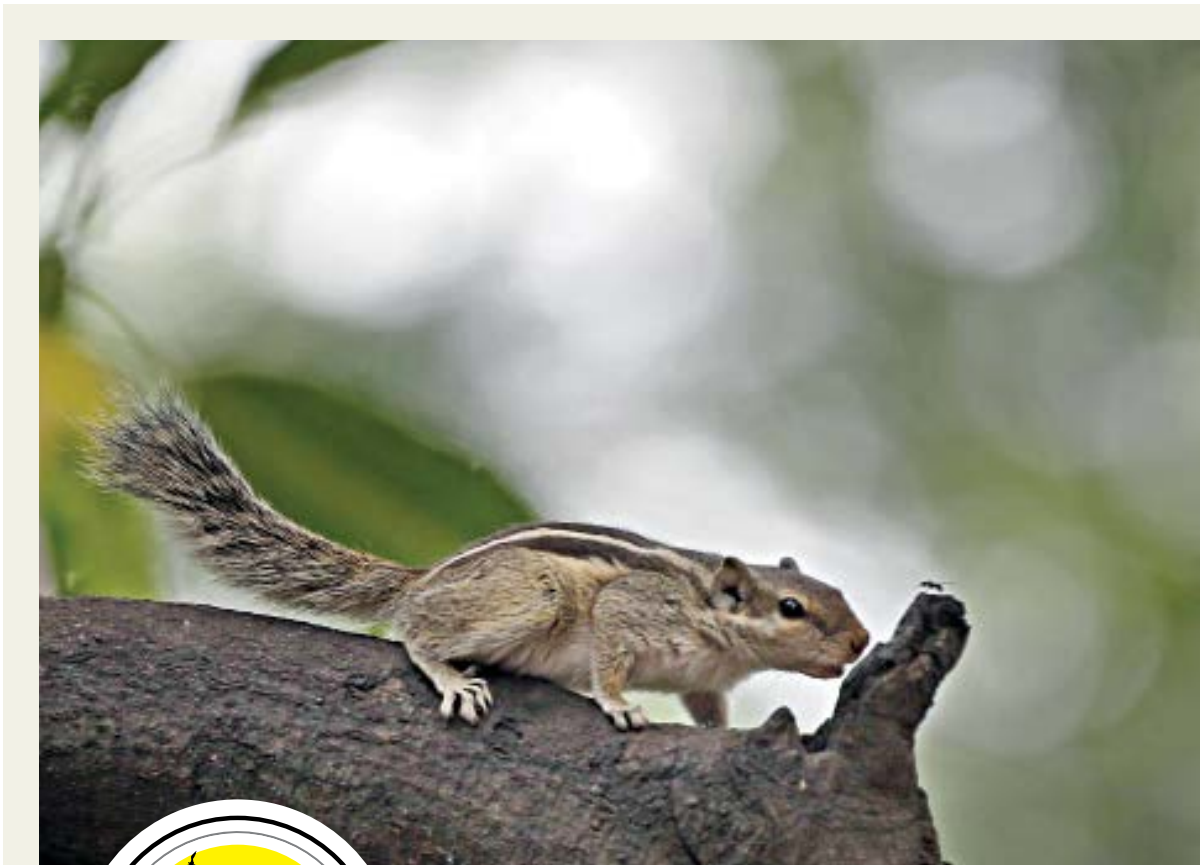
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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 19

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-30 5-00 6-50 8-15
JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



ON THE HUNT

A squirrel waiting to pounce on an ant on a tree in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday. Squirrels are members of the family sciuridae, a family that includes small or medium-size rodents.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

4 more die showing Covid-19 symptoms

STAR REPORT

At least four people died after showing Covid-19 symptoms between late Wednesday night and yesterday.

In Chandpur, three people died at the 250-Bed Chandpur Government General Hospital yesterday, according to Resident Medical Officer Sujauddowla of the hospital.

Of the victims, a 60-year-old man from Rampura of Haziganj upazila was admitted to the isolation ward of the hospital around 8:00pm on Wednesday night.

He died around an hour later.

A 30-year-old woman from Baburhat area of the district's headquarters was also admitted with fever and respiratory problems around 11:00pm Wednesday night.

She breathed her last early yesterday.

Another 60-year-old

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