

Japanese expert on ceramic industry

Quality maintenance, shipment on time can ensure bright prospect

The ceramic industry of Bangladesh has a bright prospect and can make a breakthrough in the world export markets, provided strict maintenance of quality and timely shipment are ensured, a Japanese expert has said, reports BSS.

Availability of the basic ingredients for ceramic products like moist clay and cheap labour force are the added competitive advantages of Bangladesh over other countries, Hicaki Namba, a Japanese expert on ceramics, said this at a discussion at a city hotel on Thursday evening.

Organised by Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) the discussion was participated, among others, by representatives of ceramic industries, Export Promotion Bureau Vice Chairman M S A Gazi and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry President M Yusuf. JETRO arranged the discussion and also visits to some of the ceramic industries for the expert in response to a call of the Bangladeshi industrialists.

Hicaki Namba who himself is the proprietor and president of three ceramic industries — one in Japan and two in Thailand — said since labour is very cheap in Bangladesh, this country can add more quality to their products by using better raw materials and

machinery and by creating excellent designs, specially handpainted. Though the ceramic industry of Bangladesh is as old as its history, export earnings from this sector is still at the initial stage. The relics of Mahastangarh, Moynamoti, Paharpur and other historical places reveal the background of Bangladesh skill in ceramic works in ancient days.

Bangladesh, according to official statistics, earned Taka 9.57 crore during the first four months of the current financial year (1992-93) by exporting ceramic goods. During the last fiscal, export earnings from this sector stood at Taka 20.46 crore. At present the country exports ceramic goods to about 23 countries, with the United States of America being the largest importer.

Namba said, small industries can play a vital role in the industrial development of a country, ceramic industries, which can be started with a little manpower and capital, can play a significant role in this regard, he added.

During his week-long stay in Bangladesh, the Japanese expert also visited four ceramic industries — Peoples Ceramic Industries Ltd and Standard Ceramic Industries Ltd at Tongi, Tajma Ceramic

Industry Ltd at Bogra and Bengal Fine Ceramic Industries Ltd at Savar.

Giving a background of Japan's ceramic industries, he said initially those were set up in a small scale and built up through gradual improvements based on experiences of other countries. For a long time Japan has high standard of ceramic technology. But, today the situation had changed due to high labour cost there, he said, adding that Japanese buyers were now circling the globe to find products to import.

Namba suggested that the quickest way to penetrate into Japanese market was to go for joint venture investments with Japanese companies having experience in product planning for the Japanese market.

He held the discussion that the Japanese consumers wanted quality products and price was their secondary consideration.

JETRO representative in Bangladesh Naoyoshi Noguchi, in his introductory speech, expressed the hope that the discussion as well as the visits of the expert to some industries would help Bangladeshi entrepreneurs improve the quality of their products.

Noguchi said his organisation would continue to arrange such programmes every

year in different trades in response to call for technical aid and marketing help by Bangladeshi industrialists and business leaders.

The JETRO representative said since the opening of their office in Dhaka in 1973, it had been endeavouring for the promotion of more imports from Bangladesh to Japan to reduce the huge trade gap between the two countries.

He also referred to the participation of four Bangladeshi companies, including one ceramic industry, in the Japan International Houseware Show-92 held in June at Chibu near Tokyo.

During an inspection visit to the country's oldest Tajma Ceramic Industry at Bogra, the management apprised Namba, who was accompanied by Noguchi and officials of JETRO, that they were not achieving the target as they are to use furnace oil in the absence of natural gas. At the same time their production costs also go high in comparison with those who are using gas.

Namba suggested that as a pre-condition to have desired results the inside of the factory should always be kept clean. He also said many ceramic industries in the world are using furnace oil successfully in kilns for firing and getting satisfactory results.

Switzerland to give Tk 9.8 cr grant for RSS projects

Switzerland will provide about Taka 9.80 crore as grant for the implementation of the fourth phase of the rural family and child welfare activities under the Rural Social Services (RSS) project of Social Welfare Ministry, reports BSS.

An agreement to this effect, was signed in Dhaka on Thursday between Bangladesh and Switzerland.

Secretary of Social Welfare Ministry Dr K M Fariduddin and Charge d'Affaires of Switzerland to Bangladesh Albert Mehr signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments.

The main objective of the RSS projects is to improve the living conditions of the poorest sections of the rural population.

The funds of the grant will be channelled by a Switzerland based NGO in Bangladesh Enfants Du Monde (EDM) for the implementation of the RSS project.

Sarak Bhaban foundation laid

The foundation of a Taka 2.13 crore divisional Sarak Bhaban was laid Friday in the port city of Chittagong, reports UNIL.

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed laid the foundation stone of the divisional headquarters of Roads and Highways Department, being constructed on 1.77 bighas of land beside the Agrabad Jambhury ground.

This will help save Taka 20 lakh non spent for as rented house annually, said an official handout.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said the democratic government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia would leave any of its commitments unfulfilled.

Polish miners go on strike, demanding concrete action

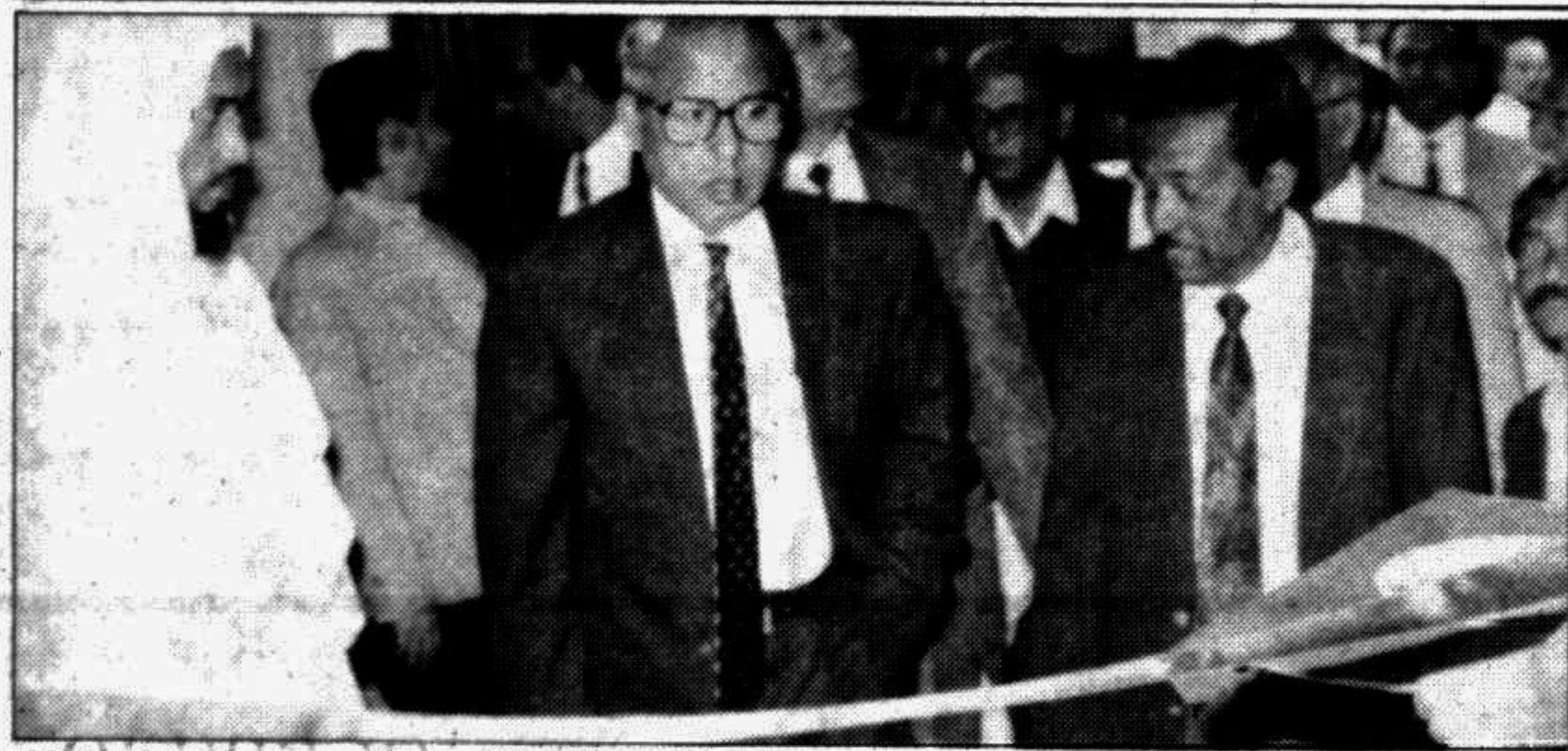
WARSAW, (Poland), Dec 18: Almost 90 per cent of south-western Poland's coal mines were on strike Thursday as workers demanded "concrete action" from the government to help their struggling industry, says AP.

The sudden strike wave, which began as a two-hour protest Monday, has clearly alarmed the government. However it insisted it would stick to a market reform plan that includes closing unprofitable mines.

"We will not print more money, nor increase inflation by raising the price of coal," said Deputy Prime Minister Henryk Gorzyszewski.

The strike at the state-owned mines are a huge challenge to the shaky seven-party coalition of Janna Suchocka, Poland's fifth Prime Minister since the Communists were toppled in 1989.

Her government, formed in July, has vowed to stay together, despite their uneasy alliance of right-wing and more liberal parties, to provide Poland with political stability for reforms.



Mahbubur Rahman Khan, MD, Rupali Bank inaugurating the bank's Moghottully branch at its own building on December 17. Mohammed Muslim, GM and other senior officers of the bank are also seen in the picture.

Developing states deprived of \$5000cr every year

The optimism that has created through emerging of market oriented economy in the world would be forced to turn into pessimism as the factors prevailing in the international market are against the interest of the developing world to a great extent.

This has been opined in the UNICEF report on the state of world children, 1993 while revealing the condition of world children against the backdrop of world economic trends.

According to the report, the developing countries are being deprived of an income of 5000 crore US dollar each year because of the constraints created by the developed nations in the international market. The amount is, however, equal to the loans taken by the developing countries from the donors, the report says.

"Market economy is not the panacea of social development," the report says while focussing on the drawbacks of the economic policies being adopted by the governments of

Star Report

The report says that the linkages between the economic reform, economic growth and fulfilling the basic rights of the people do not take effect automatically. Specific government policies are needed to utilise the economic growth in developing the standard of living of the deprived people, it adds.

If the governments forget their responsibility, the disparity between the people will increase to such extent that nothing would exist of human need in the society, the report says, adding that the natural force of market power should have to be resisted against the interest of the opportunist class.

The report, however, stresses the need for creating an international atmosphere so that the prescription of free market economy (that is being prescribed by the developed world for the developing nations) can bring good result for the poor countries.

It also says that such a de-

cision should come out from the discussion under the GATT (General Agreement on Tariff and Trade) that the developing nations will not be deprived of their economic opportunities because of conservative economic policies of the developed world.

The only way for the developing world is to diversify the economy and to take initiative to earn foreign currency through exporting finished products and reducing dependence on exporting raw materials" the report says, adding that for this promotion of investment and market are needed. But they are being deprived to a great extent in both cases, it adds.

According to the report, the developing world have to spend 20 per cent of their export earnings this year to repay the loans. The total amount is about one lakh thirty thousand crore US dollar. The overdue stands at 14,300 crore US dollar each year, which is three times of the total loan, it estimates.

25,000 tons of tobacco may be produced this year

RAJBARI, Dec 18: About 60,000 acres of land have been brought under tobacco cultivation throughout the country during the current season.

According to a source of the Agriculture Extension Department, 28,500 acres had been cultivated under the supervision of Bangladesh Tobacco Company through its registered growers while the rest under the Agriculture Extension Department.

A total of 25,000 tons of tobacco is expected to be produced in the country during this season.

Cultivation of quality tobacco is very profitable and it is one of the cash crops in the districts of Rajbari, Faridpur, Kushtia, Jhenaidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Manikgong and Rangpur of Chittagong.

Bangladesh Tobacco Company first introduced the cultivation of virginia tobacco in 1967 for manufacturing cigarettes on experimental

From Our Correspondent

The result was very much encouraging and since the independence quality tobacco is being widely cultivated in Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Jhenaidah, Rajbari and Rangpur districts.

Till 1972, about 90 per cent of country's demand were met through imported tobacco. In 1976, Bangladesh attained self-sufficiency in production of tobacco meeting the entire demand of cigarette manufacturers. Bangladesh has been earning a lot by exporting tobacco during the last few years.

Experts opined that the country can boost its foreign exchange earnings by developing Kushtia, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Rangpur, Gaibandha and Nilphamari districts as a quality tobacco growing zone.

Tobacco growers outside the BTC zone, are not getting fair price of their produce. The BTC purchase tobacco from its enlisted growers who are also provided with loans and exten-

sion services. The growers outside BTC zone have no fixed buyers. As such, they are compelled to sell their produce to the middlemen at a lower price.

Another report adds: State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof. Jahanaara Begum said, government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is committed to build a self-reliant Bangladesh.

The State Minister was addressing the opening ceremonies at paddy procurement-92 at Rajbari Food Godown. "She said, bumper aman crop of his year had ushered a new hope and inspiration among the people of the country.

The State Minister said, the government has taken up pragmatic policies and programmes to bring about positive changes in literacy, social development and infrastructural development for giving impetus to continued growth of the national economy.

Shipping Intelligence

CHITTAGONG PORT

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 17.12.92

| Berth No | Name of Vessels | Cargo | L/Port | Local Call | Date of Agent | Leaving Arrival |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|---------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| J/1 | Bharatendu | GI | Bomb | SSL | 12/12 | 17/12 |
| J/2 | Al Swamruz | GI | Metha | ASL | 7/12 | 20/12 |
| J/3 | Trans Asia | — | Bank | BOAL | 1/12 | — |
| J/4 | Komosomolets | — | — | — | — | — |
| J/5 | Rossi GI | Peng | Sunbeam | 7/12 | 17/12 | — |
| J/6 | Koston Berani | Sugar | Bank | OWSL | 2/12 | 19/12 |
| J/8 | Al Reza | CL | Fortg | KSL | 11/12 | 20/12 |
| J/9 | Supreme | Wheat (P) | P Land | Royal | 22/11 | 19/12 |
| J/8 | Silver Lake | GI | Hong | Prog | 10/12 | 17/12 |
| J/10 | Endurance Sea | Repair | Apaba | EOSL | 25/1 | 20/12 |
| J/11 | Damon | Wheat (P) | Pers | Royal | 8/11 | 22/12 |
| J/12 | You Yue | Wheat (P) | USA | Royal | 23/11 | 18/12 |
| J/13 | Pratapad | Logs | Rang | HSL | 12/12 | 20/12 |
| MPB/1 | Fong Yun | Cont | Sting | BDSHIP | 13/12 | 17/12 |
| MPB/2 | Ingenuity | Cont | Sting | RSL | 16/12 | 18/12 |
| CCJ | Banglar Bani | Sugar (P) | Pena | Cross | 13/12 | 21/12 |
| GSJ | Normance | Wheat (G) | USA | BSL | 13/12 | 17/12 |
| TSP | Becco Europe | R PHOS | Safa | SSST | 13/12 | 24/12 |
| RM/3 | Ot Sonja | C S Oil | Darb | NWSL | 14/12 | 17/12 |
| RM/6 | Chillham Sile | — | Sing | MSPL | 15/12 | 18/12 |
| DXJ | Banglar Jyoti | Repair | — | BSC | R/A | 20/12 |
| DD | Banglar Kiron | Repair | — | BSC | R/A | 17/12 |
| DM/1 | S E Haider | Cement | Kara | ASL | 19/11 | 20/12 |
| RM/8 | Safar | Repair | Col | ASL | 19/11 | 20/12 |
| RM/9 | Banglar Asha | Repair | — | BSC | R/A | 20/12 |
| CLJF | Atlanta | Urea | P Land | Seacom | R/A | 17/12 |

VESSELS DUE AT OUTER ANCHORAGE

| Name of Vessels | Date of Arrival | Last Port | Local Call | Cargo Agent | Loading Port |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| NGS Express | 5/12 | 17/12 | Mong | BDSHIP | Cont Sing |
| Cape Syros | 17/12 | 17/12 | D Box | Seacom | Mop Sing |
| Kota Buana | 18/12 | 18/12 | Sing | CTS | Cont Sing |
| Farcast | 18/12 | 18/12 | Bres | MSA | C Peas Sing |
| Ji Lin | 19/12 | 19/12 | Sing | Prog | GI Japa. C. Ports Sing |
| Andrian Goncharov | 20/12 | 20/12 | Sing | CT | GI New York Sing |
| Sam Houston | 20/12 | 20/12 | Sing | Karna | GI Sing |
| Shenton 10/12 | 21/12 | 21/12 | Sing | Omni | GI Sing |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 21/12 | 21/12 | Sing | SSL | GI Sing |
| Qing He Cheng | 20/12 | 20/12 | Sing | BDSHIP | GI Fe. St Sing |
| Trans America | 21/12 | 21/12 | BKK | DOAL | Sugar/GI Sing |
| Fong Shin 12/12 | 22/12 | 22/12 | Sing | BDSHIP | Cont Sing |
| Lena (48) 11/11 | 22/12 | 22/12 | Bank | Prog | Cont. Materials Sing |
| Kamaleverett | 22/12 | 22/12 | — | EBPL | GI Sing |
| Ravidas | 24/12 | 24/12 | — | SSL | — Dundee Ant Sing |
| Safina-c-small-2 | 25/12 | 25/12 | Damam | ASL | GI/GL Karachi Sing |
| Anting | 25/12 | 25/12 | — | BDSHIP | Agri. Products Sing |
| Petr Starostin 15/12 | 27/12 | 27/12 | — | CT | Cont Sing |
| Massy Phoenix | 05/01 | 05/01 | JAPA | OWSL | Wheat (P) Sing |
| Beccles | 29/12 | 29/12 | — | EBPL | GI Sing |

VESSELS AT KUTUBDIA

| Name of Vessels | Cargo | Last Port | Local Agent | Date of Arrival |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
| T T Energy | — | Col | ARL | 27/4 |

VESSELS AT OUTER ANCHORAGE

| Ready on | Name of Vessels | Cargo | Last Port | Local Agent | Date of Arrival |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
| Al Fesani | Cont | Kaki | BSC | 14/12 | |
| I. Yamburenko (Cont) | Cont | Sing | CT | 16/12 | |
| Ryokoh | Cont | Sing | — | 17/12 | |

VESSELS NOT READY

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|-----|-------------|
| Banglar Kallol | — | — | BSC | R/A (16/12) |
|----------------|---|---|-----|-------------|

VESSELS AWAITING INSTRUCTION

| | | | | |
|------------------|--------|------|--------|-------------|
| Samudra Raj | — | Kara | SSL | R/A (30/11) |
| Banglar Shourabh | — | — | BSC | R/A (10/12) |
| Artimes-1 | Cement | — | Bright | R/A (2/11) |

VESSELS NOT ENTERING

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----------|------|---------|-------|
| Angeliki | — | Safa | KSL | 13/12 |
| Kiung Carrier | Wheat (G) | Lapa | Ancient | 14/12 |
| Ronjay Victory | Cement | Sing | PSAL | 14/12 |

MOVEMENT OF VESSELS FOR 18/12/92

| Outgoing | Incoming | Shifting |
|----------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 18/12/92 | | |
| J/12 | You Yue | DD Samudra Raj |
| | | MPB/2 Trans Asia to J/1-2 |
| MPB/2 | Ingenuity | |
| RM/6 | C Castle | |

FOR 19/12/92

| | | | |
|------|-------------|-------|------------|
| J/1 | Phoenix | MPB/2 | Kota Buana |
| J/13 | NGS Express | GSJ | B Kallol |
| J/5 | Kota Berani | J/1 | Lin |
| J/8 | Supreme | | |
| GSJ | | | |

The above were the Thursday's shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

Price Index

| Essentials | (Taka per kg) | EGG | (4 per) |
|---------------|---------------|---|-------------------|
| RICE | | Hen | 11.00-11.50 |
| Aman(fine) | 13.50-15.00 | Duck | 11.00-11.50 |
| Payan | 11.00-12.00 | Farm | 11.00-12.00 |
| VEGETABLES | (Taka per kg) | MILK | (Two kg) |
| Onion (local) | 9.00-9.50 | Dan. | 332.00-333.00 |
| Brinjal | 6.00-8.00 | Red-Cow | 321.00-322.00 |
| Karolla | 12.00-14.00 | | |
| Lalchak | 4.00-5.00 | | |
| Tomato | 18.00-22.00 | | |
| Cauliflower | 6.00-10.00 | | |
| Gourd | 13.00-15.00 | | |
| MERRUGAN | (Taka per kg) | Cow | |
| Flour | 13.00-13.50 | Call | 10,000 - 36,000 |
| Atta | 10.50-11.00 | Light | 61,000 - 70,000 |
| FNI | (Taka per kg) | Medium | 72,000 - 80,000 |
| Rahi(big) | 160.00-180.00 | Heavy | 82,000 - 89,000 |
| Kaila(big) | 110.00-140.00 | Very heavy | 100,000 - 108,000 |
| Haha | 45.00-50.00 | Rejected | 45,000 - 55,000 |
| Pangas | 125.00-140.00 | GI | |
| Shrimp(big) | 120.00-140.00 | Big & heavy | 12,000 - 13,500 |
| Sing | 120.00-140.00 | Light & Medium | 9,500 - 11,500 |
| Kes | 130.00-150.00 | Rejected | 3,000 - 5,000 |
| MEAT | | Sheep | 8,000 - 9,000 |
| Beef | NA | Buffalo | 65,000 - 70,000 |
| Mutton | NA | | |
| CHICKEN | | Gold & Silver | |
| Large | 64.00-66.00 | (Taka for 10.00 grams) | |
| Moderate | 68.00-70.00 | Gold (Guinea) | 5395.00 |
| Small | 75.00-76.00 | Silver | 200.00 |
| TEA | | Source: Department of Agriculture marketing | |
| Dust (Plain) | 80.00-90.00 | | |

Exchange Rates

The following are the Commercial Bank's BC selling and TT (C). OD transfer buying rates for some selected foreign currencies effective on December 18 and 19. (Figures in Taka)

| Currency | Selling B.C. | T. T. (C) | Buying OD Transfers |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------|
| US Dollar | 39.1326 | 38.9087 | 38.6339 |
| Poundsterling | 61.6059 | 61.2855 | 60.8767 |
| DM | 25.1382 | | |