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LPG price shoots up in Rajshahi

Consumers warn of tough movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) shot up by Tk 35 overnight in Rajshahi yesterday, prompting immediate protests from consumers and a social body.

All the 19 government-nominated LPG dealers in the divisional headquarters were selling a cylinder at Tk 555, Tk 188 higher than the government-fixed price.

The dealers said the price became effective from Friday midnight following a supply crisis.

With the latest price escalation, the LPG prices went up three in last two months. A cylinder was sold at Tk 450 before Ramadan which rose to Tk 475 with the onset of the holy month and reached Tk 520 on November 2.

The latest rise has sparked protest from consumers who are holding a section of dealers, suppliers and government officials be responsible for creating an artificial crisis.

Consumers were seen protesting before LPG dealers' outlets at Shaheb Bazar, Upashahar and Shalbagan.

Rajshahi Raksha Sangram Parishad, a social organisation

advocating development of Rajshahi, in a statement asked the government to bring normalcy in LPG trade by December 2, 2004.

Convenor of the Parishad Zamat Khan said they would announce tough movement if situation does not improve within the stipulated date.

Several dealers in the city said Padma, Jamuna and Meghna—three companies under Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation—managed only one twentieth of the average total demand for 50,000 cylinders for last several months.

The dealers alleged of partisan role by suppliers and said many of them were not getting any supply for last few months.

Manager of Joti Petroleum at Kumarpada in the city said they got 150 cylinders this month against their demand for 2000 cylinders, a dealer of Upashahar got only 48 cylinders against his demand for 1750 cylinders.

Officials at the regional petroleum supply-monitoring cell at Bogra denied the supply shortfall.

They said supply appears to be low against the backdrop of an increased demand.

Minister for all-out efforts to achieve 'Vision 2008'

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman has called for concerted efforts from shrimp sector stakeholders to achieve the goal of 'Vision 2008', a target to export frozen foods worth Tk 10,000 crore annually by 2008.

He made the call at a discussion organised by Bangladesh Shrimp Development Alliance (BSDA) held in Dhaka on Friday, according to a press statement.

He also said establishing PCR lab will be made compulsory to ensure virus-free shrimp production at hatcheries.

Former commerce minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury was also present at the meeting presided over by BSDA President Nizam M Selim.

Qatar Airways to fly to over 70 destinations by 2005

Qatar Airways will fly to over 70 destinations by the end of 2005.

Regional Manager of the airline Abdul Quader Aziz said this at a function arranged to award the best travel and cargo agents in the year 2003-2004, says a press release.

The ceremony titled 'Top Agent's Award Evening' was also addressed by Turkish Ambassador Ferit Ergin, CEO of Oryx Aviation Ltd Taufiq Uddin Ahmed and Managing Director Ahmed Yusuf Walid.

New MD of National Bank



M Aminuzzaman has joined National Bank Limited as its new managing director.

Aminuzzaman is also the chairman of the Association of Bankers, says a press release.

Prior to his present position, he served as the managing director of Uttara Bank Limited and National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited. He held important positions in different banking capacities at home and abroad.

Preparation needed to face post-MFA

BSS, Dhaka

Business leaders at a function yesterday underscored the need for immediate preparations of a strategy for the garments sector to face the challenges of globalisation with the phasing out of the quota facilities just after a month.

Bangladesh needs massive preparations to conduct garments exports, the largest foreign exchange earner of the country, in the changed situation because time is running out very fast, they told a training course on "Industrial Sewing Machine Maintenance Technology" at Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

The business leaders said with the expiry of Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) from January, 2005 Bangladesh would have to face competition from many Asian garment producing and exporting countries in getting the market share in the global arena. So long it has been enjoying quota facilities in the USA, Canada and the EU under MFA.

Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) of Japan organised the six-day training programme in cooperation with JUKI Corporation Japan, JUKI Singapore and JUKI Bangladesh. Forty-five engineers and technicians from different garment industries from in and around Dhaka city are participating in the course, being conducted by two JUKI experts -- M. Yoshitomi and M. Tanaka.

Age-old bureaucracy stands in way of e-governance

British high commissioner tells Softexpo seminar

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Anwar Chowdhury yesterday said the present bureaucratic system is standing in the way of e-governance.

He said the most effective means to ensure e-governance is by doing away with the existing bureaucratic procedures and redesigning it.

"Existing bureaucratic system was established 200 years ago. So, it is very difficult to bring about substantial change by introducing IT only. The best way is to redesign and restructure it," he said while speaking at a seminar on 'Role of E-Governance in National Productivity'.

The seminar was organised by Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) at

Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre on the occasion of Basis Softexpo 2004. Basis President Sarwar Alam chaired the seminar while Project Director of the Support to ICT Task Force Programme of the Planning Ministry SASM Taifur made keynote presentation.

Citing examples of the United Kingdom, Chowdhury said: "The beauty of ICT is that it allows you to move fast. Redesigning and restructuring of government functionalities are possible in two years."

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can change the relationship between the citizens and government, he added.

Speaking at the seminar, former foreign secretary Faruque Sobhan said it is possible to reduce cost of

doing business by as much as 25 percent that will increase competitiveness of local entrepreneurs in the global market.

"Besides, it is possible to reduce corruption by introducing e-governance," he said stressing the need for encouraging IT literacy and specialised training for all government officials and employees.

Executive Chairman of Board of Investment (BoI) Mahmudur Rahman echoed the British High Commissioner, saying BoI first started publishing its working process and then had interaction with people who are involved in the process.

Introducing IT in its work process and transforming them are other two parts that have helped BoI to be more transparent organisation within the government, he added.

"We have changed the system before introducing IT and the software that BoI used is fully home-made," he said.

Planning Secretary Fazlur Rahman said Planning Commission has recently simplified its planning procedures. Project concept papers (PCP) and project pro-forma (PP) have been combined which will help to reduce time substantially, he added.

"We will need less time now and this is a major effort to change ourselves," Rahman said.

Later, speaking at another seminar on 'Public Private Partnership for E-Governance Initiatives' J Satyanarayana, chief executive officer of National Institute of Smart Government, Hyderabad in India, presented the keynote paper, saying

a strong political will and holistic approach are needed for public private partnership for e-governance initiatives.

Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission Syed Marghub Morshed chaired the seminar.

Professor Shomser Ali said the potential of the ICT is not being achieved due to lack of Internet connectivity.

The government must have the right policy if the country wants to head towards the right direction in the ICT sector, he added.

President of American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh Aftabul Islam said there are a lot of talents here but the country needs an electronic leader to explore the potential of the ICT sector.

High-profile French trade team due today

UNB, Dhaka

A high-powered French business delegation arrives here today on a five-day visit to Bangladesh to explore trade and investment opportunities under a comprehensive initiative.

During the tour, the 14-member delegation will hold talks with Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury, officials of the ministry and Board of Investment, and apex trade-body FBCCI to draw up their business plan.

Officials coordinating the visit said they are also scheduled to visit some production facilities of textiles, ceramics and pharmaceuticals here.

The French business barons are also scheduled to take part in one-to-one business meetings with the

prospective clients here as per choices of the delegation members.

Bangladesh maintains an annual trade worth around US\$ 500 million with France and the country enjoys a trade surplus with the trade partner.

Major export items of Bangladesh to France included readymade garments and home textiles, frozen foods, leather and leather products, ceramic tableware while major imports included prepared foodstuffs, vegetable products, machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipment, chemical and allied products, and textile and textile articles.

Some 19 companies have so far registered their investment plans of US\$ 284 million, with Lafarge alone already having undertaken their cement project with an investment of US\$ 250 million.

Tata shows interest to invest in EPZs

UNB, Dhaka

Indian conglomerate Tata has shown its keen interest to invest in the export processing zones (EPZs) in Bangladesh.

This was disclosed by the leader of the visiting high-powered Tata delegation S Manzer Hussain during a meeting with BEPZA Executive Chairman Muhammad Zakir Hossain here yesterday.

Zakir explained the entire gamut of EPZs and the facilities and incentives provided by BEPZA (Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority) to the delegation.

The delegation head said Tata is keen to invest in EPZs, particularly in steel chemical and power sectors.

He expressed satisfaction over the performance of BEPZA and observed uninterrupted production oriented environment is the pre-condition for industrial development and BEPZA is maintaining the peaceful investment climate.

Seeking investment of Tata BEPZA chief said they have reduced the rent rate of land and factory building at Ishwardi, Uttara, and Mongla to attract more investment in the three new EPZs.

3-day export services fair begins on Dec 11

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

With a view to providing local exporting companies with logistic supports, a three-day international export services fair begins in Dhaka on December 11.

Conference and Exhibition Management Services Limited (Cems) will organise the fair, the first of its kind, styled Bangladesh International Export Services and Logistics Fair 2004 (BSLF) at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel sponsored by MGH Group.

The objective of the fair is to bring all the export related companies under one roof so that local companies can get an idea about export process in a place, Shahid S Sarwar, director of Cems, said at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.

The exposition will feature software and IT-based transport and logistics services, trucking, customs clearance companies and brokers, shipping and freight forwarding companies, airlines, international trade ports, couriers, cross border transport services, he added.

played in the fair.

Speaking at the press conference, Rezaul Haque, head of Contract Services and Logistics of MGH Group, said the local companies will get an idea on how to decrease the time span from getting order to delivery of products from this show.

The fair will also enable exporting firms of Bangladesh, especially RMG industries, to know about the global standards of logistics systems thereby help compete with the other RMG exporting companies, Haque added.

Besides local companies, representatives from Australia, Austria, Belgium, China, Finland, France, Germany, India, Korea, Pakistan, Spain, Taiwan, the UK and the USA have confirmed their participation in the fair, the organisers said.

Managing Director of Cems Meherun N Islam and Executive Director of MGH Group Shahid Shams signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) after the press conference regarding the sponsorship of the fair.

A total of 36 companies will participate in the exposition in 50 booths. The fair will remain open from 10am to 8 pm everyday from December 11 to 13.

SURVEY ON SMES

Food, leather sectors worst performers

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A survey on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) has found the SMEs in food, leather, electronics and garment sectors to be worst performers and recommended fiscal incentives to promote them.

However, a leading entrepreneur contested part of the findings, saying the SMEs in the leather sector are doing fairly good as they constitute 70 percent of the export earnings from leather.

The panel survey, conducted jointly by South Asia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) and Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), was released yesterday through a discussion on the findings at the conference room of the BEI.

The discussion was chaired by BEI President Faruq Sobhan and attended by Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment (BoI) Mahmudur Rahman. Former commerce minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, former advisor to the caretaker government Syed Manzur Elahi, former commerce secretary Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury, SEDF General Manager Anil Sinha and President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Selima Ahmed also participated in the discussion.

Mahmudur Rahman said SMEs get substantial amount of subcon-

tracting from large-scale enterprises (LSEs), especially in the garment sector. This aspect should be taken into account while evaluating their performance.

He highlighted on the updating of the survey report with latest information on SMEs.

Manzur Elahi said SMEs in leather sector are not bad performers as highlighted in the survey. They share 70 percent of the export earnings of the leather sector, he said.

Selima Ahmed observed: "Not access to credit, rather access to the market is the main problem for the SMEs and the industrial policy of the government should address this particular problem of the SMEs."

The survey report said free flow of information on regulatory issues at the firm level can help SMEs follow the necessary procedures to avoid the use of facilitators and strengthening governance will be the key to reducing regulatory burdens in the long run.

The report also said sincere efforts are needed to increase SMEs' access to formal finance. The collateral requirements are high, which discourages many SMEs from applying for loans, it added.

Interest rates charged on loans are also unaffordable for many SMEs, the report observed, adding that the commercial banks should be encouraged to lend to SMEs.

FBCCI calls for removal of trade hurdles

BSS, Istanbul (Turkey)

President of the FBCCI Abdul Awal Mintoo urged the political leadership of the OIC countries to facilitate more business and investments among member states by removing all market barriers.

Speaking at the opening session of the OIC Economic and Business Forum meeting here on November 23, he also urged the Islamic countries to show political will and commitment to make the block an effective forum for development by using collective strength in business and investments.

Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan opened the conference with a 'wake up' call for enhancing intra-OIC collaboration in all areas of development.

He told the conference that the globalisation has not only put the Islamic countries to face challenges of marginalisation but also offers new opportunity to benefit from using their resources that they have plenty in stock.

The forum meeting took place before the 29th OIC ministerial meeting on economic and commercial cooperation held on November 25.

Mintoo, speaking for the Asian group said, Islamic countries have huge resource base and market potentials and yet most of them are least developed nations (LDCs) crippled with poverty and backwardness.

He said the political leadership should waste no further time and work out mechanism for exploitation of their market, goods and

services to benefit from their mutual economic advantages.

Mintoo led a five-member FBCCI delegation to the conference.

Referring to Bangladesh's recent socio-economic development, he said its pharmaceutical products are now exported to 52 countries, readymade garments have won name in global market. So also ceramic and a host of other manufacturing making steady strides, he added.

He said despite natural calamities like the recent floods, he said he country's GDP growth now close to 6 percent annually.

It is a good place for investment, he said pointing out that only a change in the mindset of the OIC leadership can open up ways for harnessing its common potentials and natural resources. He urged the OIC leaderships, particularly the developed ones, to remove all tariff and non-tariff barriers and easing visa restrictions for movement of goods and services.

Referring to Turkey as a unique liberal Islamic country, he said it is time it should take up leadership to help the transformation of Islamic countries into modern societies.

The Turkish prime minister attending the opening of the conference was visibly moved by Mintoo's speech and shook hands by stepping forward.

He also praised the leadership of Bangladesh in the OIC forum. President of the Islamic Development Bank Ahmad Mohammad Ali and representatives of the African and Arab groups also spoke on the occasion.




Board of Investment (BoI) Executive Chairman Mahmudur Rahman (2-L), Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) President Faruq Sobhan (2-R) and South Asia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) General Manager Anil Sinha (L) are seen at a discussion held in Dhaka yesterday to release the findings of a survey on SMEs conducted jointly by SEDF and BEI.

The survey pointed out electricity to be the most acute infrastructure related problem for the SMEs.

It said SMEs are also likely to avail various fiscal incentives due to

complicated administrative and bureaucratic processes. Therefore, streamlining the management of these incentive schemes can greatly benefit the SMEs, it added.

Moreover, improvement in ports and customs clearance should be sustained and complemented by similar initiatives, the survey observed.



বেসিক ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

প্রধান শাখা, ৭৩, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা।

পুনঃ নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অর্থ ঋণ আদায় আইন ২০০৩-এর ধারা ১২ অনুযায়ী পার্স প্যাকেজিং ইন্ডাস্ট্রি লিমিটেড, ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক, জনাব মোঃ মোশারফ হোসেন, পিতা-মরহুম জয়নুদ্দিন আহমেদ, মাতা-মরহুম আনোয়ারা বেগম, পরিচালক জনাব রাসেল আল হাসান, পিতা-মরহুম এস.এম. আবু আল হাসান, মাতা-বেগম নূরজাহান, ব্যবসায়িক ঠিকানা-সুট নং-৮০৫, ২৭ দিলকুশা বা/এ (৬ম তলা), ঢাকা। কারখানা ঠিকানা-তেঘরিয়া, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা-এর নিকট ৩০.০৮.২০০৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত সুদসহ ৯০,০৬,৩৫৬/২৩ টাকা মাল্য ও অন্যান্য স্বত্ব এবং আদায়কালকৃত সুদ আদায়ের জন্য নিম্ন তফসিলভুক্ত বন্ধকীকৃত নিম্নবর্ণিত সম্পত্তিসমূহ বিক্রয়ের জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাদিতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা হইবে।

- ১। ঋণ গ্রহীতার নাম ও ঠিকানা: পার্স প্যাকেজিং ইন্ডাস্ট্রি লিমিটেড, ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক জনাব মোঃ মোশারফ হোসেন। ব্যবসায়িক ঠিকানা-সুট নং-৮০৫, ২৭ দিলকুশা বা/এ (৬ম তলা), ঢাকা। কারখানা ঠিকানা-তেঘরিয়া, কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
- ২। বন্ধকীকৃত স্বত্বের সম্পত্তির তফসিল বর্ণনা:
 - (ক) জেলা ঢাকা, থানা-ধানমন্ডি এবং সাবরেজিষ্ট্র অফিস-মোহাম্মদপুর, জে এল নং-৭৯, মৌজা নং-২৫৫, রাজমুসুরী, জোত নং-৬৮/৩, সি এস খতিয়ান নং-৬৩, মিটেসন খতিয়ান নং-২৯/১, প্লট নং-১০২। জমির পরিমান-১৩.২০ শতাংশ।
 - (খ) ১) জেলা ঢাকা, থানা সাবরেজিষ্ট্র অফিস-কেরানীগঞ্জ, মৌজা তেঘরিয়া, জে এল নং-৪৪০, দাগ নং-৯০, ৯৩, সি এস খতিয়ান নং-৭৭২, ২২৪, এস এ খতিয়ান নং-৫৭৩, ৬৩০, জমির পরিমান-১১,৫০০.০০ বর্গফুট (২৬ শতাংশ)।
 - ২) উক্ত জমির একটি পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্যাকেজিং ইন্ডাস্ট্রি।
- ৩। কারখানার ঠিকানা: মৌজা তেঘরিয়া, থানা কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।
- ৪। দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী:
 - ক) দরদাতার নাম, পিতার নাম, পূর্ণাঙ্গ স্থায়ী ও বর্তমান ঠিকানা দরপত্রে উল্লেখ করিতে হইবে।
 - খ) দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার সময়সীমা: ১২.১২.২০০৪ ইং দরপত্র ১২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে সরাসরি কিংবা রেজিস্ট্রিকৃত ডাকযোগে বেসিক ব্যাংক লিঃ, প্রধান শাখা, ৭৩, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-তে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তব করিতে হইবে এবং এদিনই ১.০০ ঘটিকায় দরদাতাদের সামনে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হইবে।
 - গ) জামানত হিসেবে দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত মোট মূল্যের ২৫% ব্যাংক ড্রাফট বা পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে বেসিক ব্যাংক লিঃ, প্রধান শাখার অনুকূলে দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিল করিতে হইবে।
 - ঘ) দরপত্র গৃহীত হইবার পরবর্তী ১০ (দশ) দিনের মধ্যে সমুদয় মূল্য পরিশোধ করিতে হইবে এবং তাহা করিতে ব্যর্থ হইলে, ব্যাংক কর্তৃপক্ষ উক্ত জামানতের টাকা বাজেয়াপ্ত করিবে।
 - ঙ) উপরোক্ত অনুচ্ছেদ নং ঘ-এর অধীনে জামানত বাজেয়াপ্ত হইলে উহার অর্থ দাবীকৃত অর্থের সহিত সমন্বয় করিয়া দ্বিতীয় সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতার দরপত্রের মূল্য সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতা কর্তৃক উদ্ধৃত দর অপেক্ষা কম না হইলে উক্ত দ্বিতীয় সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতাকে বন্ধকীকৃত সম্পত্তিসমূহ নিলামে খরিদ করিতে আদান করা হইবে এবং দ্বিতীয় সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতা আহুত হইবার পরবর্তী দশ দিনের মধ্যে সম্পূর্ণ মূল্য পরিশোধ করিবেন এবং তাহা করিতে ব্যর্থ হইলে তাহার জামানত বাজেয়াপ্ত হইবে এবং জামানতের উক্ত অর্থ দাবীকৃত অর্থের সহিত সমন্বয় করা হইবে।
 - চ) দরপত্রে বন্ধকীকৃত সম্পত্তিসমূহের প্রস্তাবসমূহ মূল্য অবাধাবিক্রিতে অপর্ণাধি বা কম প্রতীয়মান হইলে, ব্যাংক কর্তৃপক্ষ দরপ্রস্তাব বাতিল করিতে পারিবে। কোন কারণ দর্শানো ছাড়া অত্র ব্যাংক কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা যে কোন/সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করিবে।
 - ছ) দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে নিলামে অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তিগত বিস্তারিত তথ্য অবগত হইবার জন্য নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে যোগাযোগ করিতে পারিবেন।

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