



AN 'EXTRA' HOUR FOR SHOPPING DELIGHTS CITY DWELLERS

'Go for increased power output rather than cutting usage'

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

The decision to allow shops in the capital to stay open till 8:00pm has been greeted with warm welcome by both shop owners and shoppers. Starting from earlier last month, city shops have been allowed to stay open till 8:00pm instead of 7:00pm following an appeal from the leaders of Dhaka City Shop Owners Association.

"It's a great step that has been due for a while. As people tend to be too busy during daytime to go shopping, an additional hour for shopping is always welcome," said Sagar Chowdhury from Green Road. City dwellers with their families rushing to shopping malls on the verge of closing in the late evenings has become a common spectacle following the curb in mall business hours.

However, city dwellers believe the revised closing hours will somewhat ease the situation.

Nafeesa Alam, a service provider from Dhanmondi, said the extended shopping hours would be a boon for people who spend most of the day in their offices. "The extension of time to shop is bound to prove more convenient for everyone," said Nafeesa Alam.

"Previously office-goers returning home at 5pm used to

have a hard time reaching the shopping malls by 7pm. The extension has alleviated some of that late evening haste," she added.

"The additional hour is really appreciated, however we are still restricted to visit only a handful of stores with the limited amount of time," said Poornima Saha, a school-teacher from Banani.

Shop owners are also

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delighted with the longer shopping hours and are thinking up ways to woo buyers in the late hours. Mohammad Ekramul, owner of a jewelry shop in New Market, is one of those shop owners.

"To stay open till 7:00pm in this age of commercialization and consumerism is an utterly unfair deal. I feel it's a very good decision from the government, however they should

consider stretching the business hours by another hour or so," said Ekramul.

Taiyab Ali, owner of an electronic goods store in Baitul Mukarram market echoed the words of Mohammad Ekramul.

"Although the extra hour hasn't had much effect in the sale, it has reduced the last minute haste at the end of the day," said Mohammad Tobarak, another shop owner

from Baitul Mukarram market. "We are content with the extended hour as the government decided it for the best interest of everyone," he added.

Following the authorities' decision to put a ceiling on the business hours of shops to ease the pressure of electricity usage, discontent and criticism surged from both shop owners and shoppers on the ground of

inconvenience. The fact that the restriction in shopping hours did little to reduce the power outages only boosted public outcries.

While the revised policy to extend the business hours by an additional hour has been a good move by the authorities, city dwellers believe the government should consider schemes to increase electricity production rather than trying to cut its usage.

"Rather than taking these sorts of policies to cut the use of electricity, they (government) should prioritize increasing the production of electricity," said Mohammad Ekramul.

"Also, there are numerous examples of illegal use of electricity everywhere. The authorities should be more concerned to remove these illegal connections, which would be a more viable measure to ease electricity usage," he added.

In a bid to take some pressure off the electricity deficit, the government put the ceiling on shopping hours on February 25 earlier this year. All businesses except for restaurants and pharmacies were bound by the new policy.

DOHS dog-owners' dilemma

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dog-owners in DOHS have come forward with complaints against the Mohakhali DOHS Council Committee after the later banned ownership of dogs in the DOHS area.

On May 1, the committee, elected to oversee welfare of residents of the area, voted at its annual general meeting not to allow anyone in the area to keep dogs. Subsequently, all dog-owners in Mohakhali DOHS, estimated to be about 60-70 in number, received letters warning them to remove their dogs from the area, and were called to a meeting to reinforce the caution.

Yasser Yousuf Khan, a resident of New DOHS Mohakhali, said, "Dogs are really man's best friend, they are so loyal, vigilant and good for security, I don't understand why they (DOHS Council) have been frantically traumatizing us to get rid of dogs from society."

According to the Khan family, they were forced to file a general diary (GD) against the Mohakhali DOHS Council at the Kafur Thana police station after

one of their German Shepherd dogs was allegedly kidnapped from the street.

"The Council guards snatched my dog when the servant was walking him on the street and tried to blackmail me

Council, has denied any improper or threatening action on their part. "The Council as such has no legal authority to ban dogs in the area. All we have done is to try to discourage people from keeping them

disturbance in the area with their loud barking, frighten children, and even attack people in some cases.

"Many people have kept dogs of violent nature, that are not intended for breeding at home. We have admonished owners whose dogs are of this sort of breed, or whose dogs have attacked other people, to remove them from the DOHS premises," he said.

Sources in the Council said, that if the dog-owners did not comply, the military police would be informed to come in and take away the dogs by force.

"It will be out of our hands then. Whether they throw the dogs away somewhere, or shoot them to death, the main thing is there should not be any dogs in Mohakhali DOHS," sources said.

The unfortunate dog-owners of Mohakhali DOHS have appealed to authorities for sympathy regarding their beloved pets, and expressed their fervent hope that the Mohakhali DOHS Council Committee will reverse its decision and refrain from any extreme steps.



into giving an undertaking not to keep my dogs, so I filed a GD against them," said Yousuf Khan. Major (Rtd) Afsar, secretary of the Mohakhali DOHS

as pets," he said. Asked about the reasons behind such a drastic decision on their part, Major Afsar explained that dogs create a

Onion dear again

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Onion is becoming dear again with its price soaring everyday. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) decision to withdraw 10 percent duty last month made little impact as the item marked 30-35 percent rise in the city markets in the last three weeks.

The price has steadily gone up by Tk 10-12 per kilogram (kg). One kg of local variety of onion now sells at Tk 30-32 while the imported one at around Tk 28.

The same were Tk 24-26 and Tk 20-22 only a week ago. And about a month ago, they were Tk 18 and Tk 15 respectively.

"Its really very tough to keep pace with the price hike. Every day you will find this or that item has gone pricey," said Golam Kadir, a college teacher, while bargaining with an onion seller at Karwan Bazar.

Wholesalers attributed the price hike to various factors including fall in production in India, increasing demand of Indian onion in Malaysia, Dubai and Sri Lanka, hoarding of the item ahead of Ramadan and very recently snapping road links due to flood.

Besides, the stock of locally produced onion has almost exhausted. The importers at this time of year import onion from



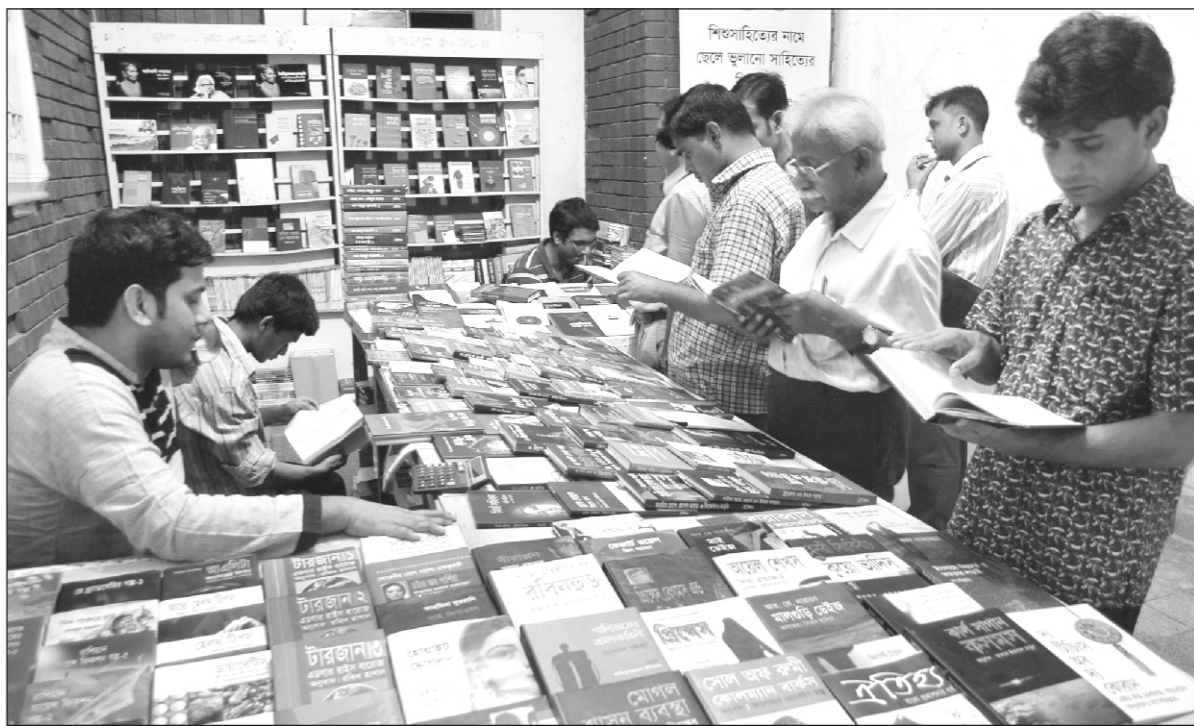
India, Pakistan or Turkey. But most of the importers prefer to import the item from Bihar or Maharashtra of India.

"Import from Turkey or Pakistan takes much time. There is always a fear of incurring loss because a portion of the item gets damaged during import," said Sobhan Mia, a staff of an importer at Karwan Bazar wholesale market.

He informed that Indian consumers federation recently increased the price of onion by around \$100 a ton.

BOOK FAIR

A ten-day book festival organised by Oithya Publication House is going on at the Public Library. The festival that began on August 1, offers a special discount ranging from 25 to 60 percent. Oithya is also going to publish a number of books by prominent authors to mark the occasion. The festival ends on August 10.



Advertising, Bank & market timing

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- German Cultural Center**
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- Indian Cultural Center**
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- Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts**
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- Cezanne Art Gallery**
UAE Moitri Complex,
Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani
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Email: office@drik.net
- Gallery Chittrak**
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Tel: 8620345, Email: chittrak@agni.com
- National Art Gallery**
Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000
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- Shilpa Rag**
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Fax: 8117085,
Email: shilparg@vasdigital.com
- Shilpangan**
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- Tivoli Art Gallery**
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- IFIC Bank Ltd**
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9550426-34
Fax: 9561410
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9871095, 9871074, 9888068,
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- Uttara Bank Ltd**
9561438, 9551162-3,
Fax: 8613529
- United Commercial Bank Ltd**
9561580, Fax: 88-02-9560587
- Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
Elephant Road-Friday
Bishal Center-Friday
Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday
Polwel Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursday
Anshan Manzil--Thursday.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday