

Eid shopping picks up in port city

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

With barely a week to go, Eid shopping gains momentum in the port city with all the shopping malls, arcades and markets as well as the makeshift shops on footpaths in the city being bustling from morning till night.

The scenario of Eid shopping here has remarkably changed during the last few days in comparison with the first two weeks of Ramadan that show a poor sale.

While markets are gripped in a frenzied atmosphere, the buyers and sellers express mixed reaction and little dissatisfaction blaming the soaring prices of essentials.

They said the price hike of essentials will lessen their Eid festivity to some extent.

Due to financial constraint, the people of modest income have cut down their budget while the affluent section of the society has nearly completed shopping.

People of well off section who are in search of latest fashion in design and colour usually through the posh shopping malls like New Market (Bipani Bitan), Amin Centre, Sanmar Ocean City, Central Plaza, Mimi Super Market, Chittagong Shopping Complex as well as several other popular outlets like Nabarupa, Pride, Aarong, Anjan's, Mia Bibi, K-crafts, Westecs, Revlon, Cat's Eye,

Matra, Nari and Menz Club.

The middle class shoppers like to shop at Reazuddin Bazar, Lucky Plaza, Chawk View Market, Terri Bazar, Tanakumandi Lane Bazar, Shipping Complex, Singapore-Bangkok Market and other markets for necessary items where they found at reasonable price.

Jahur Hawker Market and a number of city points where hawkers set up makeshift shops, however, are still the most popular outlets for the lower middle class and the poor.

No market has arranged any sale festival or so-called lottery to draw more customers this year due to ban on such practices by the police administration.

Of the Eid attires, sarrees are in top demand for the female customers while punjabis, as usual, for the male.

Chandan Chowdhury, a salesman of Sumsun at Sanmar Ocean City, said sarrees having decoration of antics over pure chiffon silk between Tk 2,500 and Tk 40,000 have great demand this year.

Different types of Italian craft silk sarree are available with prices of Tk 8,500 to Tk 40,000.

Kakon, a sarree shop in the market, offers Batni Silk and Radwan cotton from Tk 3,000 to Tk 5,000.

Romana Sarree Ghar on the second floor of Amin Centre has brought collections of variety of georgette decorated with

Bombay boutiques, jardousi and chumki with prices varying between Tk 1,000 and Tk 13,000.

Married women crave for these sarrees, said Mohammad Musa of Romana.

Sarrees with similar design and price are also being sold at Reazuddin Bazar.

Nusrat Ali, a housewife, finally came to Reazuddin Bazar after visiting Sanmar, Amin Centre and New Market to find her match in terms of price and choice, and got it here.

"I have at last bought a georgette sarree at Tk 2000 after bargaining with the salesmen at Reazuddin Bazar," Nusrat said.

Harun Ur Rashid, a seller of Lucky Corner of Lucky Plaza at Agrabad, blamed the devaluation of money and recent flood for price hike of essentials.

Sleeveless kameej decorated with different artistic patterns, with brand names like Zepsi and Anarkali have become popular among the young girls this year.

Zepsi are being sold at Tk 4,000 to Tk 7,000 while Anarkali at Tk 8,000 to Tk 11,000 at different shops at Amin Centre.

Young people are gathering at popular outlets like Khadigar, Paristhan and others that showcased attractive and colourful punjabis.

Here, khadi punjabis of Comilla are sold at Tk 250 to Tk 350, punjabis from Narshingdi, Pabna and Jamalpur at Tk 350 to Tk 900 while Rajshahi silk ranged from Tk 1050 to Tk 2,200.

Some posh outlets such as Revlon, Cat's Eye, Menz Klub, Ruby Red, Handi Bazar and Khakki also have nice collections of shirts and pants for gents. Revlon at New Market brought some latest brands of shirts including Download, Energy, Moonstone, Spider and Dragon priced from Tk 750 to Tk 1050 for college and university going teenagers.

Besides, the authorities have allowed around 20,000 hawkers to do business on the footpath again at different city points offering a scope for thousands of lower middle class and lower class for Eid shopping.



People wait in long queues for advance tickets at Chittagong Railway Station.

Proper management to lessen hassle of homebound people

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Proper management by the authorities concerned and strict monitoring by the law enforcement agencies have lessened the hassle of the homebound people remarkably in getting advance tickets of railway ahead of Eid in the port city this year.

Anxiety, however, grips many who could not collect the advance tickets of the long distance buses and trains as those have already been sold out.

Authorities of some long distance bus services who are yet to start selling advance tickets, however, assured the homebound people of tickets on the very day they wish to travel.

Railway authorities started selling the advance tickets on October 4 of seven trains -- four Dhaka-bound inter-city, two Sylhet-bound inter-city and a Chanpur-bound train -- for five-day trip from October 9 to October 13.

Railway sources said four inter-city trains -- Subarna Express, Mahanagar Prabhathi, Mahanagar Gadhuli and Turna Nishitha, will leave Chittagong Railway Station for Dhaka with 2890 passengers everyday.

Most of 14,450 tickets of these trains for five days from

October 9 have been sold out in advance from October 4 to 8, railway sources in Chittagong said.

Almost all 9,410 advance tickets for the two Sylhet-bound trains -- 655-seat Paharika and 634-seat Udyan, and one Chandpur-bound train 593-seat Meghna Express -- were also sold out within this time, sources added.

To cope with the rush of homebound people, the railway has started running the inter-city trains with extra coaches since October 9 while some standing tickets are also being sold for two Dhaka-bound trains -- Mahanagar Gadhuli and Turna Nishitha --, they said.

Due to regular monitoring of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), General Railway Police (GRP) and senior railway officials, the people could buy their tickets from the respective counters without facing nuisance of blackers, said Station Manager ATM Golam Mostafa of Chittagong Railway Station.

We are preserving time-to-time record of the sale and it is open to all, he said.

"We have also arranged an special express service from Chittagong to Chandpur everyday from October 10 to October 13," he added.

Meanwhile, the people could not collect advance tickets of many long distance buses as staffs of those buses had preserved many tickets for selling them at higher rates later.

But the authorities of bus services like Hanif, Soudia, Unique, Eagle and Shyamali denied the allegation saying, they have started the sale of advance tickets of Dhaka and different districts of North Bengal on October 2.

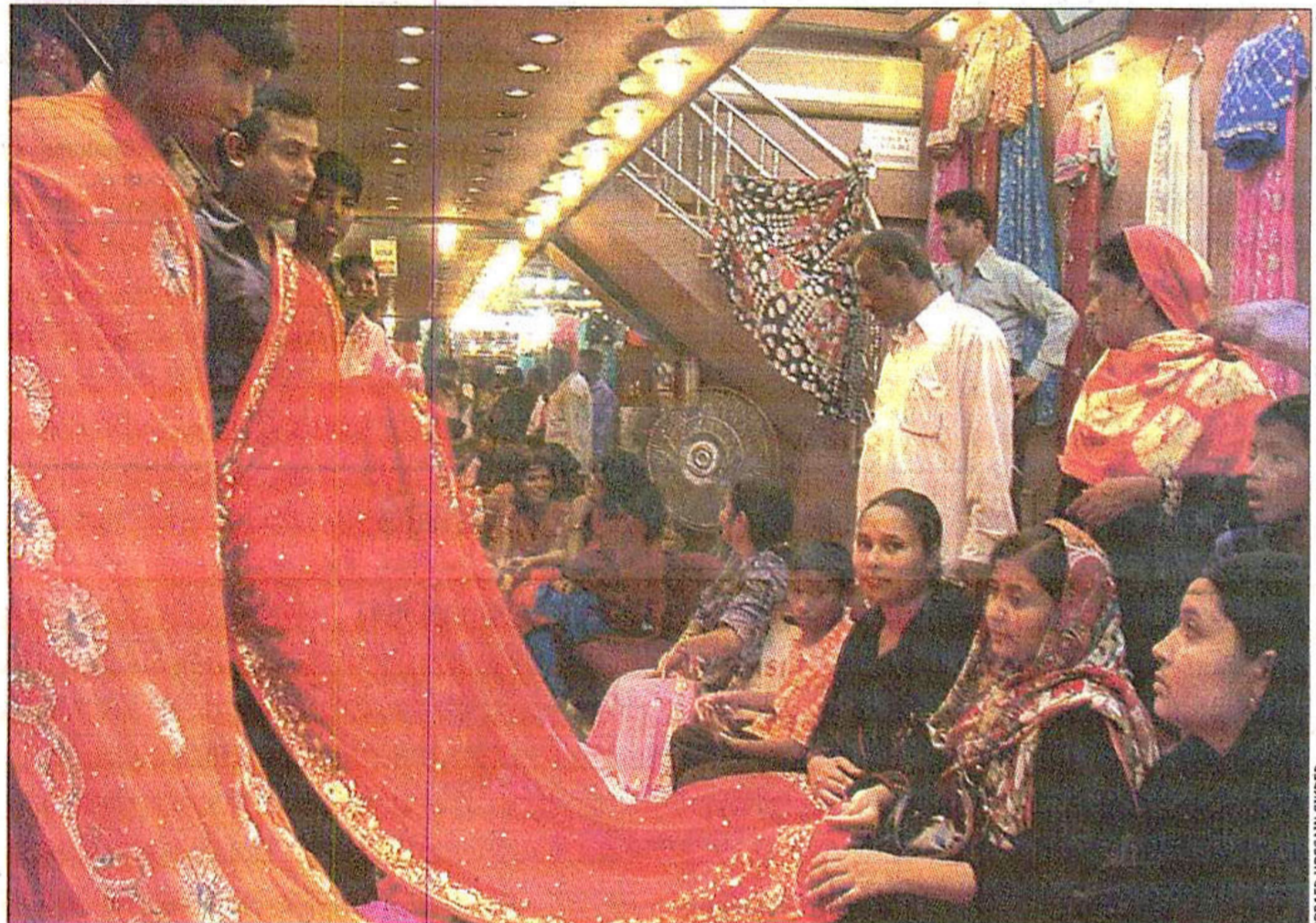
Almost all the advance tickets of these services from today to Saturday (October 13) have been sold out.

On the other hand, the authorities of S Alam bus service said they passengers will get tickets at different counters before their journey as they do not sell any advance ticket.

Many passengers said staffs of different bus services are charging higher price for tickets of different northern region like Khulna, Satkhira and Jessore.

Abdul Hamid, a passenger, said prices of tickets have been increased by Tk 50 ahead of Eid.

Jafar, a staff of Keya bus service, said they ticket at cheaper rate than the government fixed fare round the year and they are to raise ticket price this time to keep pace with the price hike of essentials.



People through different city markets for Eid shopping. The photo was taken from New Market.

theweekthatwas

CMP assures security during Durga Puja

A delegation Puja Ujapan Parishad called on Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner Mainur Rahman Chowdhury at his office on Saturday and sought his cooperation during Durga Puja in the port city.

Mainur assured the delegation of adequate security measures during the puja to maintain law and order.

The delegation members included Bangladesh Puja Ujapan Parishad, Chittagong Metropolitan President Bimal Kanti Dey, former president Sadhan Dhar, General Secretary Ashish Kumar Bhattacharyya, Vice President Santosh Nandi, and Subrata Chakrabarty from Khulsi Branch of Parishad, Makhan Lal Mahajan (Patenga) and Uttam Singh Hazari (Kotwali). Assistant commissioners and officers in-charge of twelve police stations under CMP were present.

Mayor urges child's rights' awareness

Acting mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) M Manjur Alam at a meeting urged the people for creating mass awareness about the rights of the children in society.

"Children are being deprived of their rights in every sphere of life in Bangladesh, a fact that is not good for a society. Therefore, we all should be careful about their rights," he said while he was speaking as the chief guest.

Non-government organisations of Chittagong organised the meeting at Anderkilla Ward Office on Sunday with president of Antor, an NGO, Emranul

Haq Chowdhury in the chair. Ward commissioner Chowdhury Hasan Mahmud Hasni, Chief Reporter of Daily Bangladesh Surobhat M Nasirul Haq, Deputy Director of Social Welfare Department Rasheda Khatun, Assistant District Education Officer AKM Reazuddin and Green Bangladesh Chairman Mahfuzul Haq Chowdhury also spoke at the meeting.

Aramit distributes relief

Aramit Group on Thursday distributed relief among the flood-affected families at different unions in Raozan upazila.

Each of the 500 families from Utkirchar, Guzra and Noapara unions received five kgs of rice, one kg lentil, one kg pulse and one litre soyabean oil.

Aramit Group General Manager (Commercial) B Gupta and General Manager (Accounts) MA Siddiquee distributed the relief in presence of the chairmen.

'Islam a must for peace'

Islam is a religion that always talked about peace and brotherly ties, said Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Hossain Jamil.

He was addressing as the chief guest the closing session of the joint annual general meeting of Central Eid Congregation Committee and Central Graveyard Foundation Committee at a community centre in the port city on Saturday.

Jamil called upon all for materialising the teaching of Islam to establish peace and brotherly ties among all.

Southern University Vice-Chancellor Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury attended the inaugural session in the morning.

The speakers in the morning ses-

sion recalled the contribution of historian and Professor Emeritus Dr Abdul Karim, the Dainik Purbokone Chairman Mohammad Yusuf Chowdhury, Engineer Munawar Ahmed, Shahedul Alam Quaderi and Harun Salam.

Congregation Committee President and Deputy Commissioner Ashraf Shamim presided over the sessions.

RMG workers' families get insurance money

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) on Sunday handed over Group Insurance Claim cheques for Tk 23 lakh to the family members of the workers who

died during service at different garment factories in the last one year.

Under the group insurance facility, 23 families of garments workers' got cheque for Tk 1 lakh each at a ceremony at Chittagong Club.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mainur Rahman Chowdhury handed over the cheques as the chief guest at the ceremony.

The CMP commissioner in his speech said the coordinated and sincere efforts of the owners and the workers helped garment sector survive in the international markets.

He said if the efforts continue the sector will flourish further in the future.

BGMEA First Vice-President MA Salam presided over the ceremony where former first vice-presidents SM Abu Tayab, SM Nurul Haq, Ershad Ullah,

garments factory owners and businessmen were present.

Pragatishil Shikhhak Samaj, an association of progressive minded teachers of Chittagong University (CU), on Thursday demanded release of 12 detained teachers of public universities before the upcoming Eid and Durga Puja.

"Teachers and students of public universities played significant roles in establishing Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign country," said

the teachers in a statement.

Keeping the teachers behind bars for long time might not bring any good to the congenial academic atmosphere in the universities, they said.

The statement signed by association's coordinator Professor Helal Uddin Nizami further said that the teachers protested the Dhaka University incident from an ethical point of view and one of their demands was to withdraw the state of emergency from the country, which was also felt by different organisations and common people of the country.

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Chittagong Metropolitan Union of

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The CMUJ leaders made the demand at a meeting commemorating Mohammad Yusuf Chowdhury, founding chairman of local daily the Dainik Purbokone and the pioneering figure of modern press in Chittagong.

The speakers at the meeting recalled the contribution of Yusuf Chowdhury to the newspaper industry in the port city and upgrading Chittagong Veterinary College into a university.

CMUJ organised the meeting at its auditorium. Chittagong University Vice-

Chancellor Prof Dr M Badiul Alam, Chittagong chamber acting president Mahubul Alam, the Dainik Purbokone Executive Editor Dr Ramjuddin Chowdhury, the Dainik Karnaphuli Editor Afsaruddin Chowdhury, Chittagong University Teachers Association President Prof Dr Siddiq Ahmed Chowdhury, Chittagong Press Club President Ali Abbas and General Secretary Eaj Yusuf, immediate past president Abu Sufian, Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) President Shahid UI Alam and General Secretary Reaz Ahmed, CMUJ founding president Nazir Ahmed and former president Iskander Ali Chowdhury, BFUJ Vice-President Shamsuddin Harun spoke at the meeting with CMUJ President Shamsul Haq Haidari in the chair.

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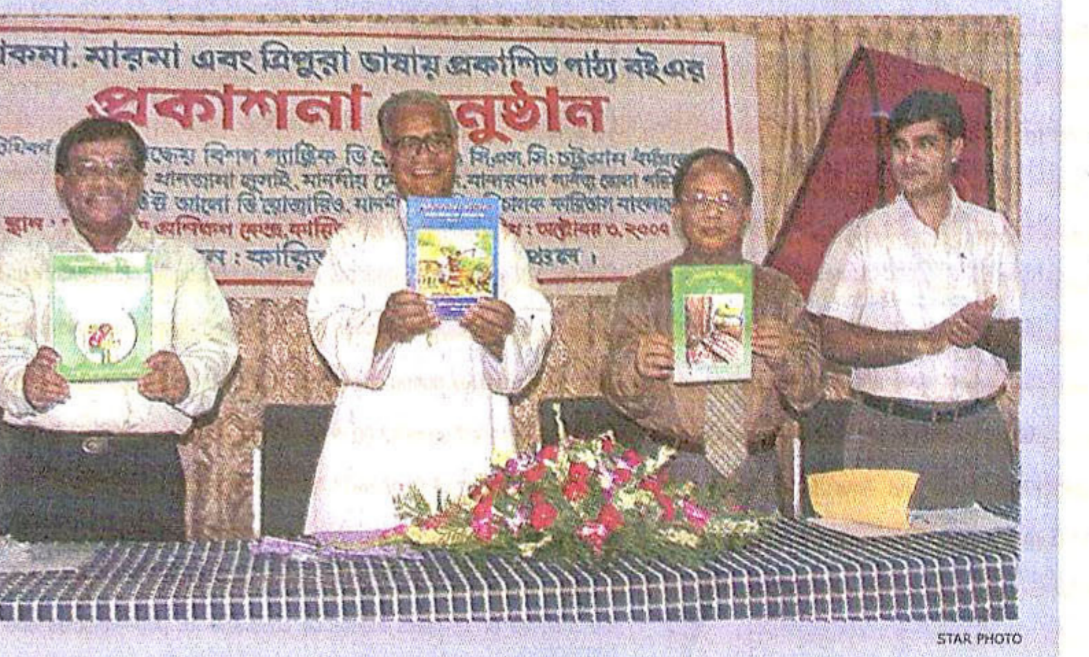
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Acting CCC Mayor M Manjur Alam speaks at the inaugural ceremony of the Autistic Children's Welfare Foundation, a centre for the children suffering from autism, at the Circuit House auditorium on Tuesday.



Bandarban Parbatya Zila Parishad Chairman Prof Thanzama Lusa, Bishop Patric D Rozario and Caritas Director Dr Benedict Alo D Rozario launch textbooks published in Chakma, Marma and Tripura languages by Caritas Chittagong at a publication ceremony at the Zila Parishad auditorium on Wednesday.