

Cattle price

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that comparing to the larger cattle, the demand for small and mid-sized ones were higher, leading to a rise in their prices. Goats have also been selling at higher prices this year, said the traders.

Bhola, a trader from Kushtia, was asking Tk 4.5 lakh yesterday for a large size bull at Gabtoli Cattle Market. He did not accept a Tk 2.7-lakh offer for the animal from a prospective buyer yesterday and since no one has offered to buy it yet, he would now sell it for Tk 2.8 lakh, he added with frustration.

Another cattle trader said he usually sells large size cattle and he sold most of the animals to political leaders, businessmen or industrialists during previous Eids, but this year he could not sell any of the cattle yet. "The prices I'm being offered for the animals this year do not even cover my expenses," he added.

Trader Sona Mian who brought six middle-sized cattle from Singair of Manikganj said he was offered Tk 31,500 for one of the cattle on Tuesday, but he turned down the offer asking Tk 38,000 for it. "But today, I sold that same animal for Tk 27,500, fearing a fall in price," Sona Mian said adding that he has incurred a loss of Tk 5,000 in that

transaction as his expenses to raise cattle has doubled during the past one year, especially due to the price hike of cattle feed.

Demand for larger animals have dropped this year as a large number of their main buyers, politicians and businessmen, are either arrested or are on the run after the present government had launched anti-corruption drives, said many traders.

This year the DCC has earned Tk 5.62 crore by leasing out the 10 temporary cattle markets ahead of Eid-ul-Azha and it made another Tk 6.2 crore from the one-year lease of the permanent cattle market at Gabtoli.

The temporary cattle markets of DCC are located on Armanitola playground and DCC field adjacent to Chitra Mahal, Jigatala-Hazaribagh playground, Hosnidalan Road, Balur Math adjacent to Brothers Union Club, Uttara Azampur Government Primary School ground and the adjacent field of Rajuk, ground of Meradia Bazar at Khilgaon, field to the west of Taltala Bus Stand, field at Agargaon near radio station, field near Alam Market at Postogola and field near Outfall Staff Quarter in DCC Ward 85.

Shakira grieves

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spaces where the children can grow healthy up in places away from trouble, at least for a few hours," she said, her eyes beaming with the audacity of such hope.

"Where children can be children, play and sing. It's much more than learning, it's a place where children can socialise and communicate with children," she said.

"I loved hearing the kids say they dream about becoming doctors and nurses...They all had positive dreams. That's what I want to leave Bangladesh knowing some of these kids will be given the opportunity to accomplish their dreams," she said, wishing to see the results when she again visits Bangladesh.

"Still coming to terms with what she had seen in the southern part of the country, Shakira said, "I was devastated to see that entire villages were wiped away. Everything they had was gone...that touched me. The loss of so many human lives...I will never forget the faces of the mothers who lost their children."

"Bangladesh and its people need attention, international attention from governments, NGOs and regular people as well," she said.

The Unicef goodwill ambassador had already planned on visiting Bangladesh but brought the visit forward after seeing the damage caused by cyclone Sidr. As part of her wider plans, she visited a Unicef project in Rajshahi where "hard-to-reach-children" spend days in centres away from the streets.

Shakira has been working with children since she was 18 when she built a foundation called Pies Descalzos, meaning "bare feet" in Spanish.

The seeds of inspiration had been sown a decade earlier at the age of eight. Her father was bankrupt and her family just lost most of what they had.

Her father used to take her to a park in the more run-down part

of the town, where she found kids sniffing glue and was shattered by the sight of their hardship. "From that point I decided I will do something to help them one day," Shakira recalls.

"I always felt very committed to review the issues that children face, maybe because I grew up in a country like Colombia, where children face the same problems like children in Bangladesh and elsewhere," she said.

"Children are the most vulnerable population in the world and at the same time they are our only hope for a safer world," she said, adding, "We are all concerned about a better future and a more secure place for our children, our children's children and for us."

Any attempt to question that commitment is quickly foiled by a well-prepared, sharply honed answer when she was pressed on how she deals with the fact that in a few months she will be singing in a glitzy concert when the children here will still be struggling with their daily lives.

"I guess it's using that spotlight that shines on me during that concert and moving it away from me to put on the issues that need that attention. This is what I can do in my own small way," Shakira was unhesitant in her reply.

She feels this is a commitment to a broader movement, a collective call of the time and her generation.

"I'm sure my generation is not willing to tolerate any more of the brutalities in these countries. We are tired of it. In the next years, my generation will have the power and it's not little. So, it's a great power that we have to communicate and that's why I'm part of the social issues," she said passionately.

The 30-year-old feels that the passion is shared by others of her generation. "I can do things in a very small way in the community of young people who want to do something about all this. These little things make great changes."

Hasina's trial

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stalled for three months all proceedings of the case following the HC order.

Earlier on December 9, the HC had stayed proceedings of the trial for three months following a writ petition filed by Hasina's lawyers challenging shifting of the court for trying a particular case, and its operation at two places at a time.

An HC bench had also issued rule upon the government to explain why the November 26 gazette notification directing the

RMG workers

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Normalcy was restored in the two factories after the authorities agreed to pay the workers as much as they deserve.

Several hundred workers of Fartex Fashionwear started vandalising their factory at about 2:30pm, alleging that the management was dithering over overtime pay for the last four months, Eid bonus and half-monthly salary for December.

The agitated workers also blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway. Police, however, dispersed them.

La Belle, Trendy Sweaters and Fartex Fashionwear paid the workers in the evening.

metropolitan sessions judge to hold trial of Hasina along with two others at a makeshift court 'should not be declared without lawful authority'.

Later, the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice M Ruhul Amin, responding to a government plea, stayed the HC order, clearing the holding of trial at the relocated court on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises.

Hasina was arrested on July 16 in connection with the case filed with Gulshan Police Station on June 13 by Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of a power company.

Her younger sister Sheikh Rahana, who lives in London, and detained cousin and former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim are the two other accused in the case.

Trial of the case began on December 3 at the makeshift Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court after the government in a gazette notification allowed it on security ground.

On the first day of trial, defence lawyers challenged legality of the government order for the trial under special arrangements.

They decided to file the writ petition with the HC saying the government cannot issue such an order to a court when the judiciary is separated from the executive.

Khaleda's nephew

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Tk 2.5 lakh "fake" business investment.

The former premier's nephew submitted Tk 4.66 crore wealth statement on July 22 and also showed property purchased in his own name as business investment.

The FIR says Tuhin in the statement concealed information and gave false information by showing lower expenditure and lower price rates. He also did not mention wealth he possessed in his own name and in the name of his family.

The property shown in the wealth statement includes three houses worth Tk 46.74 lakh in Gomnati, Domar, and Nilphamari, 20 decimal land in Bhaluka, Mymensingh and bank balance of about Tk 6.67 lakh.

Tuhin also showed that he had spent about Tk 1.16 crore in expenditure for others purposes for him and his family.

The property Tuhin did not mention in the statement includes Tk 40.7 lakh he gave to Executive Motors for business purpose, while he showed Tk 2.5 lakh fake business statement with Daffodil Online Ltd.

CASE AGAINST REDWAN
Assistant Director Shahin Ara Montaj filed the case against former state minister and LDP presidium member Redwan Ahmed and his wife Montaj Ahmed.

In the case, the plaintiff said Redwan illegally accumulated Tk 2.31 crore and did not show property worth Tk 1.37 crore in his wealth statement.

Redwan submitted the wealth statement through jail authorities on August 14 following the ACC notice issued on August 7.

The statement shows lower prices of a plot in Uttara, a four-storey building in the capital on 7.21 decimal land and a two-storey building at Monihar in Comilla, the FIR says.

His concealed property includes two cars in his wife's name, a car in his own name, four shops in Chandina in the name of his wife, son, two daughters and a daughter-in-law, and a Rajuk plot in the capital in his wife's name, the FIR adds.

The FIR also says Redwan gave false information about Tk 2.2 crore saying his son Moyeen Ahmed donated him Tk 2 crore and he took loan Tk 20 lakh from his son in 1990.

But investigation revealed that Moyeen was only 13 then and the matter of money dealing with a boy at such an age is unacceptable, unbelievable and inconsistent, the FIR adds.

Montaj was included in the case as she abetted her husband in accumulating and concealing the wealth.

Bhuiyan sued

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The other accused are former state minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Ziaul Haq Zia and former secretary MA Kashem.

Advocate Mahbul Alam Dulal filed the case against them for giving him death threats.

In his complaint, Dulal said a group close to the then BNP-led coalition government threatened Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) board of trustees Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad after his organisation branded the LGRD ministry as one of the most corrupt ministries in Bangladesh.

After the TIB report was published, they also threatened to sue Prof Muzaffer.

When Dulal along with some other lawyers defended Prof Muzaffer and gave statement protesting the incident, he received death threats on July 17, 2006.

TINKU CASE
Metropolitan Magistrate Mohamamd Shahin Uddin ordered to send Tinku to jail after Lalbagh police produced him before the court showing him arrested under section 16(2) of the EPR.

Nabajyoti Chakma, investigation officer (IO) of the case, said Tinku was arrested in front of the Dhaka Central Jail gate at about 11:00am while he was delivering speech after getting released on bail.

The IO said since he made provocative statements against the government, he needs to be put in jail until the completion of the investigation.

The joint forces picked up Tinku from his Maghbaraz residence on January 24.

DCC cleaning staffs

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engaged 160 trucks, 400 containers, nine trawlers, six pray loaders, two tire-dodgers, 20 dump trucks and 10 water lorries.

The sources said they will start removing garbage at 12noon tomorrow. As many as 1,000 cleaners will be on hand in 90 wards, while 3,000 cleaners will clean the cattle markets. Moreover, 850 truck-labourers will remove the waste of sacrificial cattle.

"We are trying our best to keep the city neat and clean during and after the Eid-ul-Azha," Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka told The Daily Star.

Commander Maksudur Rahman Chowdhury, DCC chief conservancy officer, said, "If any negligence is found, punitive actions would be taken against the staffs concerned."

A three-member committee has also been formed to monitor the cleanliness drive. Loud speakers will be used and leaflets distributed to raise public awareness."

DU teachers

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did not articulate who actually violated the emergency rules.

Law enforcement agencies arrested the four teachers and one student in late August who and 14 other students were later implicated in two cases for allegedly violating the emergency rules.

A Dhaka University teacher, meantime, expressed the hope that the teachers and the one student might walk out of prison in a couple of days after December 24, when hearings in the two cases against them will be held.

Prof Tazmeri SA Islam, acting president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, said, "I think they will be released in a couple of days after December 24. Next hearings in the two cases have been fixed on the same date, indicating that the government is very sincere in their release."

Earlier on December 17, the trial of the other case began, with the court recording the complainant's depositions.

Lawyers of Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, one of the four teachers, yesterday cross-examined the complainant after the court recorded his statement. The judge will again hear the case on December 24 when lawyers of the three other teachers and the one student will cross-examine the plaintiff.

The jail authorities yesterday turned in the four teachers and the student to the court where they were given permission to sit on a bench during the proceedings.

The second case was filed against 5,000 unnamed people, including Dhaka University teachers and students, on August 22. They were accused of violating the emergency rules, vandalising public and private property, obstructing police duty, and assaulting law enforcers on the university campus and in its vicinity.

Police on September 9, however, chargesheeted the four teachers and 15 students on charges of instigating violence on the campus and at Shahbagh on August 22.

Mad rush for home

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companies that operate through Gabtoli bus terminal has increased their operation by 20 to 25 percent to cope with the Eid rush of passengers.

He however denied all allegation of overcharging the passengers.

"We have asked our staffs to follow the fare rates fixed by the government ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr," he said.

KAMALAPUR RAILWAY STATION
Although the railway authorities arranged advance sale of tickets ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha, all tickets of the 24 inter-city trains were already sold out.

They also tagged extra compartments with each inter-city and express trains, said Muhammad Shamsul Haque, station master at Kamalapur station.

"Inter-city trains have the capacity of carrying 16,718 seating passengers, and tickets for those are already sold out. Tickets for mail and express trains, which can be bought instantly from the stations, are unsold now," he said yesterday.

These trains have a total of around 6,000 seats, he said.

UK offers \$60m

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million for relief and recovery efforts bringing its cumulative commitment to flood and cyclone relief for Bangladesh in 2007 to over \$30 million.

Sixty million dollars of the grant will be provided for adapting to the impacts of the climate change and to strengthen disaster preparedness, \$120 million for Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction programme implemented by the UN, directly benefiting 3 million people in 16 poor urban areas, \$25 million will be provided for vocational skills development, and \$2 million will be given to the NGOs helping in the voter registration process.

"Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries in the face of the climate change and we recognise its challenges. I welcome the progress in Bali on the issue and urge the whole international community to come forward to help in facing the challenges," the UK ministers said.

Protection of vulnerable countries against natural disasters requires more than emergency relief, he said adding that the UK made a long-term development commitment in helping Bangladesh face the challenges of the climate change and in strengthening its disaster preparedness.

He said he has enormous admiration for the resilience, hard work, and commitment of the Bangladeshi people. "The UK's major focus on development is for lifting the people out of poverty and for improving their chances in life."

The UK secretary of state for international development said it is

The detained teachers are Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof Sadrul Amin, General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof Harun-or-Rashid, dean of science faculty, and Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, chairman of applied physics department.

Haji pilgrims stone

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Sheep sacrificed through coupon purchase are frozen and then distributed among the needy in the Islamic world.

This year the coupons cost around 105 dollars each. Last year, according to official figures coupons worth more than 74 million dollars were sold.

The hajj reached its climax on Tuesday when the faithful -- men clad in a two-piece seamless white cloth, the women covered except for the hands and face -- spent the day praying for forgiveness.

"In total, 2,454,325 pilgrims, including 1,707,814 from outside the kingdom, are performing the pilgrimage this year," said the Saudi news agency SPA, quoting official figures.

Earlier, Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdel Aziz said the pilgrims had come to Saudi Arabia from 181 different countries, with their number increasing three percent on last year.

Among this year's pilgrims was Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, invited by Saudi King Abdullah to become the first president of the Islamic republic to take part.

His pilgrimage has an added political significance because of the sometimes rocky relations between Shiite Iran and Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia.

An Iranian demonstration during the hajj in 1987 led to Tehran and Riyadh breaking diplomatic relations. Security forces tried to break up the protest and 402 people, including 275 Iranians, were killed.

Iranians stayed away from the hajj until 1991.

This year's hajj ends on Friday.

People were now buying 'standing tickets' for inter-city trains, which would not ensure any seats for them. They have already sold around 6,000 'standing tickets', the station master said.

Yesterday, many home-goers were seen on the roof-top of different trains braving their lives.

SADARGHAT LAUNCH TERMINAL
All roads towards Sadarghat launch terminal were packed with vehicles carrying home-going passengers since yesterday noon. The traffic congestion took a serious turn as a cattle market was set up at nearby Naya Bazar.

Many of the passengers alleged that launch staffs were overcharging them by Tk 100 to 200 each.

Each of the launches were seen overloaded with passengers yesterday.

"A Bhola-bound launch with a capacity of around 400 passengers, was carrying about 600 passengers," alleged Mohiuddin, a passenger.

The home-goers however expressed their satisfaction at the absence of brokers at the terminal this time.

laudable that the chief election commissioner had said should the voter list and electoral reforms be completed earlier than planned then the elections can be brought forward from the stipulated time.

"Bangladesh is striving to achieve a democracy that will endure, the success of the process will be vital to Bangladesh's future development and prosperity," he said.

Appreciating the separation of the judiciary from the executive branch of the government, the process of establishing a Human Rights Commission, and the formation of Regulatory Reforms Commission, the UK secretary said these are surely steps towards improving governance.

"Improved governance will surely attract more foreign direct investment," he said adding that they want better records of human rights in the country.

Asked if due legal process is being followed in trying the detained political leaders, British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury said they are monitoring the situation.

Comparing the number of extra-judicial killings of 2006 and 2007, he said it is a paradox that the number under the emergency rules is lesser.

"We will continue for better records," Anwar Chowdhury said, adding that the best trend in Bangladesh is its press freedom and 'everything must be done to protect it'.

Head of the UK Department for International Development in Bangladesh Chris Austin also spoke at the briefing.

Matin

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southern districts.

Stressing the need for continuing coordinated relief operation, Matin said relief materials have successfully been shipped to hard-to-reach char areas.

The adviser, who is also chief of national coordination committee on serious crimes, called on all to stand beside the cyclone victims.

Present among others were GOC of Jessore Cantonment Maj Gen Rafiqul Islam, Barisal Divisional Commissioner Muhammad Harun Chowdhury and Deputy Commissioner of Patuakhali, AGM Mir Mashur Alam.

18 Bangladeshi

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The Daily Star yesterday.

The hajj pilgrims died between November 16 and December 12. Five of them died in Medina while the rest passed away in Mecca.

The Dhaka Hajj Office said they were buried at different graveyards in Saudi Arabia.

Earlier, one of the pilgrims died of heart failure at the hajj camp in Dhaka on November 25.

About 45,407 Bangladeshi pilgrims went to perform hajj this year.

Khulna mayor

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Public Relations Officer Sarder Abu Taher, Executive Engineer Mashuiuzzaman, BNP leader Tarikul Islam Jahir, Rupsha Unique Ice Factory Chairman Saiful Islam Babu, its Managing Director Mohammad Anam, Kamrul Islam and Mohammad Bulu.

Abu Abdullah Elin of Rupsha upazila in Khulna filed the case with Khulna Police Station on November 3.

In the FIR, the complainant said the city mayor took Tk 450,000 from him through the other accused to provide him with a job in the city corporation.

But he was neither provided with the job nor got back the money.

He also alleged that the accused gave him death threats when he asked them to return the money.

Comilla prison

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enough security members in and outside jails, keeping prisoners' movement under control, strengthening search activities, especially searching new inmates so that they cannot sneak arms, explosives and other illegal objects into jails, and keeping all prisoners under close observation and the suspicious ones incell.

Earlier on March 25, Additional IGP Colonel Md Sirajul Karim issued the first warning letter, pointing out that jail security had come under threat following rejection of the mercy petition filed by JMB leaders before their execution.

Karim said the threat further intensified following the recovery of ammunition and explosives from the possession of JMB members.

Anticipating subversive acts by JMB men, the letter asked the jail authorities to beef up security and intelligence.

In the letter, the Jail Directorate also blamed the authorities of all central and district jails for not taking any measure to strengthen security according to its earlier directives and asked them to take help from police, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and even local military administration, if necessary.

However, Comilla jail authorities did not comply with the repeated warnings and directives thus violating the jail Code.

According to section 78 of the Jail Code, the jail superintendent must visit all prisoners in cells while according to section 746, every prisoner must be searched before being taken to cells so that they cannot carry any object for escaping or committing suicide.

Comilla Jail Super Bazlur Rashid was accused for various irregularities at Chittagong Central Jail when he was in its charge. Prisoners even observed hunger strike protesting against his irregularities. Bazlur was then transferred to Comilla.

Terming the JMB members' jail-breaking attempt an exception and a separate incident, additional IGP Colonel Ashrafur Islam told The Daily Star, "We are trying to strengthen jail security and intelligence activities."

EC targets

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concerned) will be carried out in January (2008) and we are targeting the end of March to hold elections in the four city corporation," Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda told reporters yesterday afternoon.

About the election of Dhaka City Corporation, the CEC said the voter-listing task of DCC is still underway and is scheduled to complete by January 31.

"It takes time to correct the voter list. We can make the assumption (of holding DCC election) after finishing the task," he said, adding that the progress rate of DCC voter listing is quite satisfactory.

About EC's earlier plan to talk with the government to create an atmosphere facilitating the electoral campaign, the CEC said they will do it when they will get a clear idea or date over holding elections.

About holding the stalled dialogue with BNP, the CEC said the matter is now pending with the High Court.

War criminals

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almost unlimited power with the authority to sentence the war criminals even to the gallows.

Asked about the significance of the International Crimes Act, eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik told The Daily Star that the whole thrust of the law is to ensure punishment for war criminals.

"A crime has to be proven beyond a reasonable doubt in other criminal laws, but the standard is not applicable in trials under the International Crimes Act, making it much easier to prove war crimes," Malik said.

Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, accused of war crimes, are now denying their anti-liberation activities in 1971, but its official mouthpiece, the Daily Sangram, still bears the documents of their dastardly deeds. Other national and international news media of the time also carried news of Jamaat's atrocities on the struggling Bangalee nation.

Jamaat leaders Golam Azam, Abbas Ali Khan, Motiur Rahman Nizami, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, Mohammad Quamaruzzaman, Abdul Quader Mollah, ATM Azharul Islam, Abdu Sobhan and others launched anti-liberation campaigns across the country and organised anti-liberation forces during the liberation war of Bangladesh.

With wholehearted cooperation from Jamaat and some other ultra-rightist political parties, the erstwhile Pakistan government formed forces like Razkars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams to resist the liberation of Bangladesh. The principal task of the forces were to provide the Pakistan occupation army with battle field support and intelligence about local resistance groups, and to identify and eliminate Bangalee nationalists.

The current Jamaat leadership, although did not deny their anti-liberation activities earlier and rather termed their activities of the time as the product of their political stance, are now issuing statements denying the allegations against them in the wake of a growing demand for trials of war criminals, since most of its central leaders are accused of war crimes.

"With honesty and sincerity, we had trust in the then Pakistan," Motiur Rahman Nizami, the then secretary general of Jamaat, told the nation on a state run Bangladesh Television programme 'Sabinoye Jante Chai', on June 4, 1996, ahead of the seventh parliamentary election.

Nizami's claim proved that Jamaat worked against the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971, but the current Secretary General of Jamaat Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed