



Bailout package for recession-hit next week

Export-oriented industries to get Tk 2,500-3,000cr in cash subsidy, says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government may allocate Tk 2,500-3,000 crore cash subsidy to affected export-oriented industries in the recession package it is going to announce next week to tackle the fallout of global meltdown.

"Only the affected exporters will be given bailout assistance from the package, and it may be Tk 2,500 crore to Tk 3,000 crore," Commerce Minister Faruk Khan told reporters at his office yesterday.

And Finance Minister AMA Muhith said on the day the recession package would be announced before Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina goes abroad.

Hasina is scheduled to leave for Saudi Arabia on April 22 on an official visit.

Components of the package were already made public earlier, Muhith said while talking to journalists at his office after a meeting with representatives of the Association of Development Agencies Bangladesh.

Finance ministry sources said the sectors to get cash subsidy include jute and jute goods, leather, frozen foods, garments, textile etc. There would be a committee to recommend cash subsidy.

Additional cash subsidy would be given in the next fiscal year, the sources added.

Meanwhile, many export-oriented sectors now get cash incentive, and Tk 1,050 crore has been allocated for this in the present budget. Of the amount, Tk 243 crore was released early this month.

The recession package would consist of bank facilities as well as tax and other facilities apart from cash subsidy.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) had earlier issued directives to the commercial banks in this regard at a meeting of their chief executives.

The bank facilities consist mainly of loan rescheduling without down payment and lower interest rate. Six sectors will get this rescheduling for six months.

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The Daily Star-NIELSEN OPINION SURVEY

Govt ranks high on price control, low on BCL in 100-day show

Fertiliser supply, BDR handling too get high points

STAR REPORT

The Awami League-led government enjoys a solid public endorsement in price control, economic management, and in its handling of the BDR incident, a The Daily Star-Nielsen opinion poll

conducted on the eve of the government's 100-day performance shows.

However, it performed low in its student front rating, and in handling of the administration and judiciary.

The survey reveals that rural support for the government is stronger than its

urban popularity. But in the balance, the government drew an overall performance satisfaction from the respondents.

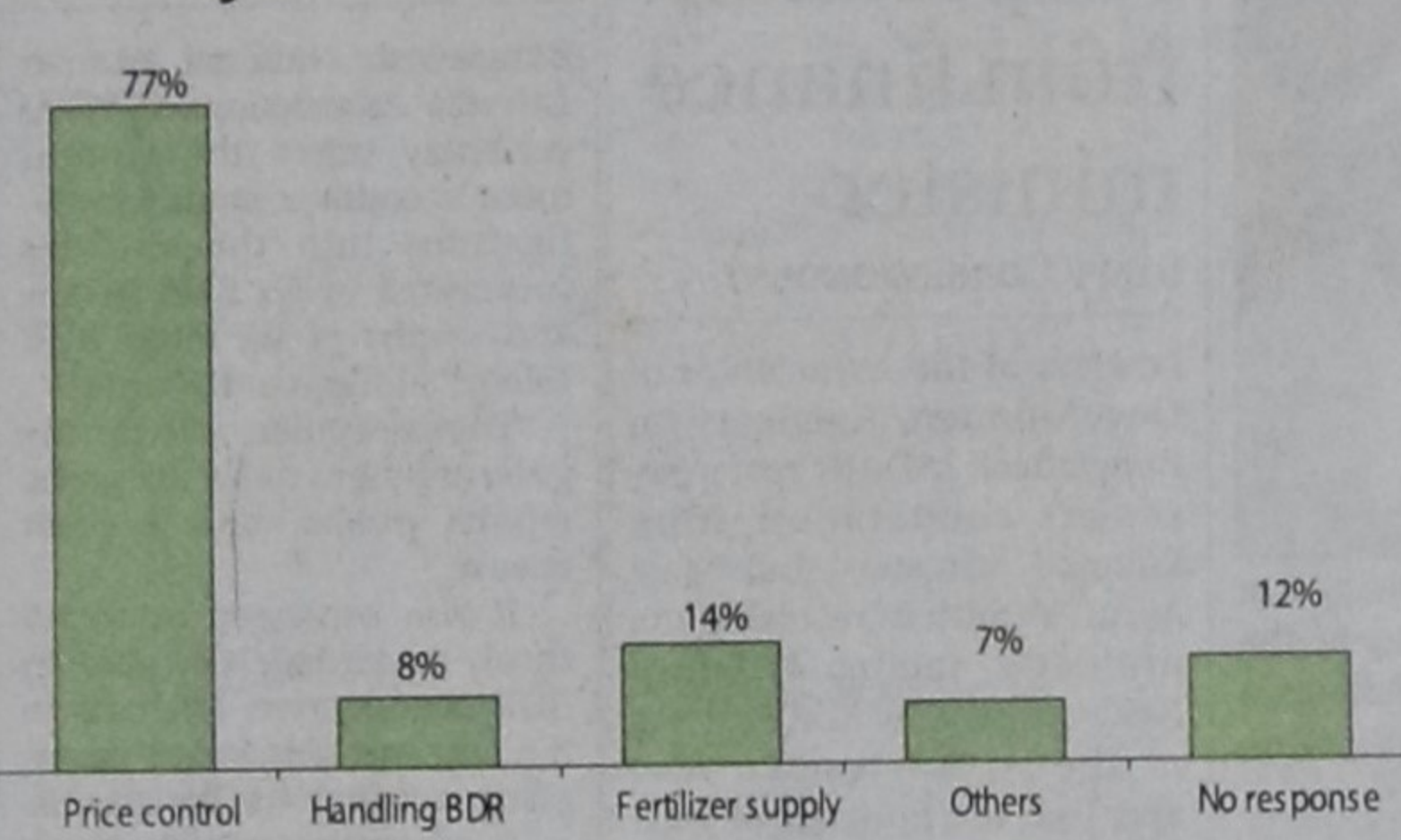
The survey was conducted between April 9 and April 12 among 2,520 respondents, all above 18 years of age. The interviews were taken at 180 spots

covering 44 districts in 90 upazilas and thanas. The interview period covered between 93 days and 96 days of the government, so that the result could be presented at the completion of its 100

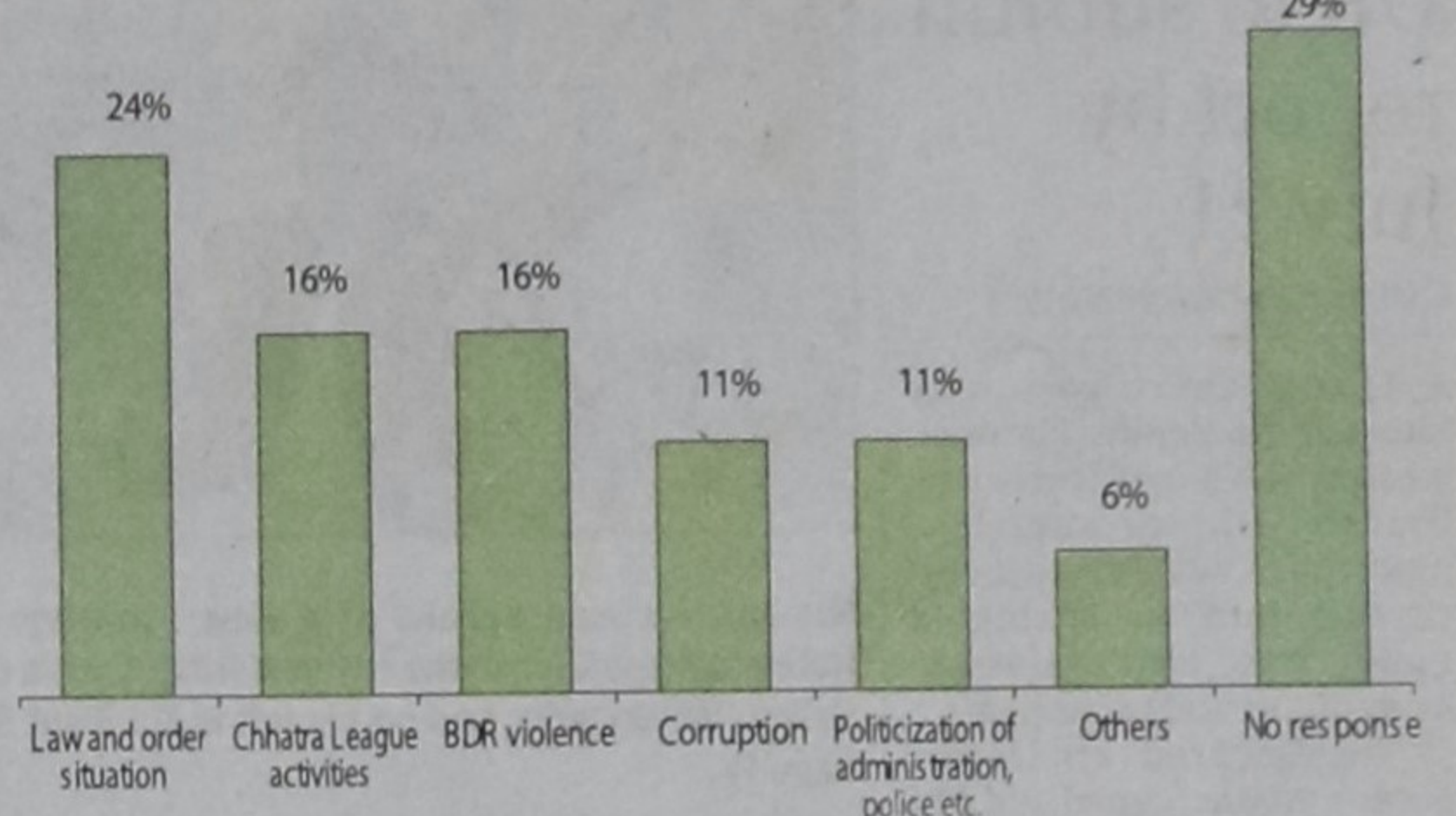
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FULL SURVEY ON PAGES 21-24

What are the areas of success of the govt in 100 days?



What are the areas of weakness of the govt in 100 days?



CAMPUS VIOLENCE Hasina warns BCL men of stern action

DU CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina has warned Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men of stern actions for creating unrest in educational institutions.

She has also warned top BCL leaders of a possible 'five-year jail' if the warning goes unheeded.

The PM made the warning as a team of top BCL leaders led by its President Mahmud Hasan Ripon and General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton met her on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh

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Mixed job in economic management

INAM AHMED

The empty OMS shops do not tell the story in whole. But the announcements -- 'Rice for Tk 18' -- posted on the walls of kitchen market shops help you understand it. Grain prices have come down to such a level that subsidised government sales have become irrelevant. And this is where the new government's success lies in its first 100 days.

There are two ways of looking at a government's economic management -- specially if it is only 100 days old -- what it has done, and what messages it has sent out to the economic players. Looking at the current state of the economic affairs, the best comment that could

be made is that the Awami League (AL)-led government has done a mixed job. It has been able to perform some outstanding feats, of course helped by the international environment, and it has attempted some tasks that may leave much to be desired. But if one considers the turmoil of the BDR carnage which virtually cast a huge uncertainty over everything, the AL-led government deserves credit for its economic management in the trying times of a global meltdown.

The new government can tout as its biggest success, the magical taming of the market from the wild horse that it had become. To empty its silos, the government even scaled down its

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Grenades, BDR uniform found at graveyard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered two grenades and a set of uniform of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) from a graveyard near the BDR headquarters yesterday and Tuesday.

The grenades were made in the Bangladesh Ordnance Factory (BOF) in Gazipur as inscriptions on recovered grenades read "REN-84, DB, BOF police said."

Talking to The Daily Star, BDR Director Maj Gen Md Mainul Islam said the BDR uses imported ARGES grenades, and they do not use homemade grenade.

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MPs to be declared unwanted in upazila parishad complexes

Threaten upazila chairmen, vice chairmen

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of newly elected representatives of upazila parishad (UP) yesterday threatened to declare lawmakers *persona-non-grata* in UP complex areas if the Upazila Parishad Act 2009 is not cancelled immediately.

The announcement came at a views-exchange meeting between UP chairmen and vice-chairmen at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

They also formed a forum titled "Bangladesh Upazila Chairmen Forum" with Muhibur

Rahman, chairman of Bishwanath Upazila in Sylhet and Ziaul Haq Sarkar, chairman of Laxmipur upazila, as its convener and member secretary.

"There is no recognised organisation for the representatives of upazila parishad. We have formed this forum to facilitate our movement for strengthening the local government," Muhibur Rahman told The Daily Star.

He said around 250 UP representatives attended the meeting that decided to hold a council of the forum within three months.

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Hazari sent to jail in money laundering case

Threatens to give 'reply' to his bail rejection

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Former Awami League lawmaker Joyal Hazari was sent to jail yesterday after he surrendered before the court in a money laundering case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Hazari surrendered before four courts of the district in six cases, seeking bail.

He got bail in five cases but Senior Judicial Magistrate Rezaul Karim Chowdhury rejected his bail prayer in the money laundering case and ordered sending him to prison. The judge fixed April 19 for the next hearing of the case.

While being taken to jail, Joyal Hazari addressed his party workers for about 15

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Students of the Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University carry masks and other colourful paper crafts during a procession marking Pahela Baishakh celebrations in the city.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Pahela Baishakh celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation in its most colourful festival welcomed Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bangla year 1416, on Tuesday amid lively pageants leaving behind the gloom of past and pledging to uphold the nation's cultural heritage.

Thousands of people from all walks of the society dressed in traditional costumes poured into the streets, parks and open spaces across the capital and elsewhere in the country from morning to welcome the Bangla New Year.

They expressed determination to move forward with a vision to build a prosperous future through this year's carnival of Pahela Baishakh amid tight security with traditional songs, music, fanfares and colourful processions.

Tight security measures were taken in and around the traditional venue of the carnival, Ramna Park in the capital, to avert any untoward incident. Cooperating with the security forces people stood in long queues to enter the venue on foot.

About 10,000 personnel of the law-enforcement agencies in uniforms and plainclothes kept a close eye on movement of the carnival-goers not only at the venue but also around Dhaka University campus. Dog squads, metal detectors, archways and closed-circuit cameras were installed at different places.

The day was a public holiday.

Mughal Emperor Akbar introduced the tradition of celebrating the Bangla New Year in relation to closing of the annual tax collection. Traditionally, traders and shopkeepers open halkhata (fresh accounts) on this day and serve sweetmeats to clients.

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BAISHAKH CELEBRATION Police rescue 37 missing children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-seven missing children were rescued and 36 snatched cellphone sets recovered while 82 'pickpockets and snatchers' arrested from Ramna Park and its adjacent areas during celebration of Pahela Baishakh on Tuesday.

DC (Ramna Zone) Atiqul Islam of Dhaka Metropolitan Police at a press briefing yesterday said law enforcers recovered 37 missing children from Ramna Park area during the celebration and later handed over 36 children to their family members through four 'Lost and Found Centres', set up in and around the park to help people.

One missing dumb girl aged about six, now in police custody, could not be handed over to her family due to lack of address of her family. Atiqul

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JU VC sees 'intruders' in BCL behind violence

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University Vice-chancellor Dr Sharif Enamul Kabir yesterday alleged that the former activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) who infiltrated into Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) are now trying to destabilise the JU campus.

"Criminals in the name of students and those who were earlier involved in the politics of JCD are instigating the BCL

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BHOLA MADRASA Faisal now admits ownership of arms Say investigators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh-born British citizen Faisal Mostafa who initially denied having any firearms and ammunition seized from Green Crescent Madrasa in Bhola admitted that he owns some of the firearms.

"Initially Faisal told us that he does not know anything about the firearms and ammunition but now he admitted to have some of the arms," said an investigator tasked with investigating the arms haul from the madrasa at Ramkeshob village in Borhanuddin upazila.

Investigators, however, suspected that Faisal, now on a 10-day remand, stockpiled all the firearms, ammunition and

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HSC exams begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exam and its equivalent Alim and Business Management (BM) examinations begin today amid strict security. A total of 6,18,308 candidates are appearing for the exams under 10 education boards.

The exams will be held in 1,919 centres this year, including five abroad and under Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla, Jessore, Chittagong, Barisal, Sylhet, Dinajpur and madrasa and technical education boards.

Of the total candidates, 55.17 percent are males and 44.83 percent are females.

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JMB men held in Naogaon active members of Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The three JMB suspects held with jihadi publications in Naogaon on Tuesday are members of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, police said.

Abdul Karim, 28, a bakery employee, is the president of Shikarpur union Jamaat in Sadar upazila, Naogaon. On the other hand, Shahadat Ali, 32, a tailor, and Hafez Faruk Hossain, 28, a teacher of Shikarpur Hafezia Madrasa, are Jamaat activists, according to police and local Jamaat leaders.

The police say the arrestees have confessed to having links with outlawed militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) under Jamaat cover. The three were plotting to carry out subversive activities on Pahela

Baishakh, the police add.

Acting on a tip off, the police arrested Abdul Karim of Chalk Kalidas in Alupatti, Naogaon on Tuesday. Following his statements, the police raided Shahadat's house and arrested the three.

The police also seized over 50 jihadi publications including books written by militant kingpin-suspect and Ahle Hadith Andolan Bangladesh (Ahab) chief Dr Asadullah Al Galib. There were also books published by Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir.

"The three were arrested following specific information of their active involvement with JMB," said M Mofazzel Hossain, superintendent of police in Naogaon, over phone.

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Home wants extension of speedy trial act's tenure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on home ministry yesterday made a recommendation for extending till April 2010 the tenure of the Speedy Trial Act, enacted by the previous BNP-led alliance government in 2002.

The BNP-led government had extended the tenure of the act twice till 2006. Later, the last caretaker government extended its tenure till April

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