

Egg import deals another blow to poultry farmers

UNB, Dhaka

Country's poultry industry is facing another setback following the government's recent decision on lifting restriction on import of eggs from India.

A fear of uncertainty has gripped the poultry farmers who have been trying to recoup their losses caused by bird flu outbreak earlier, observed the poultry farmers.

"The poultry farmers, who suffered heavy losses due to bird flu epidemic, are hesitating to reopen their farms following the government decision of importing eggs," Gazi Hossain, managing director of Aqua Breeders Limited (ABL), told the news agency.

He, however, said the farmers had started to resume their farms following improvement in the bird flu situation and were getting better prices before the decision came on importing eggs from India.

The bird flu outbreak, which swept the poultry industry in 2007 and early 2008, forced nearly a half of 1.5 lakh poultry farms in the country to shut down.

The investment in the poultry sector dropped to around Tk 6,000 crore from Tk 13,000 crore before the flu outbreak, according to the poultry business entrepreneurs.

Gazi said around 60 per cent poultry breeding farms had to be closed during the outbreak due to non-

cooperation of the government as well as the banks.

"At least 20 hugely invested poultry farms of Rajshahi region were closed down after the flu outbreak," he added.

ABL, the first grand parent poultry farm in the country, was one of the affected farms of the region.

The people related to the industry expressed their deep concern that the government decision to import eggs from India, a bird flu-affected country, risks another outbreak here like the previous year.

"The government is going to destroy the poultry industry in the country, which might be hit again by the same flu through import of eggs from India," said Mashiur Rahman, general secretary of Bangladesh Poultry Breeders Association.

He said the government has taken a wrong decision for bringing down the prices of eggs as it marked an upward trend in the local market due to increased production cost.

"Import of eggs cannot be a good decision, rather the decision can destroy the country's poultry industry instead of having any marked impact on the egg prices."

Kazi Zahedul Hasan, managing director of Kazi Farm Ltd, said the prices of eggs shot up at the local market because of insufficient production.

He, however, said egg production would increase

early next year as many of the farmers are reopening their farms, adding: "So, the government should monitor the price situation a little longer before opting for imports."

Kazi said the poultry farm owners are now pursuing a 'wait and see' policy about reopening their farms as the future of poultry industry is unclear.

He apprehended that bird flu virus might spread again in the poultry farms through the import of eggs from India.

1,120 Phensidyl bottles seized

UNB, Chapainawabganj

Members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized 1,120 bottles of Indian Phensidyl from Bilbhatia border area in Shibganj upazila on Thursday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a BDR team launched a drive in the border area when the contraband items were being smuggled into the country from India.

At one stage, the border guards fired a gunshot as the armed gang encircled them.

Later, the smugglers fled the scene, leaving behind Phensidyl bottles.

There was no report of casualty in the firing incident.

Cruelty of a UP chairman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A UP chairman, who is also a local Jamaat leader, drove away a housewife from her village as she lodged a complaint with him against his son for his repeated immoral proposal.

Chairman of Kathali union parishad under Jaldhaka upazila Golam Rabbani also forcibly took Monira Begum, 32, a mother of two children of Uttar Deshbari village, to his house and cut her hair before driving her out from the village.

Sources said the incident took place when Monira lodged complaint with the chairman against his son Miru, 30, on September 9 and sought justice and security from him.

But the chairman did not pay heed to her words and rebuked her terming her characterless woman.

Monira took shelter in her relative's house in Jaldhaka town and informed of the matter to her husband Moksudur Rahman who works at a factory in Dhaka.

He rushed to Jaldhaka in the morning of September 10 and along with his wife filed a case with Jaldhaka Police Station accusing seven people including the chairman and his son.

When contacted, the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Jaldhaka Police Station Arman Hossain told this correspondent that Monira had filed a case accusing the chairman as number one and his son as number two accused along with five others.

The OC also informed that the accused went into hiding and police are trying to arrest them.

Shah Abdul Karim hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The health condition of renowned folk poet Baul Shah Abdul Karim has deteriorated as his breathing problem took a serious turn yesterday morning.

He is kept on artificial life-support system at the Intensive Care Unit, said his physician at the Nurjahan General Hospital here.

It will take 72 hours to ascertain his condition, the doctor added.

The poet was brought to the hospital from his village home in Dhol under Derai upazila of Sunamganj on September 3.

His family members urge all to pray for his early recovery.

Four bombs recovered from Sharsha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Sharsha police recovered four bombs from a house at Puriaghuji village under Sharsha upazila in Jessore yesterday.

Sub-Inspector Sirajul Islam of Sharsha Police Station said acting on a tip-off, they recovered the bombs from the house of Omar Biswas.

The homeowner, however, managed to flee the scene realising the presence of police.

Police are trying to establish the motive of keeping the bombs in the house.

Family sources said the bombs were kept in their house as part of a conspiracy against them.

Appeal for help

METRO DESK



Md Nazrul Islam Sumon, son of Md Abul Khair of village Bandua Daulatpur in Feni, needs Tk 5 lakh immediately for treatment of a brain tumour, says a press release.

His family sold all the belongings to send him to Malaysia for a job, but he was sent home after the tumour was detected.

Now, helpless, he seeks help from the affluent in the society to bear the expenses of his treatment.

Contributions can be sent to his uncle Abu Tarek Bhuiyan, A/C No 140 101 52951, Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd, Feni Branch.



BNP leaders lay wreath at the grave of late President Ziaur Rahman in the city yesterday marking the day of Khaleda Zia's release from jail.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA.COM

'Govt to ensure primary education for all by 2010'

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Mohammad Mottahar Hossain yesterday said the government is pledge-bound to ensure free primary education for all children by 2010.

He was addressing a discussion on the occasion of the 34th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and attaining vision-2021 as declared by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, organised by the Bhasani Anusari Manch at the National Press Club in the city.

The state minister said as per election pledges, the present government will ensure primary education for all children in the country by 2010 to remove illiteracy within 2014.

Shaheen Monwara Haque MP chaired the function while Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique attended it as the chief guest.

Under the primary education programme, he said, the government will distribute tiffin and textbooks among the students at free of cost and also provide Tk 100 monthly stipend each to the poor students.

At the primary level, the government will introduce an evaluation test from December for the students, who have completed class five, to ensure quality of education.

Meanwhile, the government is going to make education uniform for the students of primary and secondary levels, Ebtedayee and Dhakhil

madrashas through incorporating Bengali, English, Mathematics, Science and General Knowledge as the common subjects, the minister said.

Besides, he said, the government also has ensured facilities for the teachers. Earlier, an assistant teacher of a primary school got only Tk 1400 in a month, but the present government raised it to Tk 5000, he said.

Director General of Bangladesh Television Kazi Abu Zafar Siddiqui, Chief News Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha and former general secretary of National Press Club Shawpan Kumar Saha and President of Employees Union of Roads and Highways Golam Kibria Dulal, among others, spoke.

Five taken on 3-day remand over Natore bank robbery

UNB, Natore

Five people, arrested in connection with National Bank robbery in Natore, were taken on a three-day remand on Thursday.

Sadar police produced the arrested people before a Natore court and sought a seven-day remand. After the hearing, the court granted a three-day remand for them.

Sources said the robbers took away Tk 1.62 crore from Kanaikhal bus stand branch of the bank in the town early Monday.

The robbers entered the bank breaking open the collapsible gate on the first floor of a three-storey building and took away Tk 1.62 crore from the vault, the police said.

Police arrested senior officer Belaluddin, another senior officer (cash) Shahadat Hossain, second officer Rabiul Islam, and two night guards Zulfikar Ali Haider and Abdul Khattab on Monday suspecting their involvement in the robbery.

Police said Zulfikar gave confessional statement under section 164 in the court on Thursday. Later, they also arrested his brother Asaduzzaman Sadhon.

However, the looted money could not be recovered even after four days of the robbery.

Japan sends first cargo spacecraft to ISS

AFP, Tokyo

Japan yesterday launched its first unmanned cargo spacecraft to the International Space Station, aiming for a share of space transport after the retirement of the US space shuttle fleet next year.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched the HTV transportation vehicle atop an H-2B rocket, which is also on its first flight, as scheduled just after 2:00am (1700 GMT Thursday), agency images showed.

The vehicle separated from the rocket, as planned, about 15 minutes later.

"We want to build on this success and continue the programme," JAXA president Keiji Tachikawa told a news conference.

The agency plans to launch one such cargo spacecraft every year until 2015.

The rocket blasted off from the Tanegashima Space Centre on a southern Japanese island, with the HTV carrying 4.5 tonnes of supplies including food and daily necessities for the six ISS crew, as well as materials for experiments, such as seeds for growing plants in space.

Later this month, astronauts will for the first time operate a Canadian robotic arm at the ISS to grab the HTV and dock it as the vehicle

approaches the station.

The 10-metre (33-foot) long cylindrical vehicle, which cost 20 billion yen (217 million dollars), will deliver the supplies, load waste materials and return to Earth, burning up as it reenters the atmosphere.

Japan has spent 68 billion yen developing the vehicle, which could be modified in future to carry humans.

Japan currently has no spacecraft that can send people into space.

But, like China and India, it has been stepping up its space operations and in June ended the world's most extensive mission to the moon in decades, using an unmanned lunar orbiter. It hopes to send an astronaut there by 2020.

Japan faced an embarrassing failure in November 2003, when it had to destroy a rocket carrying a spy satellite 10 minutes after lift-off because one of the rocket boosters failed to separate from the fuselage.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, which helped develop the H-2B programme, hailed Friday's successful launch.

"Until now, we have not been able to meet wishes of our clients to launch large satellites," said Hideaki Omiya, Mitsubishi Heavy president. "But H-2B allows us to meet most of the requests."

'Movement to continue until gas block lease cancelled'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political and cultural organisations yesterday gave separate statements supporting as well as opposing the half-day hartal called by the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port on September 14.

In a statement, the committee leaders said they would continue to wage movement until the lease of oil and gas blocks in sea is cancelled.

They also urged the countrymen to take to the streets and make the programme a success to protect national resources.

The committee also held rallies at several places including Mohammadpur Town Hall, Mirpur 10 intersection, Pallabi-12, Tejgaon, Shantinagar and Paltan in the capital urging people to make the hartal a success.

The speakers said the hartal has been called to ensure people's 100 per cent right in oil and gas of the country.

They demanded extraction of gas in sea through fresh tender, full implementation of Fulbari deal and punishment to those involved in the police attack on their procession on September 2.

Revolutionary Workers Party of Bangladesh in another statement criticised the speech of LGD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam stating that the grand-alliance government has taken stance against the interest of people and country by leasing out three gas blocks to foreign companies.

They also urged city dwellers to make the hartal a success.

Meanwhile, Joybangla Sangskritik Jote and Bangladesh Sinhow Mull Hawks League in separate statements said the hartal would cause sufferings to people ahead of the religious festivals of both Muslims and Hindus.

They hoped that people will not take part in the hartal.

Workers Party of Bangladesh in a statement said hartal would have negative effect on the support of people towards protecting natural resources and thus help conspirators to carry out their conspiracy of exporting gas from the country.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 20th death anniversary of Dr Nazma Jasmine Chowdhury, wife of noted academic Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, says a press release.

Nazma, a writer and playwright, was also a teacher at the Institute of Modern Language (IML), Dhaka University.

On the occasion, food will be distributed among the destitute in the city.

After Ramadan, the 20th Nazma Jasmine Memorial Lecture will be held at IML where Prof Muntasir Mamun will be the speaker.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of a speech competition organised on the occasion of the 116th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's 'Chicago Lecture' pose for photograph with the guests at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Sitting from left are Swami Shriratmanandiji Maharaj, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Suresh Chandra Bachar, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain and Prof Poresh Chandra Mondal.

'Vivekananda expressed gospel truth thru' his ideology'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique yesterday said every religion speaks of peace and Swami Vivekananda had expressed this gospel truth through his ideology.

He said a conflict-free world would be established if the unvarnished thoughts and philosophies of Swamiji are followed in people's lives, says a press release.

Prof Arefin said this as the chief guest at a discussion organised by Vivekananda Shiksha O Sangskriti Parishad, Bangladesh to mark the 116th anniversary of Vivekananda's famous 'Chicago Lecture' at the National Press Club in the city.

Speaking as the special guest, Prof Paresh Chandra Mandal said if there exists a religion in the world, it would be humanity and it would go forward carrying out magnanimity, liberalism and tolerance in human beings.

Prof Syed Anwar Hossain as a key discussant said history never says that any war breaks out between religions. War, clashes and hostilities are imposed on religions.

Vice-President of the Parishad Swami Shriratmanandiji Maharaj read out his keynote paper at the discussion which was also addressed by Anup Roy Chowdhury, Akhil Chandra Bhoomik and Karuna Kishore Chakravarty.

Parishad President Suresh Chandra Bachar chaired the programme.

Born on January 12, 1863 and died on July 4, 1902, Vivekananda was one of the most famous and influential spiritual leaders of the philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga.

Construction of Shankha bridge to resume in Oct after a lapse of 14 years

BSS, Chittagong

After a lapse of 14 years, construction work of Boiltali-Khodharhat Bridge on the Shankha river will resume in October.

The present government has allocated Tk 16 crore to complete the remaining construction work of the bridge.

Officials at Dohazari Roads Division sources said Al-Amin Construction Company got the work order in 1995 with an allocation of Tk 8.88 crore.

The bridge was scheduled to be completed within three years. But the company allegedly left the site after constructing only five pillars of the bridge.

Since then, the construction work of the bridge has not made any progress due to fund constraints.

Local people said the bridge would open a new horizon in the communication system as well as business in Chandanaish, Satkania and Banskhali upazilas.

The bridge would help transportation of huge amount of vegetables produced in these areas to Chittagong and elsewhere in the country.

Executive Engineer Swapan Kumar Das said steps would be taken so that the construction work could be completed within the stipulated time.



Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:05pm today and rises at 6:44am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 24.0 degree at Ishwardi.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.3	26.4	76	84
Chittagong	32.3	25.9	72	77
Rajshahi	33.8	24.7	95	77
Khulna	34.5	27.4	84	70
Barisal	34.2	25.5	81	84
Sylhet	34.8	24.6	77	66
Cox's Bazar	32.8	25.8	72	79