

City markets bustle with Eid shoppers

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With a week left for the Eid-ul Fitr, the markets are bustling with crowd as the shopping is picking up in the port city of Chittagong.

People of all ages are shopping around at different markets to choose the best dresses and other items for them and near and dear ones to celebrate the largest religious festival of Muslims.

Around 200 markets including 10 posh shopping malls, arcades, different fashion and boutique houses as well as the makeshift shops at footpaths in the city are bustling with the people from morning to late in the night.

To attract the fashion conscious people, traders have showcased their showrooms with garments with latest fashion and variety in design.

Gridlock, rains or heat nothing can daunt the festival loving people from thronging the markets.

On contrary to the buzzing atmosphere in the posh markets, middle and lower income people are in frustrating mood due to higher price of products.

People of well off section, who are in search of latest fashion in design and colour, are gathering at the posh shopping malls like New Market (Bipani Bitan), Amin Centre, Sanmar Ocean City, Yunusco Centre, Central Plaza, Mimi Super Market, Afmi Plaza, Highway Plaza, Central Plaza, Chittagong Shopping Complex, as well as some popular outlets like Pride, Aarong, Westecs, Revlon, Cat's Eye, Matra, Nari and Menz Club.

Reazuddin Bazar, Lucky Plaza, VIP Tower, Chawk View Market, Moti Tower, Moti Complex, Terri Bazar, Tamakumandi Lane Bazar, Bay Shopping Centre, Singapore-Bangkok Market and other markets are drawing attention of the middle income customers with necessary items at reasonable price.

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

In this year's Eid shopping, a remarkable trend for local boutiques is seen beside usual



Shoppers, left, admire sarees at a city market while a man, right, chooses clothes at a makeshift shop at footpath.



PHOTO ANURUP KANTI DAS

attraction for foreign garments.

To attract this section of people, ten renowned boutique houses -- Sadakalo, Deshal, Nipun, Nogordola, Rong, Banglar Mela, Kay Kraft, Bibiana, Probartana and Anjan's -- are displaying garments with local design and fashion on the same floor of the recently established Afmi Plaza.

Sadakalo and Anjan's introduced a package named as 'couples' containing dresses for a family with same design.

Cotton sarees are sold at Tk 700 to Tk 2,000 while katan at Tk 3,500 to Tk 25,000, jamdani at Tk 5000 to Tk 25,000 at Sadakalo. Three-piece suits are sold at Tk 1300 to Tk 5,000 and punjabees and fatuas for men are found at Tk 560 to Tk 1,800.

"We introduced a subject named 'Taray Taray Khochito' especially for the Eid as our designers used star as a mark of design in almost all of our dresses," said Mozammel Hoque, show room manager of Sadakalo.

Sarees and three-piece suits for women with some brand names like Femina, Suhana, Waka and Octopus are now available.

Keeping consumers' demands in mind, traders showcased both the local and Indian sarees like cotton, silk, endi-cotton, endi-silk, synthetic, georgette, katan, benarosi, jamdani, zardouzy, net and tissue.

Rafiqul Islam of Odud Fashion at New Market said sarees and lehengas, usually seen worn by the actresses of different TV serials aired in the Indian channels, have already earned much popularity among the women and girls.

Indian chiffon sarees of 'Femina' are selling at Tk 8,000 to Tk 15,000 while chiffon sarees with diamond and crystal works are available at Tk 10,000 to Tk 30,000.

Suhana, another type of saree, with both machine and hand embroidery are available at Tk 3,000 to Tk 30,000.

Traders at Terry Bazar are selling Moslin-

Benarosi saree, a fusion of the two popular products, at Tk 3,000 to Tk 7,000.

Sadeque Mohammed, purchase in-charge of Badhu Sarees at Mimi Super market, said they have stored Indian sarees with variety in design.

He, however, said consumers are also looking for local sarees like jamdani and Rajshahi silk.

Three-piece decorated with different artistic patterns imported from India has become popular among the young and teenage girls.

Indian three-piece suits are selling at Tk 2,000 to Tk 10,000 while those for teen age girls are selling at Tk 3000 to Tk 18,000.

Young men are gathering at popular outlets like Shailpik, Anjan's, Sadakalo, Handibazar, Khaki, Miabibi, Bangaliana, Khadighar and Paristhan for attractive and colourful punjabis selling at Tk 1,500 to Tk 3,000.

They are also thronging the fashion houses and popular posh outlets for T-shirt, pant,

shirt, kameez and other dresses.

Consumers from middle income groups expressed dissatisfaction over high price of products.

Nurul Afsar Chowdhury, a service holder, who bought a frock for his four-year old daughter from Sanmar Ocean City at Tk 2,100 after roaming a good number of shops, said the price is too much this year.

Abul Kashem, general secretary of Reazuddin Bazar Traders Association, said they are pleased with sale this year as they have buyers from both middle and well off sections.

Thousands of buyers from lower middle class and lower class like garment workers, nurses, rickshawpullers, CNG-auto rickshaw drivers, domestic helps and guards of different offices are also gathering at makeshift shops on the footpaths in the city.

Muggers active in the guise of Rab, DB ?



Four alleged muggers arrested on charge of snatching a trader in the guise of DB personnel.

STAR PHOTO

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR

At least 10 gangs of muggers are active in the port city and its adjacent areas in the guise of members of Detective Branch (DB) and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

Police detected four of such gangs and arrested five gang leaders but the rest are hiding, creating a sense of insecurity among the city dwellers ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr, sources in Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) said.

The gangs are Hakim-Police group, Saiful-Sumon group, Arif Shahabuddin group, Rubel Jaladas-Bakkar group, Liton Barua-Khokan-led Patiya group, Shibir Ripon-Rubel group, Dyl Sumon-Babul group, Jalal Jaku group, Yunus-Ali group and Apel Mintu-Kala Faruk group.

The gang members call those providing them with information about the prospective target as 'Bedi' and the target as 'Garu' (cow). Karim of Asadganj, Saiful of Saraipara, Rahim of Patiya, Milon of Roazan, Toyub of Khatunganj and Dulal of CDA Cattle Market were among such "Bedi" (informants), they said.

The gangs mainly try to loot the cheque (hundi)-money to avoid arrest since most of the bearers don't file case.

The muggers wait on microbus for the target. As the target comes nearer they come down with a wireless set and pick him up

introducing themselves as the DB or Rab men.

They blindfold and handcuff the victim. Later, they take away the money threatening him of arrest for carrying hundi-money before dropping him at a solitary spot.

The microbuses used for committing the crime are supplied by their cohorts Driver Jasim of Laldighi, Apel Mintu's brothers-in-law Emon, Sumon and Javed of Halihsahar and Sumon of Pahartali, said the sources.

Police on Friday arrested four members of such a gang, including the top informer Fazlul Karim, 36, in connection with mugging of Tk 4.20 lakh from a trader in the guise of DB men from in front of Bangladesh Bank under Kotwali Police Station on the night of July 26.

Other arrestees were Amin Mohammad Saifuddin alias MES College Saiful, 23, and Ali Asgar alias Sumon, 25, driver of the microbus, and their cohort Mohammad Javed, 23.

Saiful told The Daily Star at the Kotwali Police Station on Saturday that they are to give 40 percent of the booty to the informer Karim and they share the rest money. He said Karim provided them with handcuffs and a wireless set for the mugging.

Karim, however, said he has relations with different gangs of muggers but he never takes part in the crime.

Sub-Inspector Sadip Kumar Das said most of the arrested muggers mentioned the

name of Karim as informer and kingpin of such crimes but he (Karim) never took part in the crime directly.

Police on August 9 arrested three muggers with Tk 45,000 of looted money and seized a microbus in connection with mugging of Tk 11 lakh of an automobile sales centre on August 03 in the guise of Rab men.

On the other hand, a team of DB led by DB Assistant Commissioner (AC) Hasan Chowdhury arrested Police Hakim, who leads most of such crimes, on August 5 from city's Chhotoile area on charge of mugging Tk 5.10 lakh from a collage teacher from in front of Islamia College in the city's Madarbari area on July 29.

Hakim was dismissed from the police department for misconduct back in 2007 and since then he had been mugging in the guise of police and Rab carrying a handcuff with him, said Hasan.

"We have spread our detective net to nab such groups ahead of the Eid-ul Fitr," he said, adding that the traders and individuals were requested to take police escort for transporting money.

In this regard, CMP Deputy Commissioner (North) Banaj Kumar Majumder told The Daily Star that the groups who loot money in the guise of Rab and police tarnish images of the law enforcers.

He said they targeted Karim one and a-half years back, but could not arrest him due to lack of proper evidence.

theweekthatwas

India keen on cultural exchange

India is keen on cultural exchange with Bangladesh holding shows between the two countries.

Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre Director Angkon Banarjee said this at a meeting with Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor M Manjur Alam at the latter's residence at North Katolli in the port city on Friday.

He briefed the mayor of his organisation's activities and initiative to hold cultural shows in participation of famous Indian artistes in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi.

Under the initiative a three-day cultural function will be held in Chittagong from November 21 to 23 this year, Angkon said.

Manjur said such programmes at government level would surely strengthen further ties and friendship between the peoples of two neighbouring countries and assured his all out cooperation in this regard.

Angkon's wife Sudipta Banarjee CCC Engineer Mokhter Alam, CCC Public Relations Officer Saifuddin Ahmad Saki and mayor's son Sarwar Manju were present at the meeting.

Rapid implementation of projects stressed

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) at its second general meeting emphasised rapid implementation of the projects taken up for infrastructural development of the port city ahead of the World Cup Cricket.

Mayor M Manjur Alam presided over the meeting held at CCC auditorium.

Manjur thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for sanctioning Tk 87 crore for implementing the project to prepare Chittagong as one of the venue of World Cup Cricket 2011.

The meeting decided to introduce two buses to provide transportation service to poor and meritorious students in the city and naming one of the city streets after Lieutenant Colonel Enshad Ibne Amin, son of writer Fahmida Amin. Colonel Enshad was killed in the carnage at BDR headquarters of Pilkhana in the capital.

The chairmen of the 20 standing committees put up activities of respective committees for ensuring development and service to the city dwellers.

Students urged to devote more to studies

Speakers at a reception ceremony urged meritorious students to devote themselves more to studies instead of involving themselves in politics.

Amader Bandhan Bangladesh, a social welfare organisation, organised the reception ceremony at Muslim Institute auditorium in the port city on Wednesday.

The organisation accorded reception to the Golden GPA-5 achievers under Chittagong Education Board and Madrasa Board in Chittagong at the ceremony.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor Manjur Alam attended as the chief guest while Barrister AM Mahabub Uddin Khokon, a member of parliamentary standing committee on ministry of foreign affairs, as the special guest at the ceremony with Amader Bandhan Bangladesh President

Mohammad Shoeb Riad in the chair.

Later, Close Up star Nishita Barua and local artistes performed at a cultural programme.

Iftar items distributed

Lions Club of Chittagong Parijat Elite organised an Iftar mahfil for the orphans of five orphanages in the city on Sunday.

Speakers at the mahfil held at posh restaurant urged all to stand by the distressed humanity and work together to serve the society.

Lions District 315B-4 Governor Aslam Chowdhury FCA, MJF was the chief guest at the Mahfil with Club President Ln Jahanara Begum in the chair.

Meanwhile, Banglalink, a cellphone operator, continued distributing water and date among the fasting people getting stuck in traffic jam at different intersections during the Iftar hour for the 19th consecutive day on Monday.

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturer and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and British American Tobacco Bangladesh organised Iftar parties and discussions at Chittagong Club and Ambrosia on Sunday on the significance of Ramadan.

Besides, different business, political and socio-cultural organisations also hosted Iftar in the city.

Liquid milk price re-fixed

Chittagong Dairy Firm Association re-fixed price of liquid milk at Tk 50 per litter.

The association decided to re-fix the price at a meeting chaired by its president and the Dainik Purbokone Editor Taslim Uddin Chowdhury.

The meeting held at the association's office also decided to hold a preparatory meeting on September 18 to observe the death anniversary of the organisation's founding president Mohammad Yusuf Chowdhury and founding general secretary Shahedul Alam Quadery.

Rich urged to help alleviate poverty

State Minister for Environment and Forest Dr Hasan Mahmud on Saturday called upon the rich people to come forward for poverty alleviation and economic development of the society.

Dr Hasan made the call at a meeting at Rangunia Upazila Parishad auditorium at Ichhakhali for distributing rickshaws, sewing machines and mosquito nets among the poor men and women.

Addressing the meeting as the chief guest Dr Hasan, also the local lawmaker, said different projects involving Tk 500 crore would be taken for building up Rangunia as a model upazila in the next three years.

Rangunia Upazila Awami League (AL) President Khalitir Rahman presided over the meeting where British American Tobacco Bangladesh Senior Officer Zakir Ibne Hayat, AL Chittagong north district unit leaders Badiul Alam Talukder, Swajan Kumar Talukder, Zahir Ahmad Chowdhury and Engineer Shamsul Alam also spoke