

| COMMODITIES | | ASIAN MARKETS | | | | CURRENCIES | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|--------|-------|--------|--------|------|
| DGEN | CSCX | Gold | Oil | MUMBAI | TOKYO | SINGAPORE | SHANGHAI | USD | EUR | GBP | JPY | |
| ▲ 0.03% | ▼ 0.84% | \$1,390.00 (per ounce) | \$89.94 (per barrel) | ▼ 0.22% | ▼ 0.23% | ▲ 0.14% | ▲ 0.90% | 70.05 | 90.27 | 106.63 | 0.82 | |
| 8,171.57 | 15,153.81 | | | 20,015.80 | 10,346.48 | 3,144.31 | 2,877.90 | BUY TK | 71.05 | 95.31 | 111.81 | 0.87 |
| | | | | SELL TK | | | | | | | | |

SAMSUNG
New Galaxy S at Tk. 2,606*
For More Information: 885366-8, 01712-665463
TRANSKOM DIGITAL
think electronics... think DIGITAL

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY DECEMBER 23, 2010, e-mail: business@thedailystar.net

India scraps tax on onions as prices soar

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian government, facing mounting public anger over soaring onion costs, on Wednesday scrapped tax on imports of the vegetable to try to rein in prices of the staple food.

The move comes after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed "deep concern" over the cost of onions doubling and called for steps to lower the price of what is a basic item on every Indian family's shopping list.

Onions are selling for 80 rupees a kilogram (88 cents a pound) -- turning the vegetable into an unaffordable luxury for India's poor -- having rocketed from 35 rupees in a few days and stories about the rise are front-page news.

The Congress government is mindful that costly onions have a history of political fallout with voters in 1998 ousting the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Delhi state polls after a sharp surge in

Exports shine

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The export trend indicates a brighter future in overseas trade, as the main export destinations are recovering fast from recession, said business leaders yesterday.

In the first five months of the current fiscal year, Bangladesh exported goods worth \$8.27 billion, logging 35.80 percent growth, compared to the same period a year earlier, according to data from state-owned Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

"The export trend is very bright. We expect the December exports will go even higher, as calculation of the export figures is going on," said Jalal Ahmed, vice-chairman of the EPB.

Exports to Eurozone will increase significantly in January because of the implementation of the zero-tariff facility for Bangladesh by the European Union (EU), he said.

The EU has relaxed the rules of origin (RoO) under the generalised system of preferences for the least-developed countries such as Bangladesh for a greater access to Eurozone.

Ahmed also said some exporters are now delaying their shipments to cash in on the duty-free facility from January. "They will export at the end of December or in early January," he said.

Md Musa Meah, president of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association, said frozen food exports are maintaining growth with the recovery of the western world from recession.

During the July-November period, the export of frozen food grew by 40.30 percent from the same period a year ago.

"The exports will go higher in March when the EU is scheduled to relax its strict nitrofurantoin test on shipments of shrimps

out of Bangladesh," Meah said.

SM Jahangir Hossain, president of Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetables and Allied Products Exporters Association, said the exports of vegetables and allied products showed signs of recovery.

"The prospect of vegetable export is bright," Hossain said. But, he said the export of lemon to EU is held up for the last one and a half years for some test-related problems.

Bangladesh exported vegetables and allied products worth \$23.89 million in the July-November period, registering a 28.03 percent growth.

Mohammad Hatem, acting president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the prospect of his sector is also good, as the buyers are now shifting their focus from China to Bangladesh.

Moreover, Bangladesh has started exporting garments to new destinations: Japan, South Africa, Latin American countries, Australia, New Zealand and China.

The country exported knitwear products worth \$3.6 billion in the first five months of the current fiscal year, registering 36.56 percent growth compared to the same period a year ago.

Bangladesh exported woven garments worth \$2.89 billion in the July-November period with a 35.83 percent growth.

Abdus Salam Murshedy, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said: "It's not impossible to reach \$20 billion garment exports in three years if the current export trend continues."

The government will have to ensure adequate supply of gas and power and smooth operation of port, he added.

reefat@thedailystar.net



Launching of BOI Online Registration System
Chief Guest: Mr. Dilip Barua, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Industries
BOI Board Room, December 22, 2010

Industries Minister Dilip Barua inaugurates an online registration system at the Board of Investment (BoI) yesterday. BoI Executive Chairman Syed A Samad, extreme right, MCCI President M Anis Ud Dowla, extreme left, and Joint Stock Companies and Firms' Registrar Ahmedur Rahim, second from left, were also present. (Story on B3)

A joint move to tackle gas crisis

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

The owners of a dozen of industries located in Nabinagar to Manikganj area have paired up to overcome the gas crisis in their plants and lobby the state gas agency.

The industries include Akij, Monno, Rising, Alhaj Textile, Graphics and Ilias. They already sat at a meeting with the high-ups of Titas a week ago, but got no yield.

"The gas supply has deteriorated further with the cut of the shutdown time for CNG stations by two hours. We are in a horrible condition and on the verge of shutting down our factories," said Hasan Mahmud Khan, managing director of Rising Spinning Mills.

Khan said they had a meeting with

the Titas managing director who took one-week time to address the issue. But the deadline ended yesterday without any development.

The combined investment of the industries in the area will be around Tk 3,000 crore and nearly one lakh people work there. The industries range from ceramics to beverages and spinning.

According to the businesses, the factories there now receive gas at 2 PSI (pound-force per square inch) against a need for 15 PSI. This severely low pressure of gas cannot run the machine. The owners use costly diesel to operate their factories, but have to count the full gas bill.

The industrialists requested Titas to modify a gas line in Ashulia to increase the supply pressure.

The proposal, if Titas implements, will temporarily hamper the operations of other factories in the Ashulia area.

"But the move will save some 15 industries from collapse," said Sk Bashir Uddin, managing director of Akij Group.

He said they are ready to pay higher charges for gas bill, but the supply and pressure must be at par with the needs. Akij Group in combined pay Tk 4 crore as gas bill every month.

All the factories in the Nabinagar-to-Manikganj area run on diesel that costs nearly 10 times more than gas. A unit of gas costs Tk 1.5, while it is Tk 8 for furnace oil and Tk 15 for diesel.

sajjad@thedailystar.net

64th Branch
Opening today @ Mymensingh

www.mutualtrustbank.com

মিউচুয়াল ট্রাস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
Mutual Trust Bank Ltd.
you can bank on us

The Daily Star
grameenphone
VOICE NEWS SERVICE

Dial 2 2 2 2

for the latest news highlights in English

BERGER
Trusted Worldwide

Wipe all you like.
Your walls will always smile!

Whether by coffee and tea stains or dirt, your walls may be affected anytime! But if your walls are painted with Robbialac Easy Clean, you can wash away these stains and dirt with water and mild detergent. This will keep your walls shining like new!

Robbialac Easy Clean - Keep your walls smiling

now you get **more** with all mitsubishi cars

3 YRS FREE SPARES
3 YRS FREE SERVICE
3 YRS FREE MAINTENANCE

Showrooms:
Tejgaon: 215, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka
Dhanmondi: 80, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka
Chittagong: 3, CDA Avenue, Sholoshahar C/A, Chittagong
Cell: 01730706975, 01713004836, 01713142056 (Ctg.)



Live your values with HSBC Amanah

HSBC Amanah introduces a wide range of Islamic financial solutions for your personal banking needs. With HSBC Amanah, you now get a full range of products and services based on the principles of Shariah.

- Amanah Goods Murabaha:** offers you Personal Financing for any *halal* goods that you need. With this facility, you can now buy goods without having to take any interest bearing loans.

With HSBC Amanah, you can unlock a world of potential while living your values.

Call +88 01199 262624
Click www.hsbc.com.bd

HSBC Amanah
Islamic Financial Solutions

HSBC
The world's local bank