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DHAKA TUESDAY JULY 10, 2012, e-mail:business@thedailystar.net

Ban on exports of four Minister sees no big-market syndicates vegetable, spice items

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday banned exports of green chilli, brinjal, onion and garlic until August 31 to help boost supply during the month of Ramadan.

Demand for the banned items typically rises during Ramadan, which is set to begin in the third week of July.

"We slapped the ban to increase supply to meet the increased demand during Ramadan," Commerce Minister Ghulam Muhammed Quader said at a programme organised by private television channel Desh TV at Dhaka University.

"A public notification has been issued in this regard to inform customs offices, banks and chamber bodies," said MA Sabur, chief controller of imports and exports.

The ban came nearly a week after the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry suggested the government to ban the export of six commodities to curb their price spiral during Ramadan.

The apex trade body earlier demanded bar on exports of potato and cucumber along with the four vegetables.

Consumption of these items, along with sugar and cooking oil, shoots up during the month of fasting due to their popularity on the Iftar menu.

Locally grown vegetables, including green chilli, brinjal and others, are usually exported to the Middle East, UK and other countries, targeting migrant workers and non-resident Bangladeshis.

More time for index fall enquiry

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The time limit for conducting a regulatory enquiry on a massive fall of Dhaka bourse's share index that continued for five minutes on May 29 has been extended by seven workdays.

With the time extension, the enquiry panel will now have to submit a report within July 16 to the stockmarket regulator.

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Quader says govt cannot break cartels in small markets

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Commerce Minister GM Quader yesterday said the government has not found any evidence of bigmarket syndication that inflates prices of essentials irrationally.

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He, however, admitted that there is syndication in small markets, which cannot be controlled. "The government is not being able to monitor such small things." "We are alert to control incidents

of major syndication. There are also laws to prevent them," he said. About the volatile edible oil

market, he said: "We are worried about the market. More businesspeople should come to this business. But we are seeing that their number is going down."

"But those who are now in the business have been able to convince us so far that they are not increasing the prices artificially," said the minister.

Quader spoke at a dialogue on "market and prices of commodities" at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building at the University of Dhaka in the capital.

Private television channel Desh TV and Prime Bank co-organised the programme.



Second from right, Commerce Minister Ghulam Muhammed Quader speaks at a programme organised by private television channel Desh TV at Dhaka University yesterday.

The minister said there is a need for the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) to continue its operations to help the government keep the market stable for a while in the face of any crisis.

He said the government has formulated the Competition Law 2012 to prevent market monopolies or oligopolies.

He said the government is concerned about the ordinary people's worries. "And we are taking steps to minimise the concerns."

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, which works to promote human rights and good governance, said the government now and again says that the prices of the

essential commodities would have to be brought within the purchasing capacity of the ordinary people.

"But we see today that there is no balance between people's purchasing power and the prices of the commodities, and the two are heading in two different directions, making people's life miserable."

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No breach of labour law: GP

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Grameenphone (GP) said yesterday it did not violate the labour law by stopping its terminated employees from entering the premises.

"Grameenphone has been on a restructuring process for the last one year, as a result of which few lost their jobs," Kazi Monirul Kabir, chief communications officer of Grameenphone, said in a press briefing.

"We have compensated them generously."

The commotion started when 48 employees who were notified of the termination of their contracts on July 31 were denied entry into the office on Sunday. Agitated employees staged a demonstration outside the GP headquarters.

Under normal circumstances, Grameenphone officials are entitled to four months' basic salary with other benefits for any termination.

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Confidence deficit weighs on stocks

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Investors continue to remain unconvinced of market prospects, depressing the market further yesterday.

DGEN, the market tracking index of DSE, fell 127.67 points or 2.99 percent to 4,145 points, the lowest since February 9, 2012.

"Investors are sceptical of the government's ability to build the 'Padma Multipurpose Bridge' with its own fund as it would aggravate the current liquidity scarcity," IDLC Investments said in its market research. In addition, investors' wait-and-

watch policy over the 'Monetary Policy Statement' and risk-aversion attitude has contributed to the market sell-off, it said.

"Investors are looking for a miracle to get them out of the down trend," LankaBangla Securities said in its market commentary.

Turnover was Tk 164 crore, a rise of 42.25 percent from the previous day.

A total of 0.61 lakh trades were life insurance 2.27 percent. executed, with 4.04 crore shares and

mutual fund units changing hands on the Dhaka bourse.

Of the 269 issues that traded on

the DSE, 20 advanced, 241 declined and 8 remained unchanged. All major sectors fell, led by non-

bank financial institutions at 5.21 percent, engineering 4.51 percent, textile 4.17 percent and general insurance 3.89 percent.

Fuel and power lost 3.34 percent, pharmaceuticals 2.35 percent and

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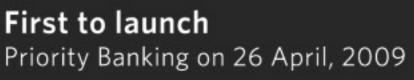


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