

COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS		CURRENCIES							
DGEN	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	JPY
▲ 0.14%	▼ 0.30%	▲ \$1,658.80 (per ounce)	▲ \$95.01 (per barrel)	▼ 0.92%	▼ 1.60%	▲ 0.45%	▼ 0.25%	BUY TK 81.25	99.79	126.61	1.02
4,452.88	8,537.16			17,380.75	8,839.91	3,025.46	2,047.52	SELL TK 82.25	103.80	130.68	1.11

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star BUSINESS

DHAKA MONDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2012, e-mail:business@thedailystar.net



STAR
Hall-Mark Group Managing Director Tanvir Mahmud, Chairman Jesmin Islam (Tanvir's wife), and General Manager Tusher Ahmed leave the Anti-Corruption Commission after an interrogation over the Sonali Bank scam in Dhaka yesterday. Story on page 1.

Egg prices spiral again, after Ramadan

SUMAN SAHA
Egg prices have spiralled in the city's markets on the back of rising consumption from households and bakeries after Ramadan. Retailers are charging Tk 38-40 for four pieces of eggs, which was Tk 32-34 about two weeks ago. In some cases, the prices have exceeded the previous levels. Mismatch of demand and supply due to increased consumption and a hike in prices of poultry feeds, accounts for the egg price rise, poultry sector leaders and egg traders said. "The egg prices rose as households and bakeries increased their consumption after Eid-ul-Fitr," said Khandker Mohammad Mohsin, general secretary of Bangladesh Poultry Farms Protection National Council. The country's daily demand for eggs is now hovering around 2.65-2.75 crore pieces, which is 30 percent higher than what was seen during the month of Ramadan. "Poultry farmers now supply 2.35-2.40 crore pieces a day," he said. Egg consumption tends to be low during Ramadan as most families do not prepare breakfast and bakeries, too, cut down on their production due to poor demand. "Egg is one of the key breakfast items. It is also a popular tiffin item among schoolchildren," said Mohsin, adding that egg consumption goes down significantly during the month of Ramadan as academic institutions remain closed.

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Ruposhi Bangla Hotel poised for a makeover

SAYEDA AKTER
The renovation process of Ruposhi Bangla Hotel will begin soon. A high-profile team from InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), the management operator of Ruposhi Bangla, is now in Dhaka to start their renovation planning from tomorrow. The team will hold meeting with the civil aviation ministry, the management of Ruposhi Bangla, and the hotel's owner --Bangladesh Services Ltd (BSL), said the secretary to the ministry. "It's part of the deal we signed with the IHG in February. Now we will discuss the process and cost of the renovation," said Mohammad Atharul Islam. A project management company the IHG has brought in will finalise the areas needed refurbishment within September 9, he said. Islam, also the chairman of the BSL, said the renovation will start by June 2013 and likely to complete within 16 months. "And after that the hotel will be renamed InterContinental Dhaka in 2014, and be handed over to the IHG for a period of 30 years."

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Pond farming takes lead in fish supply

SOHEL PARVEZ
Pond farming has emerged as the biggest source of fish, thanks to a massive expansion of freshwater farming in the past two decades and a fall in fish catching from rivers and other open water bodies. Fish from ponds and ditch now accounts for 41 percent of total yearly production of 30.61 lakh tonnes. A decade ago, its contribution was 34 percent, according to the Department of Fisheries (DoF). Contribution of fish caught from rivers fell to 34 percent in fiscal 2010-11. Declining fish habitat, the ongoing destruction of juvenile fish by using monofilament synthetic nylon fibre net and mosquito net, and environmental pollution are the major reasons behind the falling supplies of fish from rivers. "An increased production and availability of fingerlings and hatchlings because of growth in hatcheries has played a key role in expansion of fish farming," said Krishnendu Saha, chief fisheries extension officer of the DoF. Over the past two decades, private investors established more than 800 fish hatcheries. Their interest grew due to a business prospect against the backdrop of falling catches in open water areas and rising demand for fish. Initiatives by the government and NGOs to motivate farmers also facilitated farming for common carp, pangus, monosex tilapia and shing (cat fish) in regions such as Mymensingh, northern districts, Jessore and Comilla. Saha said many people in these areas entered freshwater fish farming because common carps (ruhi, katla, silver carp), pangus and tilapia become marketable in a short time. It enables the farmers to gain higher profit from fish than growing crops such as paddy and jute, he said. "Many people in greater Mymensingh have started fish culturing by making ditches in crop fields," said Saha. According to the DoF data, total pond area under fish farming was 2.42 lakh hectares early this decade, and such areas rose to 3.96 lakh hectares in fiscal 2010-11. Production also rose to 12.70 lakh tonnes in 2010-11 from 11.40 lakh tonnes a year ago. In fiscal 1999-2000, total production of fish from pond was 5.61 lakh tonnes, according to the DoF. Sajjad Hossain, managing director of Joyda Aquafarm Ltd, said many people are engaged in pangus farming because it needs low investment. Technologies were also easy for the farmers to follow, said Hossain of Joyda, which produces pangus fries at hatcheries, cultures those and sells to market. The company produces 2,500 tonnes of pangus a year, he said. M Mahfujul Haque, a professor of the Department of Aquaculture of Bangladesh Agricultural University, said the country has a huge potential to expand fish farming as only 11 percent of its pond resources have so far been exploited for fish. In the past, fish was cultured in ponds by collecting hatchlings from natural sources. But the main breakthrough came since the beginning of artificial propagation, he said.

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