

RATE HIGHER THAN MARKET PRICE

OMS rice shops in Patuakhali town see few buyers

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

OMS (open market sale) rice shops in Patuakhali town see only a few buyers as the price fixed by the government's food department is higher than the market price.

Surprisingly though, price of per kg of rice under the OMS programme meant for poor people is Tk 24 while the same category of rice is selling in the market at Tk 20 to 22 kg.

However, many people go to the OMS shops to buy atta (coarse flour) that sells cheaper than the market price.

Food department runs OMS shops through local dealers selling rice and atta in the open market to facilitate poor people buy the food items cheaply.

Patuakhali district food office employed nine dealers in the municipality area on January 1 this year and one tonne of rice and 1.3 tonne of atta are allocated daily for each dealer.

The department fixed Tk 24 as selling price for a kg of rice and Tk 20 for a kg of atta and anybody can buy 5 kg of rice and 5 kg of atta daily from an OMS shop from 9:00am to 4:00pm. In the beginning, people, especially those from low income groups, often queued up in lines to buy rice and atta from



PHOTO: STAR

A centre for open market sale (OMS) in 'court area' of Patuakahli town sees very few customers as the government-fixed price of the rice at OMS shops is now higher than that of the same category rice in the local market.

there as market price was higher. But market price of rice reduced during the last two months and now a kg of ordinary rice is selling for Tk 20 to 22 in the market.

But many people come to these shops to buy atta as a kg of it sells there at Tk 20 against Tk 28 to 30 in the market, said

Forkan Mridha, an OMS dealer of court area (near Kalatala Bazar) in the municipality.

"I came here to buy atta as its price is less than that in the market. But I didn't buy rice from the OMS shop as its price is higher," said Abdul Mannan, a rickshaw puller.

Nasima Begum, wife of

a day labourer residing at Kalatala slum, said she came to the shop to buy only atta as it saves Tk 8 to 10 per kg.

"It takes around a month to sell one tonne of rice that the food department allocates for a day while 1.3 tonnes of atta that we receive per day is finished by noon every-

day," said dealer Forkan Mridha.

He suggested re-fixing OMS rice price at Tk 16 to 18 per kg to enable poor people to save money.

Mesbah Uddin, an official of district food department, said they have nothing to do regarding the matter as the prices are fixed by the government.

SEPT 9 ATTACK ON COPS

600 Jubo Dal, JCD men sued in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

Around 600 leaders and activists of Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) have been sued on charge of attack on police during BNP-led 18-party alliance programme in Mymensingh town on September 9.

JCD district unit President Rokonuzzaman Sarker Rokon, Vice-President Tanvirul Islam Tutul, General Secretary Sujaudowla Suja, Joint Secretary Shamsul Alam Ujjal, Jubo Dal district unit President Shamim Azad, Vice-President Mozammel Haque Tutu, General Secretary Khondaker Masudul Haque, and former president of Jubo Dal district unit Shah Shabbir Ahmed Bhulu and general secretary Enamul Haque Akanda Liton are among the accused, police said.

Sub-inspector Aminul Islam of Kotwali Police Station filed the case with the police station concerned on Friday night.

Police said Jubo Dal and JCD men hurled brick chips on the law enforcers during the 18-party alliance programme in the town on September 9 and vandalised some vehicles. Five on-duty sub-inspectors, including the plaintiff of the case, were injured in the attack, they added.

BNP's district unit President A K M

Mosharraf Hossain, also former state minister for energy and mineral resources, yesterday condemned filing of a "false" case against Jubo Dal and JCD men. He demanded immediate withdrawal of the case.

Two factions of local BNP clashed during September 9 programme

in the town. At least 15 people were injured as the rival groups made chase and counter chase and hurled brick chips at each other during the clash in front of district BNP office.

None of the accused was arrested as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday.