

# Cattle arriving from Myanmar

MOHAMMAD ALI ZINNAT, Cox's Bazar

Cattle have started arriving in the country from neighbouring Myanmar ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

Local cattle traders say they have set a target for importing around 25,000 cattle from Myanmar.

Some 1,520 cows, 387 buffaloes and five goats had already been imported from Myanmar through Shah Parir Dwp corridor along the Naf river in the first 12 days of September, according to Teknaf land port customs sources.

Besides the 25,000 cattle, 4,118 head of cattle were imported from Myanmar in July and August, sources added.

There would be no crisis of sacrificial animals during the Eid, claimed Didar Hossain, president of Teknaf C&F Agents Association.

The traders said the cattle imported from Myanmar had not yet been taken to the markets in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong as the price was still low. These animals would be brought to the markets when the price started to increase.

A top cattle trader of Teknaf, Abu Sayeed, said the cattle traders of Teknaf, Hnila, Sabrang and Shah Parir Dwp had kept 3,000 head of cattle ready for sale.

Talking to this correspondent on September 11, he said the wholesale traders from Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Feni, Comilla and Noakhali had not yet come there for collecting cattle imported from Myanmar.

Locals of Puran Nazir in Hnila, Palong Khali and Hoaikong alleged that cattle were smuggled in from Myanmar through some isolated and remote points of the Naf.

However, Matiur Rahman, Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB) Shah Parir Dwp BOP commander, said

there was no scope for cattle smuggling.

He said the cattle were given clearance to enter the country after examining the imported cattle properly.

Cattle traders Emdad Ullah, Farid Boli, Shahidul Islam and Mohammad Sharif said they were not facing any problems in importing cattle.

There is an allegation that a number of dishonest traders are feeding medicine to cows to make the imported cattle fat quickly. Sources said Dexamethasone, a type of steroid medication, is being used to fatten up the cows.

Two cattle traders on condition of anonymity told this correspondent that they bought some weak and small-size cows several months ago and were feeding the cows with Dexamethasone for fattening them within a short time. They did it as there was a demand for those cows ahead of Eid.

Cows and buffaloes collect excessive water in their bodies after being fed with Dexamethasone. It can damage their kidneys, said AM Khalequzzaman, Teknaf upazila livestock officer.

Dexamethasone is not meant for feeding the cows. Meat of the cows given Dexamethasone is harmful for human consumption, said Titu Chandra Shil, health officer of Teknaf Upazila Health Complex.

The BGB had been working round the clock to make the import of cattle from Myanmar through Shah Parir Dwp corridor hassle-free, said Maj Abdul Hannan Khan, acting commander of BGB 42 Battalion in Teknaf.



Cattle brought in from Myanmar are gathered in a field of Shahparir Island in Teknaf yesterday.

PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ALI ZINNAT

## Hope lies in local cattle

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which earned the trader Tk 26,000 in profit.

Shahidul expected that they would make a good profit this time around.

He said the supply of Indian cattle to Sharsha upazila has been minimal in recent months. However, local ranchers have almost doubled their production compared to last year's figures.

The demand for cattle may reach up to 40 lakh during the Eid, said sources at the Department of Livestock and Services (DLS).

At least one-third of the demand used to be met by cattle mostly from India and a little from Myanmar, according to data of the National Board of Revenue.

Trader Md Didarul Islam from Paikgacha upazila of Khulna said rearing of cattle by farmers in his area has almost doubled compared to last year's number as they look to profit from the business.

People from other professions also bought some bulls a few months ago to raise and sell them at good prices during the Eid season, he added. "I myself have raised three bulls this year, up from one last year."

Arafat Sunny, a cattle trader from Kushtia Sadar upazila, said around 20 farms in the upazila raised about 1,000 bulls each to sell them in the capital or in other major districts during the Eid season.

**PRICES HIGHER**

Traders said the prices of cattle are

higher this year compared to last year as the purchase prices and transport costs have soared. The farmers also had to spend more on fodders.

A trucker charges traders Tk 20,000 to Tk 25,000 for transporting cattle from Kushtia to Dhaka, up from Tk 12,000 last year, said trader Shahidul Islam.

Golam Mostofa, a trader from Rajshahi, said he bought three bulls for Tk 47,000 each. Last year, bulls of the same size were sold at around Tk 37,000 each, he added.

Another trader Abdur Rashid said he brought 16 bulls from India through the Jatrapur border point in Kurigram on Tuesday. Around 2,000 bulls were brought from the neighboring country through the border point on the day.

"As the Indian Border Security Force kept a tight watch on the border, we had to spend Tk 10,000 more for each bull priced between Tk 30,000 and Tk 40,000," he said.

Trader Saidul Islam said he bought 23 bulls on Tuesday at a border point in Chapainawabganj. He had to spend Tk 10,000 more for each of them than their usual prices of Tk 25,000 to Tk 40,000.

Different breeds of bulls were on sale at Gabtali Cattle Market yesterday. They included bulls of Haryana of India, Butti of Bhutan and Nepali bulls.

A lot of buffaloes and goats were also put on sale at the city's lone permanent cattle market, but customers were thin.

## Bangladesh an example of religious harmony

PM tells Iranian minister

UNB, Dhaka

Termining Bangladesh an excellent example of religious harmony, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the people of all faiths here can perform their religious rituals freely and independently.

"Everyone in Bangladesh has the right to perform his or her own religious rituals and no one hurts the religious sentiment of others," she said.

The PM made the remarks when visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Mohammad Javad Zarif met her at her office.

After the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters.

The Iranian foreign minister briefed the PM about the recent nuclear deal of his country. In July this year, Iran and six major world powers — Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, China, France and Germany — reached a nuclear deal capping more than a decade of negotiations with an agreement that could transform the Middle East.

Once the problems are removed, he said, economic cooperation between Dhaka and Tehran will get a boost.

In response, the PM expressed hope that the trade and economic cooperation between Dhaka and Tehran would further be strengthened after the implementation of the nuclear deal.

Javad Zarif appreciated Bangladesh's support to Iran in its peaceful use of nuclear energy, and mentioned the potentials of bilateral cooperation in textiles and power and energy sectors in Bangladesh with emphasis on reactivating the joint economic commission to review the areas of cooperation.

He also informed the PM about the Iranian government's decision to provide on arrival visas to Bangladeshi citizens holding official and diplomatic passports.

Hasina said Bangladesh has traditional and cultural relations with Iran and hoped that the ties would be cemented further in the days to come.

She also conveyed her best wishes to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

PM's Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi, PMO Secretary Suraiya Begum and Iranian Ambassador in Bangladesh Abbas Vaezi were present.

## Govt to examine 'discrepancies'

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leaders said they are still firm on their decision of not discussing their demands with the finance minister.

"We have full faith in other members [of the committee], but we don't want to sit with the finance minister," FBUTA General Secretary Prof Maksud Kamal told The Daily Star yesterday.

"He [Muhith] stood against the teachers through his recent comments on our movement. He also tried to give incorrect information about the teachers," he said.

As per the circular issued by the cabinet division, members of the new

cabinet committee are ministers of industries, commerce, education, public administration and law, and state ministers for finance and planning.

Prof Maksud said that as part of their ongoing agitation programme, teachers of all 37 public universities will observe a daylong work stoppage today to press their four-point demands including immediate revision of the 8th national pay scale and a separate salary structure for them.

Although many universities have already been closed for the Eid-ul-Azha holiday, academic activities like

academic council meeting will be held. Teachers, however, will not take part in these activities, he said.

FBUTA will also hold a rally at the Oporajeyo Bangla of Dhaka University today from 11:00am to 1:00pm, Maksud added.

**ALLEGATIONS OF DISCREPANCIES**  
The post of selection grade professors (senior teachers) has been abolished in the new pay scale although bureaucrats have got a special grade for themselves.

In the seventh pay scale, selection grade professors were under grade-I category along with secretaries, and senior professors were under grade-II

and professors under grade-III.

The eighth pay scale did not separately mention anything about selection-grade professors who were put on the same grade as senior professors and secretaries.

These are some of the complaints public university teachers made.

They demand reinstatement of the selection grade. They also want salaries of selection-grade professors to be equivalent to those of senior secretaries.

The government on September 7 approved the new pay scale for all government employees with retrospective effect from July 2015.

## Do more to combat militancy

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to stop the spread of radical ideas "from the west to Bangladesh".

"Certainly we want cooperation from all other countries so that they should be very careful that no illegal money or arms or terrorists should take any chance to create any problem to any other country," Hasina said.

Defending her zero-tolerance approach to terrorism, Hasina said fundamentalist groups and some people are trying to stoke militancy in Bangladesh.

"We are fighting to maintain a secular society ... If we lose we will become a centre of global jihadi terrorism," she said, adding the secu-

rity situation in Bangladesh is under control.

Turning to Jamaat-e-Islami, Hasina said, "Jamaat has a strong influence in east London ... They are collecting money, they are sending money."

The PM's warnings come following the arrest last month of Touhidur Rahman, a British citizen of

Bangladeshi origin, who allegedly masterminded the murders of secular bloggers Avijit Roy and Ananta Bijoy Das earlier this year.

Most recently, it emerged that two of the three British citizens recruited by the Isis and killed by British and US drone strikes in Syria last month — Ruhul Amin and Reyaad Khan — were of

SEX SLAVERY IN MIDDLE EAST

## Bangladeshi women among victims

STAR REPORT

Thousands of women from Bangladesh, India and Nepal are sold every year as sex slaves in the Middle East and Islamic State-occupied part of Syria, reported The New Indian Express from Delhi.

Traffickers use New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata as transit points to take the victims to the destinations, according to the report published on Monday. Guwahati of Indian state Assam is the transit point for Bangladeshi girls, from where they are sent to Chennai or Mumbai.

Recently, 60 Bangladeshi girls were rescued from a rail station in Rangia of Assam, Indian investigators said.

The multibillion-dollar business has been around for long, but details surfaced following the rescue of two Nepalese girls from Gurgaon residence of a Saudi official, where they were allegedly gang-raped and assaulted by the Saudi man and his

friends.

On September 2, Indian intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) alerted Delhi police to Bangladeshi girls being flown from New Delhi to Dubai, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia for trafficking.

An India-based contact reached out on August 31 to his Bangladesh-based female associate and informed that he had managed the necessary liaisons in Delhi, through which he would be able to obtain visas for Bangladeshis to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Dubai, he said.

Central agencies alerted Delhi police, Bureau of Immigration and airport officials to the sex trade racket.

Illegal job placement agencies play a key role in the thriving business of human trafficking in India, investigators said.

The police have so far arrested 62 human traffickers in Delhi while the figure was 199 last year and 286 in 2013.

## 3 key challenges of MDGs ahead

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The General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission launched the report yesterday at the Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

Later this month, the UN will announce Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2016-2030 as a follow-up of the MDGs.

In his presentation, Dr Shamsul Alam, member of the GED, said as per one of the MDG targets, Bangladesh should have 20 percent of land area covered by forest by this year. But the forest-covered area is now only 13.40 percent.

"The proportion of people using improved drinking water sources is 98.5. This is on track. However, people using improved sanitary facility is only 64.2 percent though the target is 100 percent," he said.

The report says ensuring access to safe water for all remains a challenge. Arsenic and salinity intrusion as a consequence of climate change fall-out exacerbate availability of safe water, especially for the poor.

"Also, attaining food security and nutritional wellbeing for a populous country like Bangladesh still remains as a challenge," it says.

According to Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2014,

36 percent children under five suffer from stunting [low height for age].

Also, 16.4 percent people consume dietary energy below the minimum level (1,805 kilo calorie per day) whereas the target was 14 percent.

On the positive fronts, the proportion of people below the upper poverty line has declined to an estimated 24.8 percent this year against the target of 29.

Net enrolment rate in primary education is now 97.7 percent, which is likely to become 100 percent by this year.

About 81 percent of the students, who get enrolled in grade one, reach grade five. Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds is 78.63, while adult literacy rate of people aged 15 years and above is 61 percent.

It would be difficult to achieve 100 percent success in these areas within this year, said Shamsul Alam.

Bangladesh has reached the target in terms of ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education. But it is behind the target in tertiary education where the ratio of girls to boys is 0.67:1.00.

Share of women in wage employment (non-agriculture sector) is only 31.6 percent against the target of 50 percent.

On the other hand, only 20 percent seats in the Jatiya Sangsad are held by women while the target was 33 percent.

Under-five child mortality per 1,000 live births is 41 against the target of 48, and the proportion of one-year-old children immunised against measles is 79.9 percent against the target of 100 percent.

When it comes to maternal health, Bangladesh is on track to achieve most of the targets.

Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births is 170 against the target of 143, while 42.1 percent births are attended by skilled health personnel against the target of 50 percent.

The country has also achieved the goal in combating HIV/AIDS and malaria, says the report.

Speaking at the programme, Foreign Minister AH Mahmud Ali said Bangladesh's progress in achieving MDGs proves that Bangladesh could deliver on international commitments.

He, however, voiced concerns over the rise of terrorism and armed conflicts in different countries, threats of climate change, gender inequality and decline in official development assistance (ODA).

Finance Minister AMA Muhith said Bangladesh would focus on South-

South cooperation and generating resources from domestic sources, as official development assistance from most of the developed countries was on the decline.

The theme of SDG was to use resources in such a manner that the next generation would not face crises for depletion of resources, he said. "We should act accordingly though it is very difficult."

Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Atiur Rahman said the government's inclusive policies, macroeconomic stability and over six percent GDP growth annually for the last several years led to Bangladesh's progress.

He stressed the need for checking corruption, broadening tax net and green financing for sustainable development.

UNDP Country Director Pauline Tamesis termed Bangladesh a role model in achieving MDGs.

She also put emphasis on improving the quality of education, retaining students in schools and ensuring nutrition for sustainable development.

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal chaired the programme, which was addressed by, among others, State Minister for Finance and Planning MAMannan.