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Rice gets pricier

Tk 2-6 increase per kg in a week; millers, traders increase price citing declining stock, supply shortage



Estimated rice output (2018-19)
3.6 CRORE TONNES
Boro 55% (Harvest May-June)
Aman 38% (Harvest Nov-Dec)

SOHEL PARVEZ, KONGKON KARMAKER, and AMANUR RAHMAN

After soaring prices of onions, consumers now have to deal with rice prices creeping up over the last few weeks. The rising rice prices question the claims of surplus by millers and their demand for cash incentives to export the grain to invigorate the paddy market and save the farmers from losses.

All rice varieties saw jumps in prices owing to supply shortfall, declining stocks of paddy, government procurement of 6 lakh tonnes of paddy, and exports, claimed traders.

Data of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) shows that depending on quality, retail prices of the cereal rose between 4 percent and 10 percent a kg in Dhaka city since November 10. This translates to Tk 2 to Tk 6 rise per kg.

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3 bullet-hit bodies found in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Police recovered three bullet-hit bodies from a remote area in Rangamati's Rajasthali upazila last night. The identities of the victims could not be confirmed till filing of this report around midnight.

Rajasthali OC Mafjal Ahmed Khan said, "We recovered the bodies of three people from Balumura area, but their identities could not be confirmed immediately."

The hands and legs of the victims were tied with ropes, he added.

The OC said additional policemen were deployed in the area to avoid any deterioration in law and order.

Earlier, police recovered the body of local BNP leader Dipamoy Talukder, former chairman of Gaijndya Union Parishad, from a remote area in Rajasthali upazila on October 23, a day after he was abducted at gunpoint by some armed criminals.



Amid a transport strike, easy bike drivers are trying to convince a woman to board their vehicles at Sonadanga bus stand in Khulna city yesterday. Bottom, a mobile court fines a car owner for traffic rules violation in the capital's Manik Mia Avenue. Police asking a van to pull over in Banani.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY/PALASH KHAN/PRABIR DAS



MANIPULATING MARKET Govt to move against 2,500 onion traders

Prices fall further even before arrival of cargo

STAR REPORT

Even before the cargo plane arrived with the first consignment of onions, prices of the essential spice dropped further for the second consecutive day yesterday.

Visiting different kitchen markets in the capital yesterday, our correspondents found that onions imported from Egypt were sold for Tk 120-150 while the onions imported from Myanmar were sold for Tk 150-170.

Prices of these varieties rose to Tk220-250 on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Commerce Secretary Zafar Uddin said the government had identified 2,500 traders responsible for manipulating the onion price across the country, reports UNB.

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ACC seeks bank info of 105

MPs, govt officials among them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ACC has sought information on bank accounts of 105 people, including ruling Awami League lawmakers and top government officials, as they face allegation of amassing illegal wealth.

The MPs include Shamsul Hoque Chowdhury, Pankaj Debnath and Nurunnabi Chowdhury Shaon. The officials include Directorate General of Customs Intelligence and Investigation (CIID) Director General M Shahidul Islam and Commissioner of Customs House Inland Container Depot (ICD) Anwar Hossain.

In a letter on Sunday, ACC Director Syed Iqbal Hossain requested Bangladesh Bank's Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) to provide it with necessary information on the bank accounts.

ACC Director General Sayeed Mahub Khan confirmed sending the letter to the BFIU, but refused to give details.

Asked, an ACC official, quoting from the letter, said Golam Kibria Shamim and others have allegedly laundered a huge amount of money made through the illegal casino business. They allegedly bribed many government officials for the embezzlement, the ACC official said.

The ACC needs to analyse the bank accounts of the individuals and their family members to look into the matter, the official said.

On September 20, Rab arrested Shamim from his office in the capital with a huge stash of cash, fixed deposit

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ROAD TRANSPORT ACT Mobile courts go soft on first day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BRTA mobile courts operating under the new Road Transport Act was lenient in meting out punishment for traffic offences on the first day yesterday.

The courts fined as little as possible to warn errant motorists, officials said.

Six mobile courts in the capital filed 88 cases under the law yesterday. The courts also fined offenders Tk 1.21 lakh and seized papers of two vehicles for violating the act that came into effect on Sunday, AKM Masudur Rahman, director (enforcement) of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority told The Daily Star.

The mobile courts mostly fined bus drivers who had outdated or forged licences.

The new law, with increased fines for traffic offences, was supposed to be put into effect on November 1. But it was delayed as transport associations had allegedly been lobbying against it.

There were legal hurdles to conduct mobile court under the act. But they were cleared by the government on Sunday.

The BRTA courts were conducted in Uttara, Banani, Pallabi, Rayerbagh, Manik Mia Avenue, and different other areas of the city.

Bus drivers were also fined for overloading, adding more passenger seats than stated on papers, and not having proper documents and fare charts.

Several bus drivers who had been fined on

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Transport strike on, defying call from minister

STAR REPORT

Transport workers in nine districts yesterday enforced a strike, defying Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader's call for them to refrain from such programmes centring the Road Transport Act-2018.

The transport workers in Khulna, Satkhira, Jhenidah, Narail, Kushtia, Meherpur, Jashore, Rajshahi, and Bhupur upazila of Tangail went for the strike, demanding changes in several sections of the act.

Although central leaders of transport owners and workers associations said they did not instruct their units to go for the strike, many workers observed work abstention.

The RTA was finally effective Sunday more than 13 months after parliament passed it aiming to bring discipline in the

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People queue to buy onions at Tk 50 a kg from a truck of the state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh in the capital's Secretariat area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladeshi killed in Libya air raid

STAR REPORT

At least one Bangladeshi worker was among seven people killed in an air strike on a biscuit factory in the Libyan capital Tripoli yesterday.

Another 35 were injured in the attack in a southern suburb of the capital, reports Reuters.

Talking to The Daily Star, ASM Ashraful Islam, labour counsellor of the Bangladesh Embassy in Tripoli, said that of the dead, at least one is Bangladeshi. The rest are from other countries.

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Gain China, India's support over Rohingya return

Experts urge the govt to step up diplomatic efforts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former ambassadors and security analysts yesterday called upon the Bangladesh government to strengthen diplomatic efforts to earn China and India's support for Rohingya repatriation, saying their roles are imperative to resolve the crisis.

As the countries are regional powers, Myanmar maintains good relationships with them while they (India and China) also have their own economic and geopolitical interests in the Southeast country,

the ambassadors and analysts said at a roundtable discussion.

They said Bangladesh also needed to continue its diplomacy with the US and the United Nations to make them impose sanctions on Myanmar over "genocide" charges.

Institute of Conflict, Law and Development Studies (ICLDS) and Bangla daily Bhorer Kagoj jointly organised the roundtable on the "Necessity of Rohingya Repatriation in Regional and Global

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Honorable Minister
Minister of Posts and Telecommunications
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Md. Atiqul Islam
Mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation

Guest Speakers:
Ayman Sadiq
Founder & CEO, Robi 10 Minute School

Solaiman Shukhon
Head of Market Development & Communication at Nagad

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