

Pandemic bites aromatic rice processors

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Apart from domestic production, traders import long-grain rice such as basmati to cater to the demand from the middle class and upscale consumers.

“We, the aromatic rice millers, are one of the first victims of the pandemic. There is barely any demand for scented rice,” said Sanat Saha, who operates a rice mill in Sherpur, an aromatic rice-producing district in the north.

Millers, who process scented paddy, have been incurring losses as they have to sell each maund of milled rice at Tk 2,400.

The processing costs, including the prices of paddy, stand at Tk 2,800 per maund, Saha said.

“Lockdown is over but there are no large gatherings. None would invite 500 people during this time to celebrate anything,” he added.

Anup Kumar Saha, deputy executive director of ACI Consumer Brands, a unit of ACI, said they processed 3,500 tonnes of aromatic rice but faced difficulties to clear the stock as demand fell.

ACI, which operates rice mills, incurred losses as prices declined at the wholesale level because of a fall in demand. It has 1,600 tonnes of aromatic rice in stock now.

“The purchasing power of people has dwindled due to the economic crisis brought about by the pandemic. Preparing food like polao or biriyani is not an expense

for rice only. People also need to buy other items such as meat to enjoy the food.”

Despite the decline in prices at the wholesale level, processors did not reduce the prices of their retail packs to that extent.

Instead, marketers are trying to sell their items through promotions or increasing trade commissions to distributors and retailers, according to Anup.

Marketers are giving extra benefits to retailers to stay ahead of others in the competition, said MA Mahmud, senior brand manager of Square Food & Beverage.

Some 50 companies sell aromatic rice to profit from the market of nearly Tk 800 crore in the branded segment.

Retail prices of consumer packs could not be reduced as procurement prices were higher, he said.

“We can’t suffer losses,” he said, expecting that the demand would rebound slowly.

Saha, however, was not upbeat about recovery as he thinks there is no hope of business until a vaccine is developed and brought into the country.

He rather believes that farmers would reduce cultivation of aromatic rice this planting season frustrated by low prices of this type of grain.

The market would see increased supply and prices might decline further when a new crop will arrive in December, Ali said.

director of Premier Cement. The adjustable fund is worth about Tk 750 crore, which is badly needed under the current circumstances.

According to Haque, businessmen never reserve funds and instead always try to reinvest and expand their operations.

“We give the money to the NBR by taking loans from banks. Now we are paying interest to the banks whereas the NBR is not refunding our money over the years.”

Haque alleged that some officials of the NBR create obstacles for industrialisation even though the prime minister intends to continue developing the economy.

NBR does not fail to take AIT from all cement manufacturers but is yet to refund the money over the years, said Asadul Haque Sufyani, chief operating officer of Bengal Cement.

“The revenue authority takes payment right down to the last penny but does not provide refunds when we rightly demand the money.”

NBR does not pay interest even though it has blocked hundreds of crores in capital from numerous cement manufacturers, he added.

Fed official warns of ‘uncertain’ US recovery

AFP, Washington

The United States’s recovery from the coronavirus economic downturn is “highly uncertain” and many businesses will continue to struggle, a top Federal Reserve official said Wednesday.

Emergency programs rolled out by the government and Fed helped cushion the blow from the COVID-19 business shutdowns, but “the economy is still far from back to normal,” central bank governor Michelle Bowman said.

“The future course and timing of the recovery is still highly uncertain, and its pace and intensity are likely to vary across areas of the country,” Bowman said in a speech to Kansas bankers.

Govt to draft law to incorporate digitalisation of banking

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It identified crimes and spelt out punishment and trial systems. If found guilty of publishing information illegally, a person would face jail terms of at least three years or fined Tk 10 lakh, or both. This would help ensure the secrecy of information.

The laws have identified crimes as cognisable, non-bailable and compoundable.

Banks face difficulty to present certified copies of old documents at courts within three working days. The law has proposed to give seven working days to banks.

Higher investment in treasury bills saves the day for Rupali Bank

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“The investment will jack up our profits as the interest rate in these investments is around 8-9 per cent and these are risk-free. Along with it, the investment will help us maintain the statutory liquidity reserve,” he added.

Thanks to the lower deposit rate, the state-run bank’s deposit growth fell to 6.44 per cent in 2019, which was 21.8 per cent in the previous year, according to the annual report. Though the bank logged profits in 2019, it was not allowed to provide a dividend to its shareholders due to a provision shortfall.

Earlier on 28 June, the board of directors of the lender had declared 5 per cent stock dividend for its shareholders for the year that ended on 31 December 2019. The bank provided 10 per cent stock dividend in the previous year.

But the central bank did not approve the dividend, the company said yesterday in a piece of price-sensitive information posted on the website of the Dhaka Stock Exchange.

The bank’s provision shortfall was Tk 1,168 crore in 2019, which was Tk 1,136 crore in the previous year, according to the annual report of the company.

“Our board declared the dividend considering the situation of stock investors though they knew it might not be approved by the Bangladesh Bank,” the official said.

“The stock market was bearish and if we don’t pay any dividend, then the company will be downgraded to Z category,” he said.

When a company does not provide a dividend, it is downgraded to Z category shares as per listing regulations.

Rupali Bank, where the government has 90 per cent shares, closed at Tk 30.8 on the DSE yesterday, up 6.21 per cent from the previous day.

Robi beats pandemic blues as its profit takes a leap in second quarter

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Its voice call business, which is still its bread and butter, was, however, affected in April and May as the countrywide shutdown that began on 26 March meant a portion of its low-income subscribers were out of work, while its retailers could not open shops either.

Voice revenue declined 14.2 per cent compared with the previous quarter and 18.6 per cent year-on-year.

Robi termed it an indication of “the economic hardship endured especially by the lower income customers who tend to use 2G based voice call service”.

The operator clocked in Tk 1,763 crore in revenue, down 9.5 per cent from the previous quarter and a 5.2 per cent from a year earlier.

Its total active subscribers stood at 4.8 crore at the end of June, up 0.1 per cent year-on-year and down 3.5 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

“As anticipated, the impact of pandemic was quite telling on our business,” Ahmed said. The Malaysian Axiata-owned operator though felt its financial performance would have looked better were it not for the tax regime.

In a statement, it said its net profit was “heavily impacted by the discriminatory 2 per cent minimum turnover tax”.

The harsh impact of the pandemic on the business was further exacerbated due to the increase of supplementary duty by 5 per cent on all SIM services introduced in the budget for fiscal 2020-21 unveiled on 11 June, Ahmed said.

The higher SD of 15 per cent, which took effect on the midnight of 12 June, took the customers’ total service tax to 33.25 per cent.

“In fact, the very premise of the budget, which assumes that the telecom sector is awash with cash has been further debunked by the financial data disclosed by other operators. Besides, the lack of support from the government to help the industry cushion the blow from the pandemic made the situation all the more painful.”

Ahmed went on to laud the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission’s move in June to implement the significant market player regulations on Grameenphone.

“We now eagerly await tangible outcomes in this regard,” he added.

ADB to provide \$5.9b in 2021-23

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All projects are selected and processed based on strong government demand, sector absorptive capacity, and readiness, among other criteria, said the Manila-based lender press release yesterday.

“Given the coronavirus disease pandemic, we are adjusting programme priorities to help the country overcome immediate challenges related to health and social protection, accelerate economic recovery, and maintain inclusive growth,” said ADB Country Director Manmohan Parkash.

Climate resilience, gender inclusion, and balanced regional development are programme priorities, he said, adding that more support would be provided to improve food security and the finance sector.

ADB will respond to a government request for increased support by focusing on the private sector, public-private partnership projects and help with bond market development.

“To mobilise more resources, we will leverage co-financing opportunities and use diverse financing tools and modalities including policy-based loan, technical assistance, grants, equity, guarantees, B-loan and trade financing,” he added.

In the past 47 years, ADB mobilised more than \$34.9 billion in loans and grants, including co-financing, in Bangladesh for infrastructure, public services and social development. ADB’s current sovereign portfolio in Bangladesh has 49 projects of about \$11 billion.

Lack of data hinders Bangladesh’s SDG progress monitoring

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Ministries don’t have updated data, the report said.

Bangladesh would be able to achieve the SDG 1, which is ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, if the increase in income inequality does not offset the impact of higher growth on poverty reduction, according to the report.

The constraints on the mobilisation of resources especially external resources, implementation of the National Social Safety Net programmes, the vulnerability of the middle class and preventing slippage into poverty are some of the key challenges the country faces in achieving the goal, it said.

Income inequality in Bangladesh is much higher than consumption inequality. Income inequality has increased while consumption inequality has remained relatively stable over the years, the report said.

“Special focus is needed on budget allocations for health and education, including strengthening of health and education system governance, management, and service delivery capacities and implementation of essential services package, with a focus on the lagging regions.”

This year closes the first cycle of the 2030 Agenda implementation. Planning Minister MA Mannan spoke at the report launching.


কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Gopalganj, Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira & Pirojpur Agricultural Development Project

Department of Agricultural Extension, Khulna

(H R Patoary Mansion, Plot-D, 43, Mujgunni, Boyra)



e-Tender Notice

Memo No. DAE/GKBSPADP/Buried Pipe-31/2020/168

Date: 26.08.2020

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender has published through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of works/package description	Tender publication date	Last selling date & time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time	Method of tender
1	DAE/GKBSP/Buriedpipe-31-1/2020/170 ID: 487930	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150mm dia 200rm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation purpose under “GKBSPADP” at 10 (ten) sites in 5 (five) upazilas of Gopalganj district	27.8.2020 16.00	13.9.2020 17.00	14.9.2020 12.30	14.9.2020 12.30	OTM
2	DAE/GKBSP/Buriedpipe-31-2/2020/171 ID: 487933	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150mm dia 200rm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation purpose under “GKBSPADP” at 22 (twenty-two) sites in 11 (eleven) upazilas of Khulna district	27.8.2020 16.00	13.9.2020 15.00	14.9.2020 13.00	14.9.2020 13.00	OTM
3	DAE/GKBSP/Buriedpipe-31-3/2020/172 ID: 486821	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150mm dia 200rm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation purpose under “GKBSPADP” at 18 (eighteen) sites in 9 (nine) upazilas of Bagerhat district	27.8.2020 16.00	13.9.2020 17.00	14.9.2020 12.00	14.9.2020 12.00	OTM
4	DAE/GKBSP/Buriedpipe-31-4/2020/173 ID: 487936	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150mm dia 200rm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation purpose under “GKBSPADP” at 14 (fourteen) sites in 7 (seven) upazilas of Satkhira district	27.8.2020 16.00	13.9.2020 17.00	14.9.2020 14.00	14.9.2020 14.00	OTM
5	DAE/GKBSP/Buriedpipe-31-5/2020/174 ID: 487934	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150mm dia 200rm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation purpose under “GKBSPADP” at 14 (fourteen) sites in 7 (seven) upazilas of Pirojpur district	27.8.2020 16.00	13.9.2020 17.00	14.9.2020 13.30	14.9.2020 13.30	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd).

Alomgir Biswas

Project Director

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GD-1344

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

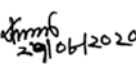
College Education Development Project (CEDP)

Khulna Govt. Mahila College, Khulna

Jalil Saroni, Boyra, Khulna

Invitation for Tenders

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education		
2	Agency	University Grants Commission/ National University		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Professor TM Zakir Hossain, Principal Khulna Govt. Mahila College, Khulna		
4	Procuring Entity Code	N/A		
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka		
6	Invitation for	Procurement of Air Conditioner (AC) for Teachers’ Council, Vice Principal’s Office, Subproject office and ICT labs		
7	Invitation Ref No	kgmc/idg/G4		
8	Date	27/08/2020		
KEY INFORMATION				
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (National)		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and Source of Funds	Development Budget (Government & IDA Credit)		
11	Development Partners	International Development Association (IDA), World Bank		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12	Project Code	224017200		
13	Project Name	College Education Development Project (CEDP)		
14	Tender Package No.	G4		
15	Tender Package Name	Procurement of Air Conditioner (AC) for Teachers’ Council, Vice Principal’s Office, Subproject office and ICT labs		
16	Tender Publication Date	27/08/2020		
17	Tender Last Selling Date	09/09/2020		
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	10/09/2020, 11:00 AM		
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	10/09/2020, 12:00 PM		
20	Name & Address of the office	Khulna Govt. Mahila College, Jalil Saroni, Boyra Khulna		
	Selling Tender Document			
	Receiving Tender Document			
	Opening Tender Document			
21	Place /Date/Time of Pre – Tender Meeting (Optional)	No pre-tender meeting will be held		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
22	Eligibility of Tenderer	The Tenderer shall have a minimum of three (03) years overall experience in the supply of goods and related services; years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply and installation of Air Conditioner of at least 1 (One) contract(s) successfully completed within the last 3 (Three) years, each with a value of at least Tk. 18 (Eighteen) lac The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderers shall be Tk 16,00,000(Sixteen lacs) Other criteria as stated in Tender Document		
23	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Installing split type inverter ac. Tenderer will do electrical wiring where necessary		
24	Brief Description of Related Services	Related service shall be in accordance with Section 4: Particular Conditions of Contract, Section 6: Bill of Quantities		
25	Tender Document Price	BDT 1,500.00 (One Thousand Five Hundred)		
26	Tender Name	Location	Tender Security Amount(Tk)	Completion time in Months
	Procurement of Air Conditioner (AC) for Teachers’ Council, Vice Principal’s Office, Subproject office and ICT labs	Khulna Govt. Mahila College	50,000 (Fifty Thousand)	2 Month
27	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Professor TM Zakir Hossain		
28	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Principal		
29	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Khulna Govt. Mahila College, Jalil Saroni, Boyra Khulna		
30	Contract Details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel: 01718051123	Tel: 01711949615	Tel: 01712702082
31	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.			



Professor TM Zakir Hossain
Principal
Khulna Govt. Mahila College, Khulna

GD- 1345