



A partially deserted road is seen during the lockdown imposed as a preventive measure against the spread of the coronavirus in Chennai, India yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Govt paid no heed as stock plunged

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The government does not store food grains to meet the demands of the entire nation.

The public food storage serves two main purposes -- to support the government's safety net programmes like Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) and Food for Work, providing for people in the wake of natural disasters and to intervene in the local market to control food prices when necessary.

If the hoarders create artificial scarcity and raise the price of rice, the government may start Open Market Sale (OMS) at reduced prices.

Every year Bangladesh faces various kind of natural disasters like floods, flash floods, cyclones, heavy rainfall or tornadoes, each of which carries the threat of damage to crops. If flash floods washes away paddy in the haor in one season, cyclones like Amphan ruins crops in another. This year, it was lack of rainfall and an unprecedented heat wave have that damaged paddy.

Experts say the government should have a food grains stock of 24 to 25 lakh tonne to tackle situations like those.

They say the minimum should be a stock of above 15 lakh tonne and the price of rice would start rising in the market if the public stock fell down to lower than 12.5 lakh tonne.

That is exactly what happened this year.

In the beginning of the current fiscal year, the public food grain stock was less than 12 lakh tonne. And now the public stock of rice has come down to three lakh tonne. Along with the stock of wheat, the total food grain stock is around 4.5 lakh tonne.

As the government stock has reduced, the hoarders started to control the market, inflating the price of rice. The price of coarse rice has

increased by Tk 13 to Tk 14 per kg in the last year and the price of rice has reached around Tk 45 per kg.

But the truth is there was no shortage of food till the last Boro season -- Bangladesh's total demand of food grains was 3.58 crore tonne and its production was 3.6 crore tonne, according to various studies.

Bangladesh became the third largest rice producers, overtaking Indonesia. So, we were self-sufficient last season.

During the last Aman season, a portion of paddy was damaged due to Cyclone Amphan. The government should have taken desperate measures to purchase rice and paddy and increase its stocks, and they set a target to purchase 8.5 lakh tonne of Aman rice and paddy.

But the government's initiative failed because, like the last boro season, it fixed the purchase price of paddy and rice lower than their production costs.

The government fixed the purchase price of paddy at Tk 26 a kg and rice at Tk 36 a kg, one taka less than the production cost. Farmers and millers were getting better price in the market and so the government could only procure 83,000 tonne of rice in the last Aman season.

Later, this January, the food ministry took the initiative to import 20 lakh tonne of rice. The government signed several government-to-government deals to import rice from India, Russia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. It also gave import approvals to private importers.

But the process was delayed due to what they said was "international volatile situation". It took four months for the government to import 2.62 lakh tonne of rice while private importers brought around 6.5 lakh tonne.

Although many importers got approval, they are now not willing to import the rest because, with the domestic Boro harvest having already begun, they will not profit if they import rice at a 25 percent duty.

The food ministry had realised much earlier that they would fail to increase food grain stocks because, for the last few months, they were giving out cash instead of food grains under the popular Food for Work programme.

And now that rice hoarders and traders know that the government does not have the stocks to intervene in the rice market, they have increased the price. The food ministry should have realised that it would come to this juncture much earlier, but they could not tackle the situation.

This price hike has put an extra burden on people who do not have a stable income and are struggling to pay house rent or meet treatment costs amid a worsening pandemic.

The glimmer of hope now lies with the Boro harvest that has already begun.

Also, the government has primarily decided to purchase 10 lakh tonne of parboiled rice, 1.5 lakh tonne of sunburnt rice and 6.5 lakh tonne of paddy.

This time it may work as the government shows interest to pay more than the production cost. The purchase of paddy is likely to start from April 28 and rice from May 7.

But agro economists who are following the situation suggests purchasing more paddy from farmers -- it will help the government secure its stock and the marginal farmers will get a good price.

It is a better strategy than importing rice at the last moment. Certainly, it is better to pay our local farmers than farmers from other countries.

Another Bangalee Muslim votes key

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killing our own people". With his 20-year-old wife at his side, AH Mahmoud Ali read a statement at a news conference pledging allegiance to the Bangladesh government. He announced that he and his wife were asking the United States for political asylum. An official of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service said that the request would be considered.

Mahmoud Ali was the first member of the Pakistani foreign service in the United States to come out in support of the Bangladesh independence movement.

Mahmoud Ali said at the news conference held at the Church World Center, 777 United Nations Plaza, that the Pakistan government ordered him to return home last week. He added that the likely reason was that he could not hide his sympathy for his fellow Bangalees. He said Bangalees at the consulate and others serving abroad had been kept from doing their usual work, prohibited from handling government business and were also spied upon when they visited other Bangalees.

Mahmoud Ali estimated that there were 200 Pakistani officials serving abroad and that 25 percent of them were Bangalees.

UN SHOULD SEND OBSERVERS TO BANGLADESH: MANN
Labour member of British Parliament Bruce Douglas Mann demanded that the UN immediately send an observer team to Bangladesh with full military protection. And if the Pakistan government refused to allow entry of any such team the UN should send an expeditionary force, as such procedures had international precedence.

Mann, who had been Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmad and General Osmany, told a news conference at Calcutta today that he would make attempts in London to organise an international brigade for fighting in Bangladesh along with the freedom fighters there. He would also urge his organisation in London to send arms to Bangladesh freedom fighters.

NEW ZEALAND MP CALLS FOR ARMS EMBARGO

"All the nations should place an embargo on military hardware being carried to Pakistan. Any nation selling arms to that country will perpetuate a crime against humanity."

This was what T J Young, a member of New Zealand Parliament told newsmen in Calcutta today. He wanted an international team of observers to visit Bangladesh immediately. "I shall ask my government to use its influence at international level in this regard," T J Young promised.

INDIA RESTRICTS TRAVEL BY PAKISTANI AIDES

The Indian government imposed restrictions today on the travel of Pakistani diplomats and their families and servants, making it impossible for them to leave India without New Delhi's permission.

The Indian Government said it was doing this in retaliation for similar restrictions that Pakistan had allegedly imposed -- but not announced -- recently on the travel of Indian diplomats in Pakistan.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

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each in South Dinajpur and Malda, 11 in Murshidabad, nine in West Burdwan and four in Kolkata.

During the campaign, TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee sought support from the Muslim community and urged them to avoid any split in votes.

The BJP, during its electioneering, blasted both the TMC and the National Congress for patronising Muslims, in its efforts to unite Hindu voters.

Among the 36 seats in the last assembly polls in 2016, TMC got 14 seats and had secured 37 percent votes while the left-Congress combined won in 22 seats and had got 44 percent votes. BJP failed to win a single one.

But the picture was different in Lok Sabha elections (national polls) in 2019 when BJP got 37 percent votes, which was very close to TMC's 39 percent.

According to the vote ratio of Lok Sabha polls, BJP is leading in 16 assembly seats, TMC in 16 seats and Congress in the rest of the four seats.

In this phase of the polling, all eyes will be on the Bhabanipur assembly seat, which is the home turf of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

But Banerjee is contesting from Nandigram this time around and nominated one of her senior most party leaders and her cabinet member Sovandeb Chattopadhyay to contest from Bhabanipur.

The BJP has fielded actor-turned-politician Rudranil Ghosh, who left the TMC a few months ago to join the BJP, from this seat.

WB Chief Minister achieved a massive victory from Bhabanipur in the 2011 by-elections. Then in the 2016 assembly elections, she repeated her triumph.

But this time, Mamata contests against her once-trusted aide Suvendu Adhikari of the BJP.

Bhabanipur seat was earlier represented by Siddhartha Shankar Ray in 1957 and 1962. Later, he became the chief minister of West Bengal in 1972.

Kolkata Port seat is the stronghold of the TMC where Urban development minister and former Kolkata mayor Firhad Hakim, also a close aide to Mamata, is contesting. He won the constituency twice since 2011.

At Ballygunge, veteran minister and senior TMC leader Subrata Mukherjee is contesting against CPIM's Fuad Halim, a popular doctor, and the BJP's Loknath Chatterjee while at Rashbehari assembly seat, TMC has fielded Debasish Kumar, a Kolkata civic body leader, against the BJP's high-profile candidate, retired Lt Gen Subrata Saha, who served as deputy chief of the Indian army.

Following the surge in coronavirus cases across India, Election Commission has banned roadshows and vehicle rallies in the state and noted that the Covid safety norms were being flouted in West Bengal during campaigning.

It also restricted any public meeting with more than 500 people.

Top leaders of TMC, BJP, Congress and CPIM decided not to hold big rallies and public meetings and conducted electioneering through electronic devices.

In this phase, a total of 86,78,221 voters will determine the fate of 284 candidates while 653 companies of central forces will guard 12,068 polling stations to ensure free and fair voting.

The 8th and last phase of the assembly election will be held on April 29 and votes will be counted on May 2, according to the polls schedule.

India shaken

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let its guard down earlier this year, allowed big religious and political gatherings to take place when India's cases fell to below 10,000 a day and did not plan for boosted healthcare systems.

Hospitals and doctors have put out urgent notices saying they are unable to cope with the rush of patients.

Outside a Sikh temple in Ghaziabad city on the outskirts of Delhi, the street resembled an emergency ward of a hospital, but crammed with cars carrying Covid-19 patients gasping for breath as they were hooked up to hand held oxygen tanks.

Elsewhere, people were arranging stretchers and oxygen cylinders outside hospitals as they desperately pleaded for authorities to take patients in, Reuters photographers said.

"Every day, it the same situation, we are left with two hours of oxygen, we only get assurances from the authorities," one doctor said on television.

Migrants

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"The ban 'begins at 6:00pm on Saturday [April 24, 2021] and continues till further notice," Arab News reported on Thursday, citing Oman News Agency.

In a video message, Tipu Sultan also said that they were unable to continue visa procedure since different foreign mission offices, including the Saudi Arabian embassy in Dhaka, remained closed amid "strict lockdown".

Moreover, other government and private offices related to the labour migration sector remained closed which hindered taking full advantage of the government decision to run special international flights, he added.

He urged the government to keep the labour migration sector out of its Covid-19 restriction measures.

He also said the price of plane tickets on different international routes has gone "out of control" at present, adding the authorities should look into the matter seriously.

"We expect a 'labour fare'. Hopefully, the government will take initiative in this regard," he said.

All 53 crew killed

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confirmed the retrieval of fragments from the submarine and declared that it had sunk, effectively ending any chance of finding survivors.

Among the earlier items recovered were a piece of the torpedo system and a bottle of grease used to lubricate periscopes.

They also found a prayer mat commonly used in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation.

Warships, planes and hundreds of military personnel had led a frantic search for the submarine since it disappeared this week during training exercises, hoping for a miracle rescue

before its known oxygen reserves ran out.

But yesterday, Indonesian military head Hadi Tjahjanto said there was no chance of finding any of the crew alive.

"With deep sadness, I can say that all 53 personnel onboard have passed," he told reporters.

'FOLDING ACCORDION'
Relatives of First Lieutenant Muhammad Imam Adi, a 29-year-old father of a young son, clung to hope earlier yesterday.

"My wish now is that my son and all the crew can be found," Adi's father Edy Sujianto said from his home on Java island.

"My son had wanted to become a

soldier since he was a child. That was his dream."

President Joko Widodo described the sailors as Indonesia's "best patriots".

"All Indonesians convey their deep sadness over this incident, especially to the families of the submarine crew," he said.

Authorities have not given an explanation for the accident, but said that the submarine may have suffered a blackout that left its crew unable to resurface.

They discounted an explosion, however, saying Saturday that the evidence suggested the submarine came apart as it was crushed by massive water pressure in the vast depths.

SC upholds Erfan

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He said Erfan would be freed from jail after the copy of the SC order reaches the jail authorities.

The Appellate Division upheld the HC bail for Erfan on the ground that the charge brought against him is bailable and he has been suffering in jail for around six months.

The lawyer said other accused of the case are now in prison. During yesterday's hearing, Additional Attorney General Sk Md Morshed opposed the HC bail for Erfan, saying that he has committed a heinous offence by attacking and injuring Lt Wasif Ahmed Khan, an official of Bangladesh Navy.

The trial proceedings of the case against Erfan is underway and therefore, he may not be granted bail at this stage, he argued.

Erfan's principal counsel Abdul Baset Majumder told the apex court that his client has been languishing in jail for around six months.

Erfan's mother died in November last year and his father is infected with Covid-19 and therefore, the Appellate Division's stay order on his HC bail needs to be vacated for his release from jail, the lawyer said.

Following a bail petition filed by Erfan, the HC on March 18 granted him permanent bail in the case.

Later, the state filed a petition with the SC seeking stay on the HC verdict that granted bail to Erfan in the case and after hearing the stay petition, the apex court chamber judge on March 28 stayed for four weeks the HC verdict.

The SC chamber judge also asked the state to move a regular leave to appeal petition before its full bench in four weeks against the HC verdict.

On October 25, the navy officer filed the case with Dhanmondi Police Station against Erfan, 37, and three others AB Siddique Dipu, 45, Md Zahid 35, and Md Mizanur Rahman, 30, for attacking him.

A Rab team conducted a drive at Erfan's house in Old Dhaka and arrested him the same day.

শেখ হাসিনার নির্দেশ
জলবায়ু সহিষ্ণু বাংলাদেশ

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Preparation of Master Plan and Feasibility Study for Establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park at Moulvibazar Borsijora Eco Park, Moulvibazar, Sylhet

Memo No. 22.01.0000.135.29.601 Date: 22 April 2021

e-Tender Notice
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods as stated below:

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Package No., Name of Packages	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
1	Tender ID: 571748, (Package # Sy/IL/MNC/CFD/Feasibility study/2020-21/GD-02), Supply of Laptop, Desktop and Printer	11-May-2021, 05:00pm	12-May-2021, 12:00pm
2	Tender ID: 572393, (Package # Sy/IL/MNC/CFD/Feasibility study/2020-21/GD-03), Supply of GPS with battery, bag and air cooler.	11-May-2021, 05:00pm	12-May-2021, 12:30pm

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. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury
Divisional Forest Officer
Wildlife Management & Nature Conservation
Sylhet-HQ Moulvibazar and
Project Director
Master Plan and Feasibility Study for Establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park at Moulvibazar

GD-822

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাভিয়েশন অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
পুরাতন বিমানবন্দর, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস, ঢাকা-১২১৫।

INVITATION FOR TENDERS

No: BSMRAAU/Registrar/163/2021/Part File-20/OTM-20/03 Date: 26 April 2021

Ministry / Division	Ministry of Education				
Procuring entity name	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation and Aerospace University (BSMRAAU)				
Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh				
Tender Invitation For	Procurement of Accident Investigation Lab Items for BSMRAAU, Dhaka Campus.				
Invitation Reference No	BSMRAAU Open Tender No: OTM-20/2020-2021				
Date	26 April 2021				
KEY INFORMATION					
Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (National)				
FUNDING INFORMATION					
Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
Tender Last Selling Date & Time	06 May 2021; 16:00 PM				
Tender Submission Date and Time	09 May 2021; 02:30 PM				
Tender Opening Date and Time	09 May 2021; 03:00 PM				
Name & address of the office selling, receiving and opening tender document: Registrar office, BSMRAAU, Old Airport Building, Dhaka-1215					
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
Eligibility of Tenderer	1. The Tenderer must possess a valid trade license, updated VAT and TAX certificate, up-to-date bank solvency and other documents as per tender document. 2. A pre bid meeting shall be held on 11:30 AM, April 2021 or later, tenderers are advised to use Covid-19 protective measures.				
Lot No.	Item Description	Quantity	Location	Tender Security	Completion Time
01	Camera Drone System with Simulator and accessories	As per tender schedule	BSMRAAU campus, Lalmonirhat Airport at Lalmonirhat Sadar, Lalmonirhat-5500 Bangladesh	Tk. 38,000.00 (Taka Thirty Eight Thousand only)	21 Days after awarding Purchase Order/signing of Contract
02	Video and Photography Devices			Tk. 18,000.00 (Taka Eighteen Thousand only)	
03	Miscellaneous Lab Items			Tk. 35,000.00 (Taka Thirty Five Thousand only)	
Tender Document Price		Tk 700.00 (Taka Seven Hundred Only) in the form of pay order / bank draft (non-refundable) from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation and Aerospace University' (BSMRAAU).			
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
Name Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Registrar, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation and Aerospace University			
Address Of Official Inviting Tender		Registrar Office, BSMRAAU, Dhaka Campus, Old Airport Building, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215			
Contact Details		Tel No: 55065059	Web: www.bsmraau.edu.bd		
Official Inviting Tender		Mobile: 01769995061	Email: procurement@bsmraau.edu.bd		
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.					

GD-825

Procurement Section
BSMRAAU