



**A Rouf Chowdhury, chairman of Bank Asia, virtually presided over its 22nd annual general meeting yesterday. The bank announced 10 per cent cash dividend. Vice Chairman Mohammad Safwan Choudhury, Chairman of the Board Executive Committee Rumea A Hossain, Chairman of the Board Audit Committee Dilwar H Choudhury and Chairman of the Board Risk Management Committee MA Baqui Khalily attended the meeting.**

## Date sales moderate this Ramadan

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He said many people left the city in droves apprehending that the government might extend the restrictions.

"The exodus of people from the city is a blow for all the businesses because traders like me are fully dependent on this group of customers. Some customers are more comfortable buying goods from shops rather than street vendors," Rahman said.

Jardar says he sells both general and medium standard dates in his makeshift shop because the former has a good demand among the middle and lower-income groups.

He showed his van trimmed with various dates and described the variety of tastes and sweetness so that the customers could choose the right dates they sought for.

He has Dabbas, Zahidi, Kalmi, Itema, Khola, Khadrawy, Halawy, Dayri, Albera, Khudri, Safawi, Saghai, Saidy, Sukkari, Ajwa, and Maryam dates on his van.

Joardar switches his business depending on the season. He sells orange, apple, tangerine, grapes and pomegranate before his dates' business.

Albeit he deals in other fruits' business in different seasons, the vendor keeps dates in his shop to sell throughout the year.

Abdul Matin, another seasonal date trader at Mirpur-6, sells dates in his sweetmeat shop.

"People come to my shop to buy sweetmeats. But the sale of sweets in Ramadan normally remains low. So, I am selling dates to make up the loss in revenue. In this way, I could be able to recoup my earnings," he said.

There is demand for dates throughout the year, but the lion's share of the overall imported dates are sold in Ramadan.

Bangladesh has a demand for dates around 60,000-70,000 tonnes annually. Of which, around 40,000-50,000 tonnes are consumed during Ramadan alone, which is around 70-80 per cent of the total consumption, according to the Department of Agricultural Marketing.

The import price of ordinary category dates was \$400-500 each tonne, or Tk 43 per kilogram. The price of medium quality dates is \$1,000-2,000 per tonne, or Tk 120 per kg.

The ordinary category date is being sold at Tk 60-70 per kg in the

wholesale market and the medium category at Tk 150-200.

The price of the ordinary category dates is Tk 80-100 per kg at the retail market, and the medium category date is Tk 100-250.

Md Serajul Islam, general secretary of the Bangladesh Fresh Fruits Importers Association, said people are very aware of dates' high calories and its food value. "They consume it round the year."

"People eat dates not only in Ramadan but also at suhoor (pre-dawn period) for its high food value. They consider dates as a perfect afternoon snack."

So, the demand for dates in Bangladesh has not decreased amid the pandemic.

"Rather, the demand for the fruit is increasing day by day. This year, an additional 10,000 tonne of dates have been imported," Islam said.

A total of 25 varieties of dates come to Bangladesh from around 15 countries. The bulk comes from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, Iran, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Dates also come from Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

## Early pineapple harvest benefits farmers

FROM PAGE B4  
DAE Deputy Commissioner Krishna Prasad Mallik said most of the pineapples available in the market are of the "honey queen" variety. "It is very sweet and good in shape. It is recognised as the best of all varieties," he said.

This year, the "honey queen" variety has been cultivated in 90 per cent of the 2,130 hectares of land dedicated for pineapples in different areas, including Naniarchar upazila of Rangamati.

The "honey queen" variety originated in Naniarchar area. Farmers of Islampur and Bogartekh areas in the upazila have been cultivating the variety since long, he added.

However, according to the DAE district offices, there has been a bumper production of pineapple in different districts, especially in Tangail, Moulvibazar, Rangamati and Khagrachhari this season because of favourable weather conditions.

This year, about 11,058 hectares of land have been brought under pineapple farming

in Tangail, Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban. About 6,500 hectares of the fruit has been cultivated only in Tangail, according to agriculture officials.

Pineapple was cultivated in 19,706 hectares of land and 4,74,240 metric tonnes of the fruit was harvested across the country last year, said Sabina Yesmin, upazila agriculture officer at the DAE.

The DAE officials said nationwide pineapple yields are usually calculated each year after the end of the harvest period.

This year, the yield of the fruit will be more than that of last year as cultivation has been expanded, they said.

"We are expecting a bumper yield this year. But due to a lack of rain, the pineapples may be comparatively smaller in size. But, if it rains, it will be fine enough," said Pranab Kanti Barua, deputy director of the DAE in Khagrachhari.

Our correspondents from Tangail, Moulvibazar and Rangamati contributed to the report.

## PM readies Tk 880cr cash assistance for the poor

FROM PAGE B1  
"Due to the outbreak of the global epidemic, people of our country have to follow the hygiene rules to save their lives," the statement said.

As a result, low-income workers and some people engaged in informal work have become unemployed.

The prime minister has taken steps to provide financial assistance to protect the country's poorest people from unemployment and loss of income due to the coronavirus, it added.

To bring the extremely poor, jobless and low-income people under the benefit of the programme, disaster-prone, extremely poor areas and population ratios have been taken into account while allocating money.

In particular, it has been ensured that low-income people like day labourers, farmers, transport workers and so on get this financial assistance.

The people have been identified using information technology so that only the real extremely poor individuals will get this money, the statement said.

## Airbus sticks with plan to raise jet output, shares rise

REUTERS, Paris

Airbus on Thursday confirmed plans to raise production of its most-sold jets as airlines begin an uneven recovery from the pandemic, despite setbacks in Europe and a rapidly worsening wave of infections in India.

## An alternative to low-yield bank deposits

FROM PAGE B1  
"Return on investments on open-ended mutual funds are better compared to bank deposits," said Mahmood Osman Imam, a professor of finance at the University of Dhaka.

It should be kept in mind that some risks are attached to the investments on mutual funds, because mutual funds earn by pouring money into stocks, which can fall anytime, the professor added.

Despite the volatility, some fund managers generate handsome dividends every year, he said.

So, investors need to choose the right ones, because all mutual funds do not perform the same way, he said.

"But if you have the ability to take those risks, you could consider investing in open-ended mutual funds."

"In India, there is a ranking system and this helps investors analyse the performance of funds but we have no such ranking system," Imam added.

Shahidul Islam, chief executive officer of the VIPB Asset Management Company, echoed the same.

Open-ended mutual funds are a suitable investment alternative for retail investors who are interested to take exposure in the capital market instrument but are unable to do research.

Before investing in any fund, investors should analyse the track records of fund managers.

"As investors buy the funds on the basis of its net asset value, they do not need to analyse the price for open-ended funds," Islam said.

### WHERE TO BUY

Open-ended mutual funds are not listed with the stock market but one can buy them from a fund managers' office on the basis of its net asset value.

Similarly, investors can sell off fund units at any time at prices based on its current net asset value.

As most general investors are not well informed about mutual funds, their presence is very low in the

sector. Besides, corporate houses prefer open-ended funds as those pay handsome dividends on most years.

Major open-ended mutual fund managers in the country are: Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) Asset Management Company, VIPB Asset Management Company, IDLC Asset Management Company, LankaBangla Asset Management Company, Universal Financial Solutions, CAPM Co, CWT Asset Management Company and Edge AMC.

"If anyone wants to invest in stocks but avoid high risk of volatile share prices, then the person could choose open-ended mutual funds," said Md Belal Hossain, an investor who has investments in the Prime Finance Asset Management Company.

"As I do not have enough knowledge on the stock market, I invested here as it currently offers higher returns than keeping money in banks," he said, adding that if any fund manager launches a Shariah-based open-ended mutual fund, it would be more preferable among investors.

**Dhaka South City Corporation**  
Office of the Project Director  
Development of Different Infrastructures  
Under Dhaka South City Corporation  
Level-4 (West Block), Nagar Bhaban, Fulbaria, Dhaka  
Ref No. 46.207.007.09.00.056.2021

**e-Tender Notice (Re-Tender)**  
e-Tenders are invited through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Project Director, Development of Different Infrastructures Under Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of following package, which will be available at e-GP website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) from date 02/05/2021 time 18.00.

Sl No.	Tender ID, Ref No. & Package No.	Name of works	Last selling date and time	Tender closing date & time
01.	Re-Tender ID-572810 Ref: 46.207.007.09.19.2020-21 Package No. WD_P_107_DDIP	Construction of multipurpose building at Duphkhala Maath under Dhaka South City Corporation (Lot-1).	19/05/2021 17.00	20/05/2021 15.00
02.	Re-Tender ID-573496 Ref: 46.207.007.09.19.2020-21 Package No. WD_P_108_DDIP	Construction of multipurpose building at Duphkhala Maath under Dhaka South City Corporation (Lot-2).	19/05/2021 17.00	20/05/2021 15.00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

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ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১৭৬/২০২০-২০২১  
GD-862

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Prime Minister's Office  
Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority  
BEPZA Economic Zone  
Mirsharai, Chattogram-4320  
([www.bepza.gov.bd](http://www.bepza.gov.bd))

Reference No. 03.06.1553.394.14.079.19-1361 Date: 28/04/2021

**e-Tender Notice**  
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of goods/works	Date and time of publication	Last selling date and time	Closing & opening date and time
574099	BEPZA EW-05	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of solar street light (Group-Ka) at BEPZA Economic Zone, Mirsarai, Chattogram (Package No. BEPZA EW-05).	02-May-2021 15:00	19-May-2021 18:00	20-May-2021 12:00

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.  
The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.  
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).  
For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01737790029).

**G. M. Nazrul Islam**  
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**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
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Phone: 02-222280785, Fax: 02-222282900  
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**Invitation for Tender**  
Sealed tender is hereby invited from the manufacturer/wholesaler/supplier for supply of MSR for Upazila Health Complexes (UHC) as per PPR-2008, terms and conditions are as follows:

KEY INFORMATION	
1	Ministry/Division
2	Agency
3	Procuring entity
4	Procuring entity code
5	Procuring entity district
6	Invitation for
7	Invitation for offer Ref. No.
8	Date

KEY INFORMATION	
9	Procurement method

FUNDING INFORMATION	
10	Budget and source of funds
11	Development partners

PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
12	Project/program code
13	Project/program name
14	Tender Package No.
15	Offer package name
16	Tender publication date
17	Tender last selling date
18	Tender closing date and time
19	Tender opening date and time
20	Name and address of the office

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
21	Eligibility of tenderer
22	Brief description of goods
23	Brief description of related services
24	Price of tender documents Taka
25	No. Identification & name Location

PROCURING ENTITY DETAIL	
26	Name of official inviting offer
27	Designation of official inviting offer
28	Address of official inviting offer
29	Contact details of official inviting offer

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers.

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GD-864