



A porter walks through the crowded Karwan Bazar kitchen market, carrying a wicker basket loaded with vegetables and other essentials on his head. Late into the evening, people rushed to markets to stock up before the 'complete lockdown' begins today.

Perishable prices shoot up as shoppers throng Dhaka kitchen markets

Low-income people scramble to leave capital

SHAHEEN MOLLAH AND MUNTAKIM SAAD

As the weeklong nationwide 'strict lockdown' is going to be imposed from today, shoppers thronged the capital's kitchen markets to stockpile daily essentials in large quantities for a week or longer.

Visiting several kitchen markets in Karwan Bazar, Mohammadpur, Mirpur, Kazipara, Shewrapara and Farmgate areas, this correspondent found prices of fish, meat and vegetables increased, comparing to last week.

Traders blamed the dearth in supply and increase in demand behind the price hike.

They said demand has increased suddenly because of the lockdown as people are stockpiling fish, vegetables and meat. At the same time, the supply of cultivated fish and vegetables is low because of the flash flood in the rainy season. Ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, the price of cow has been hiked. So, the price of beef is on the rise too, they said.

Yesterday, the price of Hilsa fish weighing one kg was Tk 1,600-1,800 per kg, which was Tk 1,400 per kg a week ago. Smaller-sized Hilsa was seen selling for Tk 1,200-1,400, which was Tk 900-1,000 a week ago.

At Shewrapara bus stop kitchen market, the price of other fish was found higher by

Tk 20 to Tk 50 per kg. Yesterday, rui fish weighing one kg to three kg were being sold at Tk 280-350 per kg.

The price of shrimp increased too. A week ago, it was sold at Tk 550-800 whereas it was sold at Tk 650-800 yesterday, depending on the type and qualities.

"People are mostly buying fish which can be stocked for one or two weeks. So the demand is higher, but its supply decreased because of the flash flood," said Saiful Islam, a fish trader in Mirpur-1 bazar.

The demand of beef increased too, traders said. It was selling at Tk 580-600 per kg, compared to Tk 550-580 a week ago.

Talking to this correspondent, at least five traders at several kitchen markets said Eid-ul-Azha is ahead, so they are buying cows at a higher price than the earlier.

Consumers are spending more on chicken, onion, potato and edible oil as its prices have been stable for the last week.

There was little respite for consumers in prices of some vegetables either. Yesterday, consumers had to spend Tk 50 to Tk 80 for a kg of okra, long bean, pointed gourd and bitter gourd, Tk 10 higher on average across the board.

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Dhaka University for tomorrow

Prof Dr ASM MAKSUD KAMAL



In the second half of the Medieval Ages (1000-1500 AD), sometime between the 11th and 12th centuries, modern universities in Europe came into being against a particular social, political and economic backdrop. Paris University, usually recognised as its exemplar, started metamorphosing itself into 'universal' in the modern sense of the term from a cloistered theological seat of learning after Pope Innocent III rechristened the Paris School a 'Universitas' in the twelfth century.

In the course of time, the 'Universitas' evolved into a university which means 'an institution entitled to award degrees'. As a result, the universities already established in the first half of the Medieval Ages (500-1000), such as the University of Bologna (1088), Oxford University (1096) and Cambridge University (1209), assumed the mantle of self-contained universities, ushering Europe into a new age of learning,

research and creativity in all the disciplines of knowledge.

In the Medieval Ages, when democracy did not exist anywhere in Europe, these modern universities were the last bastion of it and were, of course, democratically governed. The universities gradually made their presence felt everywhere in the world with the rise of democracy, economic development and the establishment of knowledge-based society.

In line with the trend, the Dacca University Scheme Committee was formed by the British Indian Government on May 27, 1912 to compensate for the annulment of the 1905 Partition of Bengal in 1911. After a protracted delay, on March 23, 1920, Lord Reading, the Viceroy of India, decreed the Dacca University Act 1920 while, as we all know it now, the university set in motion its academic activities on July 1, 1921.

Its administrative, academic and residential arrangements were made after the fashion of Oxford University and its residential halls were envisaged to have a pride of place in the academic, social and cultural life of the students, so the University of Dhaka is called the



Oxford of the East.

I had the wonderful opportunity to look at the University of Dhaka from numerous perspectives -- as a student, a teacher leading the different forums, and now as a part of its administration. The nation always looks up to the hundred-year-old university while, at the same time, the university has in the recent times been a subject of multifarious discussions and criticism, primarily for the gradual degradation of the quality of its education.

It is true that even in the 1970s, when the heyday of the university did not yet die out, students from Malaysia, other Asian and African countries would come to study at this seat of learning, but now it seems to have a hard time keeping pace with the rest of the world. We lacked the plans, visions and

especially the speed at which other universities in Asia moved on. We are not unaware of the setbacks of our education standard.

On the centenary birth celebration of the university, therefore, we have adopted some measures to expand its research, academic and aesthetic infrastructures so that the university can gradually rise to the challenges of the future.

As part of our programmes commemorating the hundredth year anniversary, we are holding a plethora of activities, including writing two books, organising international seminars, essay competitions and research festivals. A timely, appropriate and complete masterplan to revamp the university infrastructure is in the last stage of preparation.

It is put into implementation after the necessary scrutiny and approbation from the Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

A special attention will be accorded to the expansion of student residential facilities.

To increase the university's research opportunities and modernise its research laboratories, a mega plan has been adopted.

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BANGABANDHU'S BIRTH CENTENARY Two-day int'l peace conference in Nov

PM tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will host a two-day international peace conference in November, marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told Parliament yesterday.

In reply to a tabled question from ruling Awami League MP Mozaffar Hossain from Jamalpur-5, she said the foreign ministry has already started preparation to arrange this conference in Dhaka on November 4 and 5.

In a scripted answer, the Leader of the House informed the House that a declaration titled 'Dhaka Peace Declaration' will be adopted in the Conference.

The premier said the issue of giving 'Bangabandhu Peace Award' is under the consideration, "but no specific decision has been taken yet in this regard."

About the conference, Hasina said the government has approved a proposal for arrangement of the event as part of celebration of the birth centenary of Bangabandhu.

She added: "I believe that with the conference, it will be possible to spread massively across the globe Bangabandhu's outstanding contributions to the establishment of global peace and the welfare of humanity."

A number of panel discussions will be held with

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5 YEARS OF HOLEY ARTISAN ATTACK

'Militancy is evolving, and we should, too'

Says CTTC chief in conversation with Star

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC), a specialised unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), started its journey at a time when the country witnessed a sharp rise in deadly attacks on bloggers, publishers, different Muslim sects, foreigners, and people of other religions. Specialised in technology, the unit was launched in 2016 to enhance law enforcers' capacity in combatting threats related to militancy and transnational crimes.

In an interview with The Daily Star marking the fifth anniversary of the heinous Holey Artisan attack, CTTC chief and additional commissioner of DMP Md Asaduzzaman discussed their efforts to deal with militancy.



Md Asaduzzaman

The Daily Star (DS): Bangladesh has never been the same after the terror attack at Dhaka's Holey Artisan Bakery on July 1, 2016. This year marks its fifth anniversary. What is the present scenario of militancy now? What steps have you taken to deal with the threat?

Asaduzzaman: CTTC had submitted a police report in court, after ending investigation of the café attack, and the trial has been completed, which is a milestone.

Although militant activities rose after the incident, due to sincere efforts and activities of law enforcers, they did not get the scope to launch any attack. CTTC has conducted a huge number of drives, and the target was to attack terrorist hideouts after identifying them.

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