

## Govt to go all out to arrest price spiral

PM asks officials to lift all taxes on import of essentials

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The government will make all-out efforts to keep prices of essential commodities stable through measures like lifting all tariffs and taxes on their imports and taking stern action against market manipulation.

As part of the measures, private food importers will get all kinds of support so they can smoothly import food grains and other essential commodities.

The commerce ministry will facilitate imports by the private sector and monitor supply and prices in the market to curb any artificial price spiral.

Importers of essential foods will have to mention their plan for alternative import sources while opening letters of credit at the bank. At the same time, the highest priority will be given to boosting domestic food production.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave these directives at a meeting at the PMO yesterday, said highly placed government sources.

Several ministers and top civil and military officials were present at the National Committee on Security Affairs (NCSA) meeting that started at 10:00am.

During the meeting, Hasina asked that tariffs and taxes on the import of essential commodities be lifted to limit price hikes.

The PM asked the ministries concerned to keep prices of essentials within the people's purchase capacity and to continue the drives against syndicates, irrespective of their political affiliation.

She also said food inflation is the main concern across the globe following the Ukraine-Russia war and the Covid-induced global recession, and asked law enforcement agencies to remain vigilant so that no one can cash in spreading rumours against the government and indulge in black marketing.

Earlier, the government formed a high-powered taskforce to review commodity prices and the market situation. On May 23, it advised the government to withdraw VAT on the import of refined soybean, palm, rapeseed, canola and olive oil.

The taskforce also proposed that the government import wheat from India under the government-to-government arrangement and

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- Political parties will be allowed to conduct rallies, processions
- Drive against food grain syndication to be continued
- PM asked for proper action to ease traffic jam
- Law enforcers were asked to be vigilant to avert any sort of sabotage centring Padma Bridge inauguration
- Foreign ministry was asked to expedite Rohingya repatriation process



Posters and banners have flooded Cumilla city as the residents are set to pick their new mayor and councillors through the city polls tomorrow. The photo was taken near the polling centre at Nawab Faizunnesa Government Girls High School in the city's Jhautala yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## MOHIB ULLAH MURDER Police press charges against 29 Rohingyas

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN and MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

His popularity among Rohingya community and stance against all kinds of crimes and irregularities inside the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar triggered the grisly murder of Mohib Ullah, said the charge sheet submitted after an eight-month investigation.

Implicating 29 Rohingyas in the murder, Ukhiya Police Station's Inspector (investigation) Gazi Salah Uddin placed the charge sheet in the

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## CUMILLA CITY POLLS

### All eyes on Cumilla, EC

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and KHALID BIN NAZRUL from Cumilla

Candidates in the Cumilla city polls made their last-minute efforts to woo voters yesterday as the electioneering ended at midnight.

Many voters believe that Awami League mayoral nominee Arfanul Haque Rifat may have an advantage over his main rival Monirul Haque Sakku, who is running in the election without party backing.

Former BNP leader Sakku, also the immediate past mayor of the Cumilla City Corporation (CCC), was expelled by his party for taking part in the polls going against the party's decision.

Voters also said Sakku, an independent candidate, may capitalise on the people's anti-government sentiments to win votes. According to them, turnout will be the deciding factor in this year's election. A big turnout may favour Sakku.

Tomorrow's election is going to be

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### People want change: Rifat

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and KHALID BIN NAZRUL

Ruling Awami League mayoral candidate Arfanul Haque Rifat said people of the Cumilla city wants change.

He said the city dwellers would vote for him as they want a new face who is not corrupt.

"I have been doing politics here for the last 40 years. I came up from the grassroots. People of this city know it very well. So, they will be with me. I'm an honest and tested activist of the Awami League."

Rifat, also general secretary of Cumilla city unit AL, said in the last 10 years, the city corporation office became a "den of the corrupt", and sufferings of the city residents became extreme.

"There is no other way of ending the sufferings except changes in the office," he said.

Regarding his 11-point election pledge, Rifat said

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### No level playing field: Sakku

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and KHALID BIN NAZRUL

Monirul Haque Sakku, an independent in the Cumilla city mayoral polls, alleged that there is no level playing field right now and the ruling party candidate will try to create chaos on election day.

The immediate-past mayor of Cumilla City Corporation, Sakku said ruling party lawmaker AKM Bahauddin Bahar is intimidating the voters and even dishonoured the Election Commission's directive to leave the area.

"When the MP is influencing the voters, question arises why the Election Commission had served the notice?"

Sakku said this is the first big polls after the formation of the new EC and it was a test case for the commission, but it has apparently failed.

"I think sending the letter was a wrong decision of

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## Projects delayed for poor preparations, coordination

Finds first-of-its-kind IMED study on ADP

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

About 76 percent of the government officials involved with preparing, processing and evaluating development projects think the projects get approved without an adequate feasibility study and stakeholder consultations, found recent research.

And about 26 percent of the respondents in the survey answered that they had experienced such lacking in 61 to 81 percent of the projects, according to the study by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division on the slow implementation of development projects.

"This is a major area of concern," said the report, which is based on a survey from 100 government officials, focus group discussions, project data for the last five years and interviews with consultants, retired government officials and project directors.

It is a first-of-its-kind study by the government. It was carried out following the instruction of the IMED secretary, and MD Taibur Rahman, a director of the division, was the lead researcher. The study is now available at the IMED website.

Bangladesh lags in completing most projects on time and within budget, causing cost overruns and lowering the expected benefits from the projects.

The poor and sluggish implementation rates of the much-publicised fast-track projects such as the Padma bridge, the Padma bridge railway link and the Dhaka metro rail are examples, said the

### DIAGNOSIS ON SLOW IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- First such study by IMED to address the time and cost overrun ailment
- Study based on project data for last five years and opinion of 100 govt officials
- More than 80pc respondents think project implementation lacks transparency and accountability
- About 95pc respondents think right contractors are not selected for projects
- About 93pc think transfer of utilities, resettlement and evacuation of illegal structures cause delays
- About 82 think inadequate skills of project staff and lack of incentives lead to delays

report, which was published in June 6.

Of the eight fast-track projects of the government, six have already been revised and a revision proposal for another — metro rail — has been submitted. Only the Roopur nuclear power plant project has not been revised yet.

Because of the cost and time

escalations, the majority of the projects fail to attain the objectives and targets set initially including the internal rate of return, financial rate of return and the economic rate of return.

Hence, it is important to identify the major causes and take necessary actions to prevent such mis-governance of public projects.

About 85 percent of the respondents agreed that the projects that require civil works lack proper engineering drawings, which is key to the successful completion of the projects.

About 72 percent of the respondents either agreed or fully agreed that weak project documents are a major roadblock. Only 16 percent were indifferent and 12 percent did not agree.

"This indicates that the overwhelming majority has opined that project documents are weak and this is a serious problem."

About 16 percent of the respondents experience a high incidence of such a problem: 61 to 81 percent.

As many as 89 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that there is an inadequacy of resources to prepare a decent development project proposal (DPP).

About 70 percent of the respondents think that more than 40 percent of the projects had weak DPP or technical project proposal (TPP) due to a lack of adequate resources, it said.

"A few people are involved in preparing a large number of DPP/TPP and this compromises the quality of the project documents,

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## জনশুমারি ও গৃহগণনা ২০২২

জনশুমারি ও গৃহগণনা হচ্ছে, শুমারি মুহুর্তে (১৪ জুন ২০২২ দিবাগত রাত ১২:০০ টা) বাংলাদেশে বসবাসরত সকল ব্যক্তিকে গণনাসহ তাঁদের সম্পর্কে মৌলিক জনমিতিক, আর্থ-সামাজিক ও বাসগৃহ সংক্রান্ত তথ্য সংগ্রহ করা।

**গণনায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত হবেন-**

- শুমারি মুহুর্তে (১৪ জুন ২০২২ দিবাগত রাত ১২:০০ টা) বাংলাদেশে অবস্থানরত সকল দেশি ও বিদেশি নাগরিক; এবং
- ছয় মাসের কম সময়ের জন্য সাময়িকভাবে বিদেশে অবস্থানরত সকল বাংলাদেশি নাগরিক।

**গণনা থেকে বাদ পড়লে অথবা শুমারি সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো তথ্য জানতে কল করুন**

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**বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো**  
পরিসংখ্যান ও তথ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা মন্ত্রণালয়

জনশুমারিতে তথ্য দিন, পরিকল্পিত উন্নয়নে অংশ নিন