

# Star BUSINESS

### WHO CAN AFFORD A COMPROMISED DIET?

Workers and employees in the following sectors:

- » Shipbreaking
- » Tannery
- » Pharmaceuticals
- » Re-rolling mills
- » Aluminum and enamel
- » Private road vehicles
- » Construction & timber

### WHO CAN'T AFFORD EVEN A COMPROMISED DIET?

Workers and employees in the following industries:

[Compromised diet for 4 persons: Tk 9,557 monthly (without fish, beef, mutton & chicken); in Dhaka city]

Shrimp	Fish & trawler	Hotels and restaurants	Soap and cosmetics	Tea packaging	Tailoring	Cotton textile
Bakery, biscuit and confectionery	Automobile workshop	Garments	Glass and silicate	Plastic	Leather and footwear	Rice mills

### PRICES HIGHER THAN INT'L MARKET

Of these essentials:

## WORKERS IN 14 INDUSTRIES

# Minimum wage not enough to bear food cost

### Says CPD

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

High inflation is directly threatening the food security of workers of at least 14 industrial sectors earning a minimum wage, said the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) yesterday.

The independent think tank urged the authorities to "urgently" revisit and revise the minimum wages of workers in all industrial sectors.

The CPD put forth some estimates based on Bangladesh Urban Socioeconomic Assessment Survey 2019 conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

The average monthly cost of a basket of 19 common food items, enabling a regular diet for a household of four persons in Dhaka city, was Tk 23,676 as of December 15 this year, it said.

If fish, mutton, beef or chicken was kept out, the cost will stand at Tk 9,557, it said.

Both cost estimates are 5 per cent higher than the CPD's previous food estimate of October this year.

The CPD named some sectors where wages being paid to workers and employees were lower than the compromised cost, even if a 5 per cent increment in wages was taken into account.

The sectors are namely garments, hotels and restaurants, fish and trawler, tailoring, bakery, biscuit and confectionery, automobile workshop, plastic, leather and footwear and rice mills.

Only workers and employees of shipbreaking, tannery, aluminium, re-rolling mills, construction and timber were able to manage compromised diets, said the CPD.

The findings are revealed at a time when prices

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## Ctg port's container traffic may drop in 2022

Slowdown in exports, imports to blame

**DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg**

The Chittagong port may post a negative growth in container throughput in 2022 compared to a year earlier due to the decline in container handling for the slowdown in Bangladesh's international trade.

Port users blamed the gradual slowdown in foreign trade amidst global economic downtrends for the fall in container traffic at the premier port of the country.

Following the decline in two consecutive months in September and October, container handling by the port ticked up in November. But the annual figure at the end of the year may remain below that of 2021.

According to data from the traffic department of the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), the port handled 32,14,448 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers in 2021, up from 28,39,977 TEUs in 2020, posting a year-on-year growth of 13.19 per cent.

In the 11 months to November, container handling by various facilities of the port totalled 29,03,116 TEUs.

The CPA has compiled the data on container handling by taking into account the number of import, export and empty boxes loaded and unloaded at the main jetties of the port, the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal in Keraniganj,

the Kamalapur Inland Container Depot (ICD) in Dhaka, and 19 private ICDS in Chattogram.

On average, 263,919 TEUs of containers were handled each month this year. If the same pace persists in December, the total annual volume

will be nearly 47,000 TEUs shy of last year's throughput.

Monthly container handling decreased by 8.6 and 3.6 per cent in September and October, but it grew by 3 per cent in November, said CPA Secretary Md Omar Faruk.

"The port may see a decline in the overall throughput of containers this year."

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Mahbubul Alam said imports fell in the last few months due to the government's restriction on the import of luxury items and the higher price of commodities in the global market.

In July, the Bangladesh Bank asked banks to take up to 100 per cent of import payments in advances from businesses while opening

letters of credit for luxury and non-essential items, in an effort to keep the foreign exchange reserves stable.

"The drop in container throughput at the port is nothing but a reflection of the downward trend of the country's foreign trade owing to the impacts of the global economic slowdown caused by the Russia-Ukraine war," Alam said.

Exports grew 10.89 per cent year-on-year to \$21.94 billion in July-November, data from the Export Promotion Bureau showed.

Imports rose 6.72 per cent to \$25.51 billion in July-October, according to the BB.

The shipment from the readymade garment sector, which accounted for about 85 per cent of national export receipts, witnessed a fall in orders since the beginning of the current financial year in July as the importing countries in Europe and the US have been facing economic slowdown for the war and the global energy crisis.

As a result, the growth of garment shipments from Bangladesh halved in July-October compared to a year ago.

The European Union and the US are the two largest export destinations of Bangladesh.

"Garment factories have cut production due to the decreased export orders. The import of raw

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**Garment factories in Bangladesh have brought down production due to the decreased export orders. The import of raw materials by these factories also went down**

**Nasir Uddin Chowdhury**  
a former first vice-president of BGMEA

## Default loan triples in 10 years: CPD

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

The volume of non-performing loans (NPLs) has increased by more than three times in the last 10 years, according to a report of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) yesterday.

NPLs surged to Tk 134,396 crore in the first quarter of the ongoing fiscal year of 2022-2023 from Tk 42,725 crore in the fourth quarter of FY2012, as per the report.

CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun made a presentation on the report titled "Managing the Economic Crisis: CPD's policy recommendation" at a programme at the Brac Centre Inn in Dhaka.

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7<sup>th</sup>

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