



Totalail Beel in peril



Mymensingh: No respite from gridlocks



Furry Celebs



No country for women and girls

Govt move to check prices falls flat

City markets react stubbornly, a day after govt fixed prices of eggs, onions, potatoes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The commerce ministry's price cap on onions, potatoes, and eggs barely made an impact on the runaway prices as shopkeepers in the capital have not complied with the order.

Grocery store owners in different kitchen markets said they were aware of the government order, but they would have to count losses if they lowered the prices right away.

They added that they bought the goods from the suppliers at prices higher than the cap set by the government.

Shopkeepers at kitchen markets in Kawran Bazar, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Mohammadpur, Sukrabad and Rajabazar said similar things yesterday.

The government on Thursday set the price of onions at Tk 64 to Tk 65 a kg. But the price of the spice ranged from



An elderly woman collects a handful of partially burnt rice from the debris of the capital's Mohammadpur Krishi Market, a large part of which was burnt to the ground by a devastating fire early Thursday. Several other women from low-income families were seen scavenging for rice or anything edible in the ruins yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

KRISHI MARKET BLAZE

Victims seek immediate support from government

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Traders and salesmen whose shops were gutted in the huge fire in the capital's Mohammadpur Krishi Market are yet to receive any aid.

Having lost their merchandise and other goods, the victims demanded the government immediately provide them support and make makeshift arrangements to resume their business.

They also demanded a thorough investigation into why different markets catch fire in the middle of the night.

The huge blaze broke out at the Mohammadpur Krishi Market around 3:40am Thursday. It took 17 firefighting units nearly six hours to bring

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A price chart hung by a grocer at a kitchen market in the capital's Kazipara yesterday.

Tk 70-Tk 95 a kg in the markets.

People had to pay Tk 45-Tk 50 for a kg of potatoes while the cap was set at Tk 35-Tk 36.

Only a few shops were selling an egg for Tk 12 in compliance with the order while most were demanding Tk 13.50.

Delwar Hossain, a shopkeeper in the Purba Rajabazar area, said, "Our suppliers had not lowered the prices. We cannot sell onions at Tk 65 after procuring them for Tk 80."

At a kitchen market in Sukrabad, a middle-aged shopper named Azizul Islam was seen arguing with a shopkeeper over the prices of potatoes.

"Why are you asking for Tk 50 a kg when the government fixed it at Tk 36?" Azizul asked.

The shopkeeper replied that he procured potatoes for Tk 42 a kg, and selling them for less was not an option for him.

Shahidul Haque, a grocery store owner in Kazipara, said, "If I am forced to comply with the order, I will have to quit this business."

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Liquidity stress at Islamic banks shows no sign of abating

Says Moody's Investors Service

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Liquidity in Shariah-based banks in Bangladesh remains tight due to a dip in deposit collection and the banks' inability to make the most of the central bank support to overcome the situation, Moody's Investors Service said in a report.

The report, published by the US-based global ratings agency on Thursday, said the latest data from Bangladesh Bank shows that liquidity stress for the sector is persisting.

"The liquidity shortfalls are credit negative as many Islamic banks could face difficulty meeting short-term obligations."

On Tuesday, Fitch Ratings also highlighted the liquidity challenges facing the Islamic banking segment.

The system-wide investment (loan)-to-deposit ratio of Islamic banks stood at 101 percent in June this year, up from 94 percent a year earlier, according to the central bank data.

"Such a high ratio means that liquidity continues to be tight after shrinking substantially," reads the Moody's report.

The liquidity situation at the Shariah-compliant banks worsened in recent times after enjoying a sound liquidity base year after year.

At the end of 2022, all 10 full-fledged Islamic banks met regulatory liquidity requirements, but six months later four of them did not have sufficient liquidity to meet the minimum cash reserve and statutory liquidity ratios.

While the other six remained in compliance as of the end of June 2023, their excess liquidity levels were modest, said the Moody's report.

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Foreigners get 'false' reports from some civil society members

Abdur Razzaque tells AL 'peace rally' in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some civil society members misled foreigners by providing them with "false" reports, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque alleged while speaking at a rally in the capital yesterday.

"Some representatives of the civil society and some lobbyists give false reports by taking money from the BNP-Jamaat. Adilur Rahman [rights body Odhikar secretary] misleads foreigners through false reports in exchange for money," he told a "peace rally" in front of the Awami League central office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Dhaka city (south) unit AL organised the rally protesting the "terror and anarchy" by activists of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Calling on the European Union to send a delegation to Bangladesh, Razzaque, also an AL presidium member, said, "They [EU] have passed another resolution echoing the language of the BNP... You said the human rights of minorities in

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Govt oblivious

Mirza Fakhrul says about the state of democracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has said though the world says democracy in Bangladesh is on its deathbed, the government remains oblivious.

"The New York Times said that Bangladesh's democracy is heading towards a silent death. The Times of India in an article said that Bangladesh's democracy is on life support. Yet, they [government] are oblivious," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

He was addressing a rally, organised on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy, in front of the party central office in the capital's Nayapalton yesterday.

A large number of leaders and activists of the BNP and its associate bodies joined the rally. The crowd crammed the road from the Nightingale intersection to Paltan Model Police Station.

Speaking at the rally, Fakhrul said that BNP is not alone in the movement for restoring democracy in the country, rather the entire world is with them. He urged people from all walks of life to join the movement.

"On the International Day of Democracy, we pledge that we will not take part in any election under the incumbent government. No election will be held without the non-party interim government system put in place," he said.

The BNP leader demanded the government dissolve parliament and hand over power to a non-party interim government.

Fakhrul said the government knows it very well that the Awami League will not win more than 10 seats if the parliamentary polls are held under a neutral government and that's why it is setting up the administration to their liking.

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Tigers win nail-biter against India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh prevailed in a game of nerves, exiting the Asia Cup with a narrow six-run win in their final Super Four game over tournament finalists India at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

After Shubman Gill's 121 off 133, a late 34-ball 42-run cameo from Axar Patel threatened to take the game away but Bangladesh bowlers managed to stay composed, bundling out India for 259 in 49.5 overs while defending a 266-run target.

Bowling a crucial penultimate over, Mustafizur Rahman, one of the five changes made in the Bangladesh eleven for the game, turned up with the goods for the Tigers. Needing 17 off the last two overs and Patel well-set at one end, India looked to be in the driver's seat.

However, with his trademark cutter, Mustafizur got rid of Shardul Thakur in the very

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Skipper Shakib Al Hasan congratulates Mustafizur Rahman, who picked up two crucial wickets in the penultimate over to help Bangladesh prevail in an Asia Cup Super Four thriller against India in Colombo yesterday. Earlier, Shakib's 80-run knock had laid the foundation for the Tigers' competitive total of 265 for eight en route to their six-run victory.

PHOTO: AFP

Free Adilur, Elan at once

48 eminent citizens urge government

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-eight eminent citizens demanded the immediate release of Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan and Director ASM Nasiruddin Elan, who were sentenced to two years in prison on Thursday.

In a joint statement issued yesterday, they expressed deep concerns over the verdict in a case filed in 2013.

The two key figures of the human rights organisation have been collecting data, investigating and publishing national and international reports on rights violations for years, it said.

Adilur and Elan were sentenced under the controversial section 57 of the ICT act for allegedly propagating "false and fabricated information", said the statement.

"We think that this incident will create immense obstacles in ensuring human rights and discourage other

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Study finds high level of microplastics in salt

Experts say it may pose threat to public health

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

A recent study has found a surge in harmful microplastics in sea salt produced over the last couple of years in the country.

Researchers from Noakhali Science and Technology University (NSTU) have detected 560 to 1,253 plastic particles per kilogram of raw salt collected from 12 salt-producing sites in Cox's Bazar and Chattogram.

The study, published in the acclaimed Amsterdam-based Regional Studies on Marine Science journal in June this year, has found 9,640 microplastic particles from 12 kgs of raw salt. It has also revealed that offshore salt pans are more contaminated with microplastics than those onshore.

The study was conducted by a group of researchers from the oceanography department and the environmental science department of NSTU.

The presence of microplastics in the recent study was much higher than that of another study conducted in 2021 when researchers found 78 to 137 particles per kg of raw salt.

The previous study was jointly conducted by Bangladesh Oceanographic Research Institute (BORI) and the fisheries

Researchers from Noakhali Science and Technology University have found 560 to 1,253 microplastics per kg of raw salt in samples from Cox's Bazar and Chattogram

The contamination in raw salt is caused mostly by toiletries products like soap, facewash, cleanser, and different kinds of packaging and single-use plastics

Experts say gradual intake of microplastics may harm the human body at multiple stages

and marine science department of NSTU. Titled "Microplastics pollution in salt pans from the Maheshkhali Channel, Bangladesh", it was published in the peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary Nature Journal in November 2021.

Salt, composed of sodium chloride, is produced in the south-eastern coastal belt

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