

**পূবালী ব্যাংক থেকে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ
স্বাভাৱিক দ্বিগুণ লাভ...**

যে কোনো শাখা থেকে পিন নম্বর এর মাধ্যমে রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ করলে সরকার নির্ধারিত ২.৫% প্রমোদনার সাথে পাবেন আরও ২.৫% পূবালী ব্যাংক প্রমোদনাসহ মোট ৫% প্রমোদনা।

সাথে আরও আছে নিশ্চিত আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার



পূবালী ব্যাংক পাবলিসি
PUBALI BANK PLC.

**ঘরে বসেই
ব্যাংক
অ্যাকাউন্ট
খুলুন**

পাই ব্যাংকিং (PI Banking) -
একটি পূবালী ব্যাংক অ্যাপস

পূবালী ব্যাংকে সক্ষয় করুন, নিরাপদে থাকুন



BNP leaders and activists distribute leaflets, protesting the rising prices of essentials ahead of Ramadan, in front of its Nayapalton headquarters in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

CONTROLLING COMMODITY PRICES

Ensure fair competition in market: experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ensuring market competitiveness is necessary to control the spiralling price of commodities instead of government's intervention, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They also said flawed market management or syndicate of the merchants are not the only reason for hike in price of commodities.

They made the remarks at a roundtable discussion on "Commodity prices, market management and competition," organised by Bangladesh IP Forum at Azimur Rahman conference centre of The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

The price of daily essentials can rise due to various reasons, such as inflation, increase in dollar price, increase in price of raw material, fuel, or inclement weather conditions such as heavy rain or drought, said Prof Md Helaluddin of economics department at Dhaka University.

"Product pricing, market regulation, fair competition and protection of consumer interest are very important for the economic growth of the country. Producers, suppliers and consumers can all benefit from a strong market ecosystem by ensuring supply of products stay equal

with market demand, and maintaining a competitive environment," he also said.

He said the market will become automatically stable in one stage if it is allowed to run on its own instead of intervention.

If the market system works properly, the price of commodities does not increase without effective reasons, such as cost of production, he also said. He added that a strong market system will reduce poverty, increase investment, and generate employment.

Prof Helaluddin alleged that policymakers and regulatory bodies often take decisions without understanding market behaviour, which in turn brings negative impact in the market and ultimately the consumers suffer.

Around 80 percent of people in the country are hit hard by the ongoing hike in commodity prices, said Md Khaled Abu Naser, former director of Bangladesh Competition Commission.

If the market syndicates can be rooted out then most of the problems can be solved, he opined.

However, in some cases, high prices encourage investors and create new entrepreneurs, which help generate

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Release journo Shafiuzzaman

Demand BFUJ, DUJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists yesterday demanded release of journalist Shafiuzzaman Rana of Sherpur.

On March 5, a mobile court jailed the Nakla correspondent of Dosh Ruptantor for six months for "misbehaving" with a government official while he was trying to collect information through the RTI Act from the UNO office.

In joint statement signed by BFUJ President Ruhul Amin Gazi, Secretary General Kader Gani Chowdhury, DUJ President Md Shahidul Islam, and General Secretary Khurshid Alam condemned the incident expressing concern over the sentencing.

Such repression not only curtails the journalist's right to information but is also an obstacle to press freedom, said the statement.

C-section: When exception becomes a norm

Around 45pc of country's total births are being done through emergency procedure; 84pc done in private clinics

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

Caesarean sections or C-sections, a lifesaving procedure which is done in special cases during birth, have become a norm in Bangladesh, especially in private clinics, data show.

Of the 3.6 million babies born in Bangladesh in 2022, over 1.6 million or nearly 45 percent were born through C-sections, according to data from National Institute of Population Research and Training, putting both the mothers and the children at unnecessary health risks.

In 2004, the rate was only around four percent, according to statistics from the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

According to Save the Children, between 2016 and 2018, the number of C-sections rose by 51 percent, a rise that experts blamed on the lack of regulation and profit-mongering of private clinic owners.

In 2021, around 84 percent of total C-sections were performed in private hospitals and clinics, according to a report of

Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey in 2022.

To put things into perspective, the rate of C-section was 21.5 percent in neighbouring India as of 2021. Similarly, C-section rate range between 16% and 22% in Pakistan, Nepal and Myanmar.

According to Save the Children, between 2016 and 2018, the number of C-sections rose by 51 percent, a rise that experts blamed on the lack of regulation and profit-mongering of private clinic owners.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends the percentage of caesarean deliveries not exceed 10 to 15 percent in any nation.

However, C-section rate is high in many of the developed nations as well, for example nearly 32 percent of all institutional deliveries in the US are done through a C section, while

this figure is 33 percent for Australia, 28 percent for Canada and 35 percent for China.

In Bangladesh, C-section deliveries cost \$250, roughly equivalent to Tk21,121, on average, while a normal delivery cost only \$60 or roughly Tk5,069, according to a 2019 report published by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh.

Such out of pocket expenditures is a huge burden on the poor, the study added.

WHY C-SECTION ON THE RISE
Despite the risks and monetary burden, C-sections are booming uncontrollably in the country.

The influences of brokers and a class of doctors are encouraging people to have caesareans, according to the 2022 report of BIDS.

The caesarean delivery was 52 percent in private facilities while 10.6% in public facilities.

Other factors like maternal age, maternal and paternal education, working status of the mother, and wealth status among others contribute to rising C-sections, it added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

UAE wants partnership with Bangladesh

Says foreign ministry

BSS, Dhaka

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has expressed its keen interest in transforming bilateral ties with Bangladesh into a partnership level.

UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan showed this interest at a bilateral meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Dr Hasan Mahmud on Friday evening at the royal palace in the city of Al Ain in Abu Dhabi, a foreign ministry press release said yesterday.

During the meeting, the UAE foreign minister emphasised signing the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between his country and Bangladesh and activating the Joint Business Council (JBC) with Dhaka to build the economic partnership.

At the outset of the meeting which lasted a quarter past an hour, Bangladesh's foreign minister handed over the invitation letter of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah inviting the UAE President to visit Bangladesh on the occasion of 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

While reviewing the whole gamut of existing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Of honey-trap, abduction, and ransom

6 arrested, 1 victim rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police claimed to have arrested six members of a syndicate involved in abducting and extorting the country's wealthy individuals, and rescued a victim.

Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (DB) of DMP, disclosed the arrest and the activities of the syndicate yesterday at a briefing.

The arrestees are: Jewel Rana, 37, the ringleader; Mahmud Hossain, 34; Golam Rabbi, 30; Masum Sarker, 28; Lavli, 37; and Syma, 18.

The syndicate employed women to lure their targeted persons in a honey-trap, and bring them to a pre-arranged location in the name of meeting in-person, before confining them.

The syndicate members would then make a clone copy of the victim's phone number and communicate with his family for ransom, asking for payment in cryptocurrency through dollar payment.

The DB claimed to have unearthed the syndicate during a shadow investigation into the abduction of Liton Mia, 40, a garment trader, who came to Dhaka from Brahmanbaria on February 27, following a complaint filed with Dhaka's Kotowali Police Station in this connection.

The detectives first arrested Jewel from Uttara. Based on information gleaned from him, they arrested three others and rescued Liton 10 days after the abduction,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Unable to find an opening to move ahead, a biker tunnels through a sewerage pipe kept on the entrance of Nawab Yusuf Road in the capital's Nayabazar area yesterday noon. The road has been under repair for over two months, obstructing movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

SCBA POLLS VIOLENCE

6 lawyers held, five placed on 3-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six including senior pro-BNP lawyer Ruhul Quddus Kazal was arrested yesterday for their alleged involvement with the chaos, and violence during the vote counting of the 2024-25 election of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

Of them, Ruhul was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department while Advocate Kazi Bashir Ahmed, Advocate Tushar, Advocate Tariquell, Advocate Sumon, and Advocate Usman were arrested by the detective branch of police.

Arrestees are the first information (FIR) listed accused of the case filed with the Shabbagh Police Station in connection with the attack.

Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (Detective Branch) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, disclosed the arrest while

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1