

Potato price soars to Tk 80 per kg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of potatoes, harvested in the previous season, has increased by Tk 10 in a week and now are selling at Tk 80 a kg, which traders say is an all-time high.

The new potatoes, mostly imported, were being sold for Tk 120-140 at different kitchen markets in the capital yesterday, down by Tk 10-20 last week.

However, poor-quality potatoes were available at Tk 70-75 a kg at some kitchen markets.

According to traders, the wholesale price of potatoes has gone up by at least Tk 5 a kg in a week.

This correspondent found that potatoes cost between Tk 64-68 per kg at Kachukhet, Mirpur, and Karwan Bazar wholesale markets.

Traders blamed "inadequate" supply for the price hike.

According to the wholesalers of Karwan Bazar, the stock of potatoes in cold storage is nearing an end, causing a supply shortage.

They said, in an unusual trend this year, the price of potatoes remained

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UNYIELDING CRAFTSMAN

For half a century, Muhammad Janu has been preserving the fading art of stencil-making in Old Dhaka. In the past, craftsmen such as him were in high demand. However, over time, the advent of technology and the rising popularity of digitally printed banners and posters have put most of them out of business. Now, he is one of only two who cling to this craft on Nazimuddin Road, where business once boomed. Today, he earns Tk 500-Tk 800 a day, whereas even a decade ago, he would get Tk 2,000-Tk 3,000 worth of work orders per day. Despite these challenges, Muhammad Janu remains steadfast and continues with dedication. The myriad of stencils on display at his workshop is a testament to his artistic prowess.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ELECTRIC RICKSHAW Drivers block Jurain level crossing

Several trains get delayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Battery-run rickshaw drivers yesterday blocked a railway line in the capital's Jurain area for around four hours, disrupting rail communications and traffic movement.

The operation of trains between Dhaka and Narayanganj, and between Dhaka, Khulna, and Rajshahi was halted from around 11:00am as the drivers were protesting the ban on electric rickshaws, in line with a High Court order.

During the blockade, a chase and counter-chase also took place between the drivers and police. The demonstrators were cleared of the area around 3:00pm.

Witnesses and police said about 400 drivers blocked the Jurain level crossing, demanding that the battery-run rickshaws be allowed to ply the city streets.

They said the protesters lowered the barriers at the crossing on the

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Nations snub \$250b climate finance offer

Poor countries say proposal 'totally unacceptable'; rich nations term it 'uncomfortably high'

REUTERS, Baku

The COP29 climate summit ran into overtime yesterday after a draft deal that proposed developed nations take the lead in providing \$250 billion per year by 2035 to help poorer nations drew criticism from all sides.

World governments represented at the summit in the Azerbaijan capital Baku are tasked with agreeing a sweeping funding plan to tackle climate change, but the talks have been marked by division between wealthy governments resisting a costly outcome and developing nations pushing for more.

The two-week conference in the Caspian Sea city, due to end yesterday evening, spilled past its scheduled close as the wrangling continued, with expectations the \$250 billion target could yet rise.

"I'm so mad. It's ridiculous. Just ridiculous," said Juan Carlos Monterrey Gomez, the Special Representative for Climate Change for Panama, who called the proposed amount too low. "It feels that the developed world wants the planet to burn."

A European negotiator, meanwhile, told Reuters the figure in the draft deal released by the summit presidency was uncomfortably high and did not do enough to expand the number of countries contributing to the funding.

"No one is comfortable with the number, because it's high and (there is) next to nothing on increasing contributor base," the negotiator said.

Governments that would be expected to lead the financing include the European Union, Australia, the United States, Britain, Japan, Norway, Canada, New Zealand and Switzerland.



'Shockingly insufficient'

Says climate adviser about COP29 draft deal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, adviser to the environment ministry, yesterday criticised the \$250 billion annual climate aid to poorer countries proposed at COP29 as "shockingly insufficient".



Wealthy nations yesterday offered the money to help poorer nations hit the hardest by global warming, but faced immediate calls from several groups of nations to give more as UN climate negotiations in Azerbaijan extended into overtime.

Rizwana also expressed her "profound" disappointment with the latest text on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, published by the COP29 presidency.

In a statement, she criticised the text as a "very disappointing package", noting its failure to meet the critical needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

"The proposed decision to allocate \$250 billion per year for all developing

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Ballistic missile strike on Ukraine a warning to West

Says Kremlin; Moscow speeds up its advance in northeast Ukraine

AGENCIES

The Kremlin said yesterday that a strike on Ukraine using a newly-developed hypersonic ballistic missile was designed to warn the West that Moscow will respond to moves by the US and Britain to let Kyiv strike Russia with their missiles.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was speaking a day after President Vladimir Putin said Moscow had fired the new missile - the Oreshnik or Hazel Tree - at a Ukrainian military facility.

Putin's confirmation of hypersonic missile use contradicts Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's claim that Russia launched an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Peskov said Russia had not been obliged to warn the United States about the strike, but had informed the US 30 minutes before the launch anyway. Putin remained open to dialogue, Peskov said.

Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov said yesterday that Russian forces had accelerated their advance in the north-east of Ukraine and had ground down the Ukrainian army's best units there.

"This work we have done here now has crushed the best (Ukrainian) units. Now the advance has accelerated. We have derailed their entire 2025 campaign," said Belousov.

A Russian drone attack on the northeastern Ukrainian city of Sumy killed two people and injured 12 yesterday morning, regional authorities said.

- Russia claims it 'derailed' Kyiv's war plans
- Drone attack on Ukraine's Sumy region kills two
- Nato, Ukraine to meet over Russian missile strike

Jamaat not in favour of banning AL

Says its secy gen

UNB, Meherpur

Referring to the Awami League, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday said the party is not in favour of banning any political organisation, including its rivals.

Secretary General Professor Mia Golam Parwar, at a programme in Meherpur, reiterated that Jamaat believes in the democratic process and dialogue with all political parties to solve national issues.

Commenting on the issue of banning political organisations, Parwar said Jamaat was banned four days before August 5. However, the Awami League and Chhatra League couldn't survive even four days after that. Due to widespread public outrage, Sheikh Hasina and her family were forced to flee the country.

He also said which party will attend the next election will be determined by the people of the country.

"The people will decide whether Awami League can contest the elections," he said.

He said election in the country should be held at a reasonable time, but only after carrying out key reforms to create a congenial environment for free and fair polls.

Parwar also said that Sheikh

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World's tallest, shortest women meet for tea

CNN ONLINE

The world's tallest woman and the world's shortest woman have met for afternoon tea in London to celebrate Guinness World Records Day.

Rumeysa Gelgi, who stands 215.16 centimeters (7 feet 0.7 inches) tall, and Jyoti Amge, who measures just 62.8 centimeters (2 feet 0.7 inches), met at the Savoy Hotel, according to a statement from Guinness World Records (GWR) on Wednesday.



The height difference between the two women might be a massive 152.36 centimeters (5 feet), but the pair reportedly got on famously.

"We do have things in common. We both love make-up, self-care, jewellery and doing our nails," said Gelgi in the statement. "It was difficult for us to make eye contact at times due to our height difference, but it was great," she added.

Amge added that she was "so happy" to meet her fellow record holder.

Gelgi, a web designer from Turkey, was confirmed as the tallest woman living in 2021. Her height is due to an extremely rare condition called Weaver syndrome.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Traders pack vegetables into polythene bags at Town Hall kitchen market in the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday. Use of such bags continues unabated in the city despite a ban. The traders argue that the lack of alternatives forces them to rely on polythene bags.

WI go slow after Tigers opt to field

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pacer Taskin Ahmed struck twice to give Bangladesh early momentum but opener Mikyle Louis held firm as hosts West Indies reached 116 for three at tea on the first day of the first Test at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua yesterday.

Taskin dismissed Windies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite (4 off 38) and Keacy Carty (0 off 8) cheaply, limiting their opponents to 50 for two at lunch.

With no wicket in the opening hour, during which the West Indies made 23 without loss in 12 overs, it seemed like stand-in skipper Mehedi Hasan Miraz's decision to bowl first backed for the visitors.

However, Taskin, who didn't feature in Bangladesh's last three Tests, struck in his first over after the drinks break as he trapped Brathwaite in front with a straight delivery to give the Tigers a much-needed breakthrough.

Brathwaite took a review after having a chat with his opening partner Louis but the umpire's original decision prevailed.

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