

55 lakh families to get rice at Tk 15 per kg from next week

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government will distribute rice to 5 lakh more poor and low-income people under its Food-Friendly Programme (FFP), one of the main social protection schemes, from next week.

In the current fiscal year 2025-26, the food ministry will provide rice at Tk 15 per kilogramme, according to a press release, nearly a quarter of the retail price of the staple in Dhaka markets.

Distribution will begin on August 17, said Food Adviser Ali Imam Majumder, adding that the food grain will be distributed to 55 lakh families this year, up from 50 lakh last year.

Each family will receive 30 kilogrammes of rice per month, he said at a discussion held at the Manikganj circuit house yesterday with local officials from the district administration

and the Directorate General of Food.

The food-friendly programme will run for six months this year, compared with five months last year.

In the first phase, the programme will operate for four months, from August to

In July, the food ministry distributed 81,800 tonnes under FFP, a 36 percent decrease compared with the same period last year

November. It will then pause during December and January before resuming in February and March.

Some 10 lakh tonnes of rice will be distributed under the programme this year, he added.

In July, the food ministry distributed 81,800 tonnes under FFP, a 36 percent decrease compared with the same period last year, according to official data.

The food adviser stressed that no irregularities will be tolerated during the implementation of the food-friendly programme and warned that strict action will be taken against anyone involved in misconduct.

He also mentioned that the current food stock of 21.79 lakh tonnes is a historic high and very satisfactory.

“We need to maintain a minimum safe stock of around 13.5 lakh tonnes,” he said, adding that the government has made advance preparations to ensure food security and manage potential flood risks.

The government aims to distribute 36.61 lakh tonnes in fiscal year 2026, which is higher than last year's total distribution.

Chinese Kaixi Group to invest \$40m in Bepza Economic Zone

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Chinese investor Kaixi Group is set to invest a further \$40.05 million to establish an intimate apparel and accessories manufacturing facility at the Bepza Economic Zone (Bepza EZ) in Mirsharai, Chattogram.

Xiao Hongxi, chairman of Kaixi Garments Bangladesh Limited – a subsidiary of Kaixi Group, and Md Ashrafur Kabir, member (investment promotion) of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza), signed the agreement at the Bepza Complex in Dhaka yesterday.

The factory will produce 18 million pairs of lingerie and undergarments and 20 million pairs of bra foam and bra cups

annually, creating employment for 3,003 Bangladeshi nationals, according to a press release.

Maj Gen Abul Kalam Mohammad Ziaur Rahman, executive chairman of Bepza, attended the signing ceremony and welcomed Kaixi Group's decision to expand just 14 months after commencing operations, describing it as a testament to growing foreign investor confidence in Bepza, particularly in the Bepza EZ.

Xiao Hongxi cited operational challenges, notably the lack of nearby worker housing, which forces the company to transport employees from distant locations and delays morning attendance.

Nevertheless, he reaffirmed Kaixi's long-term commitment to Bangladesh and to the Bepza EZ.

Caab's network rollout model

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Banglalink, Grameenphone and Robi Axiata have recently sent a letter to Caab, proposing that the network be jointly deployed by all mobile operators without tender.

“One operator will lead and deploy the basic infrastructure like Distributed Antenna System in applicable areas and other operators will install and integrate their equipment, systems and spectrum accordingly,” reads the letter.

The operators agreed to pay space rents for Terminal 3 at rates comparable to those for Terminals 1 and 2. They also noted that security deposits are not standard practice for network deployments.

Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer at Robi, criticised

Caab's proposal: “This is absolutely ridiculous. We pay taxes to the government and BTRC as per the law. There is no scope for sharing revenue or profit with any third party.”
Tanveer Mohammad, chief corporate affairs officer, Grameenphone, said, “The airport is the country's first impression to international visitors. Ensuring uninterrupted mobile service in terminals is not merely commercial but a national necessity.”

The dispute between the Association of Mobile Telecom Operators of Bangladesh (Amtob) and Caab has been ongoing since 2022.

Amtob Secretary General Lt Col (ret'd) Mohammad Zulkifair said, “Since 2022, we have been in talks with Caab to set up mobile networks

inside and around Terminal 3. A trial solution was even tested successfully during the soft launch in 2022.”

Terminal 3 is slated for full operation by 2025.

A meeting was held on May 7. Operators estimate needing around five months to complete network deployment once permissions are granted.

BTRC Chairman Maj Gen (ret'd) Md Emdad ul Bari said there should be no revenue-sharing arrangement, as such tender and bidding models for coverage could hinder network deployment in the future, not just at the airport, but at other locations as well.

The Daily Star emailed a set of written questions to Caab on July 30 seeking its response. But the authority has not replied as of yesterday evening.

Stock market

FROM PAGE B1
But others argue the proposals were neither groundbreaking nor swift.

“The task force committee should not have taken such a long time. They have recommended things which were almost known to people, so these could have been done within one month,” said Siddiqi.

“These recommendations could have been finalised in seven days. What matters now is implementation,” he added.

One tangible change is the overhaul of IPO approvals. The process is being digitised to reduce lobbying and shorten timelines, with stock exchanges gaining initial approval powers. The BSEC will retain oversight.

“We expect full implementation within this year,” said Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) Chairman Mominul Islam.

At present, the BSEC is running a pilot project to make the IPO application process fully digital so issue managers will not need to come to the BSEC personally for IPO applications.

It also makes it compulsory for listed firms to differentiate dividends before holding AGMs to avoid delays in dividend payments as part of the reform.

Other measures have already taken effect via the 2025-26 budget. BO account maintenance fees have been cut from Tk 450 to Tk 150, turnover tax for brokers reduced to 0.03 percent from the existing 0.05 percent, and the corporate tax gap between listed and unlisted firms widened from 5 percentage points

to 7.5 percentage points to encourage listings.

PROGRESS THERE, BUT LONG WAY AHEAD

After the fall of the previous government, the DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka bourse, leapt 589 points in three days to above 6,000. It then slid steadily, dropping below 4,615 by May, before recovering to over 5,350 in recent weeks.

“The stock market was massively undervalued, so it is a natural rebound of the stock,” said Shahidul Islam, CFA, chief executive officer of VIPB Asset Management.

Since January 2024, the index dropped around 12 percent before the rebound. As a result, many stocks were attracting investors.

For the rise of the index, macroeconomic development was a reason. “A solid development was seen in rising foreign exchange reserves, and pressure on the exchange rate dropped. Inflation has dropped and other economic indicators are also showing signs of recovery.”

Most importantly, Islam noted that the interest rate of treasury bonds is in a falling trend, and it has a direct inverse relationship with the stock market index.

Governance improvements have also helped draw in long-term investors.

Yet structural weaknesses remain. No IPOs have been launched in the past year. BO account numbers fell by 20,000 (around 1 percent), though accounts with balances above Tk 100,000 increased, according to Central Depository Bangladesh data.

Six banks shine

FROM PAGE B1
rates. Its bad loans jumped 33 percent to Tk 25,765 crore.

A similar story played out across most of the major loss-makers.

IFIC Bank cited “deterioration in asset quality” as the main cause, noting its net interest income fell into the red at negative Tk 970 crore, down from a positive Tk 443 crore a year earlier.

First Security Islami Bank said an increase in classified investments led to a Tk 1,977 crore drop

in net investment income year-on-year.

National Bank reported it could not book interest on loans and advances because of poor recovery from defaulters, while also facing higher interest expenses on deposits and borrowings.

Despite these setbacks, National Bank in its financial report said its new board and management were working to improve financial health by stepping up recovery efforts and mobilising low-cost deposits.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior official of a leading bank said depositors were moving funds to banks with strong corporate governance during the period, even if the lenders offered lower interest rates, because of the perceived safety of their assets.

As a result, well-run banks were flush with deposits, while others were struggling to attract any.

“In the coming years, this tendency may continue. So, well-governed banks will do better,” he added.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Office of the Director.
Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai

Invitation for Re-Tenders

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change		
02	Agency	Forest Directorate, Bangladesh, Dhaka.		
03	Procuring Entity Name	Director, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai		
04	Invitation for	Supply of service provider through outsourcing.		
05	Invitation Ref. No	02/FDTC/OUTSOURCING/2024-2025		
06	Date	10/08/2025		
KEY INFORMATION				
07	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM): National Competitive Tender (NCT)		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
08	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB. Budget. Government of Bangladesh		
09	Development Partners	Not applicable		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
10	Project / Program Name	Director, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai		
11	Tender Package No.	02/FDTC/OUTSOURCING/2024-2025		
12	Tender Package Name	Supply of service provider through outsourcing		
13	Tender Publication Date	12/08/2025		
14	Tender Last Selling Date	27/08/2025 up to 4:00 pm		
	Date	Time		
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	28/08/2025	1.00 pm	
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	28/08/2025	2.00 pm	
	Name & Address of the office(s)	Office of Director, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai		
17	Selling of Tender Document	Address: Sadar Range Office, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
18	Eligibility of Tenderer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tenderers will be the firms having required experience of service provider supply through outsourcing.Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the Contract under the Applicable Law.Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh.Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh.Others Eligibility are mentioned in Tender document.		
19	Brief Description of Services	Supply of service provider for the position of (i) Mali (2 nos.), (ii) Laboratory Bearer (1 nos.), (iii) Bungalow Chokidar (1 nos.), (iv) Cleaner (1 nos.)		
20	Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	Tk. 1000 (One Thousand) only (Non-Refundable).		
21	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk.)
	1.	Supply of service provider through outsourcing	Sadar Range Office, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai, Rangamati.	Tk.65,000/-
22	Name of Official Inviting Tender	MD. Sajjaduzzaman.		
23	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director		
24	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Director, Forestry Development & Training Centre. Kapitai, Rangamati.		
25	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone No: +88-0234461421, E-mail: dir-fdctcaptai@bforest.gov.bd		
26	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.			

(MD. Sajjaduzzaman)

Director

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GD-1762

Rice imports hit

FROM PAGE B1
The statistical agency has not released its estimate on the production of Boro, which accounts for nearly 55 percent of Bangladesh's yearly rice production.

However, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) estimates that farmers cultivated Boro, harvested in the May-June period, on 50.69 lakh hectares of land, with a production target of 2.26 crore tonnes.

QUESTIONS OVER DATA

However, the US Department of Agriculture in March forecasted Bangladesh's Boro rice production at 2.05 crore tonnes.

If this is taken into account, total rice production in FY25 stood at 3.98 crore tonnes—much higher than the annual demand for rice, which is as much as 3.80 crore tonnes, according to the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission (BTTC).

In the previous FY24, rice production hit the highest at over 4 crore tonnes, leaving a surplus against the estimated demand.

“If we consider production, demand, and consumption altogether, there appears to be a gap somewhere in the statistics,” Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) Director General Mohammad Khalequzzaman told The Daily Star.

“Otherwise, this situation shouldn't arise and there shouldn't be such a large discrepancy between production and consumption,” he noted.

believes the government's figures are overstated. “If production estimates were accurate, we wouldn't see shortages or price spikes,” he said.

“Despite the high production reported last year, rice prices rose significantly, highlighting a likely gap between the supply reported and actual availability,” he also said.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, the price of fine rice rose nearly 16 percent in FY2023-24, medium-grain by 14 percent, and coarse rice by 12 percent.

Rice is the staple food for most Bangladeshis. Any increase directly feeds into inflation and squeezes low-income households, for whom rice makes up a large share of daily expenses.

Khan stressed the urgent need for methodological reforms and more timely data from the BBS, as delays in data availability and inaccuracies impede effective policymaking, especially when it comes to imports and stock management.

“This leaves the market vulnerable to mismanagement,” he said. Shahidur Rashid Bhuiyan, former vice-chancellor of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, warned that food grain output was not keeping pace with population growth.

“Factors such as a fall in agricultural land, lack of development and dissemination of high-yielding varieties, rising prices of agricultural inputs, and farmers' inability to make sufficient earnings are affecting agricultural production,” he added.

Naogaon University

Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Selection of a short-list of consulting firms for submission of Feasibility study, Master Plan Drawing-design and other related works for Physical Infrastructure Development Project of Naogaon University

1.	Ministry/Division	Education / University Grants Commission of Bangladesh
2.	Agency	Naogaon University
3.	Procuring entity name	Naogaon University
4.	Procuring entity code	N/A
5.	Procuring entity district	Naogaon
6.	Expression of Interest for	Integrated Master Plan and Feasibility study project for Naogaon University.
7.	EOI Ref No.	NaU/Planning/001
8.	Date	10/08/2025
KEY INFORMATION		
9.	Procurement method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10.	Budget and source of funds	GOB
11.	EOI closing date, time & place	09/09/2025 Time: 2.00pm, Office of the Director, Planning & Development Office, Naogaon University, Ground Floor, Holding No. 5277, Baludanga, Model Town, Naogaon Sadar, Naogaon.
12.	EOI opening date, time & place	09/09/2025 Time: 2.30pm, Office of the Director, Planning & Development Office, Naogaon University, Ground Floor, Holding No. 5277, Baludanga, Model Town, Naogaon Sadar, Naogaon.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICATION		
13.	Brief description of assignment	The overall objective of the services shall cover but not limited to the following scope. a) Completion of Master Plan, Feasibility Study including Digital Survey Works, Subsoil Investigation, after approval of the plan from Client Detail Architectural Drawing & Design, Detail Structural Drawing & Design, 3D Architectural View, BOQ (Bill of Quantity), Estimate & Schedule, Detail Electrical and Plumbing design, Tender Documents, etc. b) Submission of all Feasibility Study reports, Master Plan and all Kind of drawing-Design, Detail Estimate in printed form at least SIX (06) set along with soft copy.
14.	Experience, resources and delivery capacity required	This is a project of utmost importance to develop Naogaon University to an international standard one in every respect. Bidder must have adequate technical ability recourse, human resources etc., as such following are defined as minimum eligibility criteria; 1. Interested consultant are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochure, description of similar assignment, experience in similar operating conditions availability of appropriate professional qualification and experience among staff etc.) 2. Minimum 10 years experience in the business as a registered company/entity in Bangladesh. 3. Registered entity with Register of joint stock and companies (RJSC) in Bangladesh. Must submit Current Trade license, Income tax and VAT certificate. 4. Needs to have full time experienced human resource in Master Plan, Feasibility Study, Drawing, Design and other related works in connection to multi-storied and high-rise buildings. A complete list is to be submitted with necessary CV. (Company/Firms must have IAB registered Architect, IEB Registered Engineer and BIP Registered Planner) 5. A complete list of accomplished works with proper PDS, evidence and proof of projects during last 5 years is to be submitted along with details contract address of the project (preferable in government, semi-government, Autonomous Project Including Autonomous and Government University). 6. The firm must have experience in successfully completed at least one Mater Plan and Feasibility Study for any Public University in Bangladesh within last 05 years. 7. Required Last Three Years External Audit report of the Firm/ Company. A short list of consultants will be prepared upon evaluation of EOI's of the eligible applicants and “Request for Proposal” document will be issued in their favor. A Consultant will be selected using the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method.
15.	Other details (if applicable)	The firm(s) may form joint-venture, association or consortium (JVAC) to enhance their qualification, but should mention whether the Association is in the form of joint venture. In the case of joint-venture, all firms/entities shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire consultant's obligations under the contract. It is preferable to limit the total number of firms including their associate to maximum of two. Special Instruction: The Proposal in two set (1 Original+1 Duplicate) shall be submitted in sealed envelope.
16. PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
	Name of official inviting Expressions of Interest	Director, Office of the Planning and Development, Naogaon University
	Designation of official inviting Expressions of Interest	Director, Office of the Planning and Development, Naogaon University
	Address of official inviting Expressions of Interest	Planning & Development Office, E-mail: naogaonuniversity@gmail.com
	Contact details of official inviting Expressions of Interest	Director, Office of the Planning and Development, Naogaon University: Mobile: 01715413733, +8802587747937
17. Special Condition		
	a. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any and all EOI's made in response to this invitation without assigning any reasons whatever. b. Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Public Procurement Act (PPA)-2006 and (Public Procurement Rules (PPR)-2008 and latest amendment public procurement issued by GOB. c. If any company/Firm produce false/fabricated papers along with EOI, the related EOI will be treated as cancelled. d. Any EOI after the closing time will not be accepted. e. EOI shall be submitted in sealed envelope, all supporting papers and bio-data authenticated and signed by appropriate person, delivered to the address of the undersigned. Interested consultant firm may obtain further information at the address below during normal office hours.	

Director

Planning & Development Office

Naogaon University

Naogaon

GD-1760