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No hike in fuel prices for now

Govt says reserves sufficient, warns against hoarding

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday said it has no plans to raise fuel prices at this moment and assured the public that the country has an adequate supply for a month, while efforts are underway to further strengthen reserves.

Amid global uncertainties linked to the US-Israel war on Iran, the authorities have urged people not to give in to panic buying and warned against hoarding.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapan and Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani announced the government's plans following a special meeting to address the fuel situation. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman chaired the meeting at the Cabinet Division.

At a post-meeting press briefing, Swapan told reporters that despite the global situation, the government had taken no decision to increase fuel prices, reports UNB.

He said a cabinet committee, led by the finance minister, was managing the situation efficiently. "At this moment, there is no fuel crisis and we hope to avoid any."

Prime Minister's Adviser (Policy and Strategy) Zahed Ur Rahman, who was also present at the briefing, warned against hoarding, saying it would not be beneficial as fuel prices are not increasing.

"The prime minister has clearly stated that fuel prices will not go up. So those involved in hoarding fuel will not benefit," he said, adding that the government is monitoring any such activities at the fuel pump level.

Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani said the country

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



A farmer tries to siphon water from a pond to his Boro paddy field in Dumuria upazila of Khulna yesterday as growers face a mounting crisis of irrigation due to a shortage of fuel to run pumps amid the US-Israel war on Iran.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

'Freedom fighters gave us a map, a dignified flag'

Shafiqur says changes only outward despite '71 sacrifices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite the sacrifices made in the 1971 Liberation War, Bangladesh has only changed outwardly but not from within, opposition leader and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman said yesterday.

Expressing "deep gratitude from the innermost depths of the heart" to the freedom fighters, he said they had given the nation "an independent map and a dignified flag".

"With this flag and map in hand, Bangladesh was supposed to change. But in reality, only external change has happened; the inner change has not," he said as the chief guest at a discussion marking Independence Day. It was organised by Dhaka South

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Ruhul Quddus made new attorney general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior Supreme Court lawyer Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal has been appointed the 18th attorney general of Bangladesh.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin made the appointment under Article 64(l) of the constitution, according to a gazette notification issued by the law ministry yesterday. The provision empowers the president to appoint as attorney general any person qualified to be a judge of the Supreme Court.

The Attorney General's Office provides legal advice to the government and handles its legal matters.

Additional Attorney General Md Arshadur Rouf had been serving as acting attorney general since January 1 this year, following the resignation of Md Asaduzzaman on December 27 last year.

Asaduzzaman stepped down to contest the February 12 national election as a BNP candidate

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

DGHS drive opens can of worms

Shuts down 7 more facilities, slaps fines on 2

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A 50 bed hospital is operating with only one duty doctor, with no emergency department. Its licence expired in June 2025.

Another facility, approved as a diagnostic centre to conduct only basic tests, has been providing services beyond its jurisdiction. It has also been running a blood bank without approval for the past year.

At a separate diagnostic centre, inspectors found expired reagents being used for tests. Test reports lacked the signature of a designated physician, and no patient records were maintained.

These facilities relied on paid brokers to bring in patients from Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Patients, many from low-income backgrounds, were reportedly compelled to use substandard services in exchange for money.

The irregularities came to light during a drive conducted by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), in association with the Dhaka District Administration, yesterday targeting errant private hospitals, diagnostic centres and blood banks in the Chankharpool area.

As similar irregularities were reported at four other facilities on the second day of drives, the authorities shut down two hospitals, four diagnostic centres and one blood bank. Two of the facilities were also fined by a mobile court.

The drive was launched after the health administration on Monday sealed Doctor's Care Hospital and Diagnostic Centre in the capital's Shyamoli over various irregularities.

DGHS Director (Hospital) Abu Hussain Md. Moinul Ahsan, who led the drive, said they would continue the drive against the rogue facilities.

The health ministry yesterday directed divisional and district-level health administrators to launch countrywide drives against errant private hospitals, diagnostic centres and blood banks in a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Brokers coerced the family of stroke patient Hanif, 72, to take him to Advanced Health Aid Diagnostic Centre from DMCH yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

JET FUEL PRICE HIKE

Domestic airfare to go up by at least Tk 1,000

RASHIDUL HASAN

Air tickets on domestic routes will cost Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,050 more following an 80 percent hike in jet fuel prices at the consumer level, according to the Aviation Operators Association of Bangladesh (AOAB).

Under the revised structure, the price of jet fuel for domestic flights has been set at Tk 202.29 per litre, up from Tk 112.41.

Meanwhile, jet fuel for international flights will cost \$1.3216 (Tk 162.21) per litre, up from the current \$0.738 (Tk 90.58).

For domestic flights, air operators will have to pay Tk 1,200 as duties and value-added tax, up from Tk 150, said Mofizur Rahman, secretary general of AOAB.

After adjusting the surcharge and tax, an air passenger will have to pay a minimum of Tk 5,849 for one-way travel to Sylhet, up from Tk 4,799 previously.

Of the minimum fare of Tk 5,849, airlines will have to furnish about Tk 1,754 to the state coffers, said Mofizur, also the managing director of Novoair.

Kamrul Islam, general manager (public relations) of US-Bangla Airlines, said they had no option but to update the surcharge rate after the unprecedented move by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission.

"The government's decision is illogical," Mofizur told The Daily Star after his meeting with Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanam

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Oil prices tumble, stocks rally on peace hopes

AFP, London

Oil prices tumbled and stock markets rallied yesterday on reports that the United States had sent a peace plan to Iran.

After nearly four weeks of conflict, investors jumped on signs that hostilities could be winding down, with the safe-haven dollar losing support.

However, analysts pointed out that the arrival of more US troops in the Middle East and fresh missile strikes exchanged between Iran and Israel suggested chances of escalation remained.

"Oil prices have moved lower... offering some relief to equities that had been weighed down by worries over inflation," noted Matt Britzman, senior equity analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown.

"It's still a highly fluid situation. Trying to call how the rest of the week plays out would be unwise."

The economic impact of the crisis has begun to bite around the world, with governments looking to cut energy consumption.

Helping to ease the situation, Tehran announced it will let "non-hostile" oil vessels through the crucial Strait of Hormuz.



Crude futures plunged more than six percent yesterday -- with Brent back below \$100 -- after US President Donald Trump voiced optimism at ending the war and said officials were "in negotiations right now".

The head of the International Energy Agency, Fatih Birol, meanwhile said he was "ready to move forward" with an additional release of oil reserves "if and

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

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