

Prices at Banani Market soar moments after ministry's watchful eyes leave!

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Online Desk : The prices of vegetables, chicken, beef and other essential commodities rose once again in Banani Kitchen Market following the departure of the Commerce Ministry's market monitoring team on Thursday. The prices of various kitchen staples dropped by Tk 15 to Tk 50 when the monitoring team was present, only to return to their previous high levels after the team left the market. The market inspection took place at around 11 am, led by Sultana Akhter, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce. Magfur Rahman, Assistant Director of the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection and other officials were present during the monitoring.

During the visit, the market appeared to comply with the ministry's pricing standards as price lists were visibly hung in different shops, showing beef being sold at Tk 750 per kg, mutton at Tk 1,000, broiler chicken at Tk 200 per kg, Sonali chicken at Tk 280 per kg, eggs at Tk 160 per dozen, potatoes at Tk 55 per kg, green chilli at Tk 280 per kg, local onions at Tk 115 per kg, and Indian onions at Tk 110 per kg. Shortly after the officials left the market, the prices surged again with beef price rising to Tk 780 per kg, while that of broiler chicken to Tk 220 per kg, Sonali chicken to Tk 300 per kg, potatoes to Tk 60 per kg, local onions to Tk 120 per kg, and green chilli to Tk 300 to Tk 320 per kg.

While talking to UNB, a trader said that they were compelled to adhere to the ministry's price list during the inspection to avoid fines. "We were warned to follow the prices fixed by the Ministry. But selling at these prices means we can barely cover our costs," he said. Joyal went on saying, "The wholesale prices are higher than what is mandated, and we are not at fault here. The wholesale syndicate should be broken first; otherwise, retail traders like us will continue to struggle under such inspections." Most traders in Banani Kitchen Market were already aware of the monitoring team's visit beforehand, allowing them to prepare and display the 'appropriate' prices during the inspection, Joyal added.