US to restore development SCADA system can save money, food aid assistance

The US government through US Agency for International Development (USAID) will restore development food aid assistance to Bangladesh to higher $levels\,than\,the\,assurances\,made\,earlier.$

USAID will now give Bangladesh additional 25,000 metric tons of food aid assistance than what could be assured two months ago

Mobil lubricant

now available

Motors outlets

Motors Ltd, says a press release.

Mobil Jamuna Lubricants Ltd has

signed a supply agreement with Eastern

Lubricants Limited Azam I Chowdhury

and Director of Eastern Motors Motiur

Rahman signed the agreement on

behalf of their organisations in Dhaka

available along with Bridgestone

products at 74 outlets of Eastern

Eastern Motors Ltd, and Faisul A

Chowdhury, marketing manager of

Mobil Jamuna Lubricants Ltd, also

meeting of finance ministers from the

10-member Association of South East

Asian Nations (ASEAN) on April 25-26

due to the spread of the SARS virus in the

Many regional meetings and busi-

ness conferences have been cancelled

due to Severe Acute Respiratory

Syndrome (SARS), which has killed

Commercial Counsellor, Embassy of

the People's Republic of China in

Dhaka. In the letter, the economic

counsellor emphasised the long

friendly relationship between the two

countries has been beneficial to both

Below we publish the relevant

"We are gravely shocked and

discontented after we have read the

article entitled "Made in China:

Recycled Corruption in Telecom Deal'

published in The Daily Star on April 5,

2003. Another article in the same vein

titled "9.5m Telecom Equipment

Purchase Proposal Rejected" was

published on March 23, 2003. The

contents of the two articles are both

totally baseless. Such articles are

definitely unacceptable. Meanwhile,

we are deeply surprised and disap-

pointed that such a reputed newspaper

of yours could so regrettably publish

been trying its utmost to help its

brother country -- Bangladesh. The

traditional friendly relations and

cordial co-operation of mutual benefit

between the two brother-countries are

deeply rooted in the heart of the people

of our two countries and have brought

about increasingly tremendous profits

to both sides. It is with this spirit that all

Chinese corporations here including

CMEC, one of the major state-owned

corporations, are devoted wholeheart-

edly and are making their contribu-

tions. CMEC is the supplier of the major

equipment under 216,000 telephones

project is Alcatal-Sbell China, the first

The response of the Economic and

Commercial Counsellor of the Chinese

Embassy in Dhaka does not deal with

the substance of our report and does

not counter a single point made in it.

On the contrary, it speaks about the

relationship and admires the recen-

achievements of Chinese people.

However, our friendly bilateral rela-

tionship has nothing to do with our

report, which dealt with corruption and

abuse of power as pointed out by the

White Paper published by this govern-

ment and by our Bureau of Anti-

class telecom enterprise in China."

As a developing country, China has

such an article.

Bangladesh and China.

portion of letter with our reply.

more than 100 people worldwide.

Clarification

Manila postpones

ASEAN meeting

witnessed the signing.

in late April

REUTERS, Manila

Under the deal, the lubricant will be

Mujibur Rahman, director of

Managing Director of Mobil Jamuna

at Eastern

Tuesday.

that the springtime represents a critical draw-down period for the Bangladesh Public Food Distribution system, and it is also indicative of the high regard with which Bangladesh development food aid programme is held.

Despite competing demands for food aid in other parts of the world, the for Bangladesh when the ongoing droughts in Southern and Eastern Africa continued to attract widespread donor attention and considerable food aid.

Prior to this latest development, some development assistance previously planned for Bangladesh had been reprogrammed for use in meeting emergency relief requirements on the

The successful effort to retain a higher portion of this year's anticipated development food aid reflects the longstanding and strong US partnership with Bangladesh and the excellent working relationships that exist among various Bangladesh government ministries and the US co-operating partners said a US Embassy release.

Lubricant Supply Contract Mobil Jamuna Lubricants Ltd. ERSTERN MOTORS LTD.

Alam J Chowdhury (3rd-L), managing director of Mobil Jamuna Lubricants Limited, and Motiur Rahman (2nd-L), director of Eastern Motors, sign an agreement at Mobil House in Dhaka on Tuesday. Under the deal, Mobil lubricant will be distributed through Eastern Motors outlets. Mujibur Rahman, director of Eastern Motors Ltd, and Faisul A Chowdhury, marketing manager of Mobil Jamuna Lubricants Ltd, were present.

12 SoEs await cabinet approval to go private The Philippines has postponed a

The government has started finalising a process to hand over 23 state-owned enterprises (SoEs) to the private owner-

Talking to the news agency here vesterday, Chairman of the Privatisation Commission Inam Ahmed Chowdhury said a proposal to hand over 12 SoEs out of the total 23 units was sent for cabinet approval. Tender for the rest 11 units

The commission chairman said the cabinet had already approved two SoEs -- Kokil Jute Mills and Baoa Jute Mills -for privatisation while the Deshbondhu Sugar Mills was privatised during BNP's previous government.

"Through this process, we want to speed up the process of industrialisation in the country," he said adding, the SoEs to be privatised also include He, however, stressed the need for

infusing dynamism into the process of privatisation as it was still slow despite everything was progressing as per the government's plans and programmes.

Chowdhury sought cooperation of all concerned in this regard and underlined the importance of increasing power of the commission to speed up the privatisation process.



(From Left) M A Khair, company secretary, Harald M Kube, managing director, Hasanul Morshed, chairman, and other directors Pierre-Louis Dupont and A K M Shamsuddin and Adeeb H Khan of auditing firm Rahman Rahman Huq attend the 27th board of directors' meeting and 8th annual general meeting of the Bayer CropScience Ltd in Dhaka

Indian firms eye slice of contracts in Iraq

Indian industry is hoping to win potentially lucrative contracts in postwar Iraq despite New Delhi's criticism of the US-led military campaign to oust Saddam Hussein.

Industry officials said Thursday that they would send a delegation this month to the UN office in United States to pitch for the reconstruction work as well as ensure export contracts under a possible oil-for-food

A.C Muthiah, president of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) said India was vet to deliver 30 billion rupees (625 million dollars) worth of food out of deals contracted in the past two years.

The exports were interrupted by the US-led war against Iraq

Agricultural Minister Ajit Singh said he expected major opportunities for Indian exporters in Iraq.

"There will be demand for food $grains\,even\,in\,a\,country\,ravaged\,by\,war$ and India can export," Ajit Singh told the Press Trust of India news agency.

The FICCI said it hoped India's political stance was not likely to weigh in when awarding business contracts.

The FICCI delegation will be visiting Washington to meet the US organisations designated for the reconstruction of Iraq to seek India's

Anil K Agarwal, co-chairman of FICCI's India-Iraq joint business council, said wheat and tea exports --

Citigroup wins best treasury, cash management awards

Global Finance has awarded Citigroup, a holding company of Citibank N.A., the best treasury and cash management provider worldwide, says a press release.

According to Global Finance, "the key to effective cash management is having your money where you need it and when you need it".

The CitiDirect Online banking service offers seamless offers to all of its business banking products via the Internet, just about anywhere in the

Citigroup's legions of bankers are making sure that its customer's money circles the world quickly.

India's main items of export to the country -- had been left out of UN's priority list of food items for post war-

"We urge the Indian government to take up this issue with the Office of the Iraqi Programme, United Nations officials on an urgent basis," he said.

"Additionally, India can comfortably provide large quantities of rice and sugar -- which are again not included in the priority list -- at short notice to Iraq.

The industry delegation is hoping a senior Indian foreign ministry official accompanies them on the visit to United States.

Indian export goods which were held up in transit during the war had now been delivered, industry officials

They said Indian industry were in a position to export 20 billion rupees worth of goods such as electrical goods, medicines and cooking gas over and above the previously contracted

"Indian companies have been deeply involved in Iraq and they have long experience. They will have a definite role to play in the reconstruction," said H.S. Meije, chairman of India-Iraq joint business council.

improve power quality

ABB Utilities vice president tells The Baily Star

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh can save crores of taka in the power sector by adopting a new system which will also improve quality and security of power, says John Pilling, ABB Utilities vice president of Export Sales.

He said Electricity Network Management is a unique and proven system, which after being introduced by Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (DESA) back in 1998, has saved some Tk two to three crore every month.

The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system was handed over by the ABB.

"Such a system gives operators an overview of the networks and an updated view of voltage levels and equipment status, making them instantly aware of anything happening over a wide area, like a spider in the centre of his web," said Pilling. He said due to these reasons, the ABB system is called spider.

Pilling was speaking at an exclusive interview to The Daily Star on Wednesday prior to leaving Dhaka after completing a one week stay.

He said such control centres enable operators to have a window into the electrical network through computer workstations.

All vital equipment is duplicated for maximum reliability, with standby

instant in case of failure. The mair computers or servers at the control centre are connected by radio to 66 substations around the city. At each substation there is a remote terminal unit (RTU) which is linked to the switchgear, transformers, relays and other important devices in the station.

scanned and the status reports sent to the control centre so that operators know within seconds if there is an alarm.

He said such an advanced system is relatively new in Bangladesh and DESA is the lone utility company using it. "There are plans for energy management systems for the Bangladesh Power Development Board and the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, but it will be some years before they go into opera-

Pilling said the government of Bangladesh is now contemplating to bring Chittagong region under this state-of-the-art SCADA system for quality and secured power

Pilling said he sees great potential in the young engineers working in Bangladesh who are well-trained in modern software. "At ABB, we have a reverse mentor programme where the young train the old in computer skills."



Bayer CropScience declares 15pc dividend

Bayer CropScience Ltd has declared a 15 per cent dividend for the year 2002.

The dividend was announced at the board of directors and the 8th annual general meetings of the company held in Dhaka recently, says a press release.

Bayer CropScience Ltd is a joint venture company with the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation and Bayer CropScience

During the year the name of the company was changed from Aventis CropScience Bangladesh Ltd to Bayer CropScience Ltd due to the global acquisition of Aventis CropScience SA

Managing Director Harald M Kube stated that during the year the company achieved a sales growth by 16 per cent over the year 2001 and the company invested a substantial amount for local formulation Plant at

Toyota to make four models in China

ANN/China Daily

Toyota Motor Corp, Japan's biggest carmaker, yesterday reached an agreement in Tokyo with First Automotive Works Corp (FAW) to produce four models in China.

The four models are the Crown, Corolla, Land Cruiser and Land Cruiser Prado, the Japanese company told China Daily "The agreement is an important

step of us towards producing 300,000 to 400,000 units by 2010 in co-operation with FAW," the statement said. Last August, Toyota formed a

strategic alliance with FAW -- one of China's top three automakers -- to produce high-end sedans, small-sized cars and sport-utility vehicles (SUVs) in Toyota will start to make the Crown

sedan in 2005 at a new plant of its joint venture in North China's Tianjin according to the agreement.

The initial annual output for the Crown will be 50,000 units.

For this joint venture, the Chinese partner is Tianjin FAW Xiali Automobile, a subsidiary of FAW.

The statement said the compact Corolla will be introduced into the joint venture's existing plant in Tianjin next spring. The plant will produce 30.000 Corollas annually. Toyota will launch the Land Cruiser

SUV later this year at an FAW plant in Changchun, Northeast China's Iilin Province. The plant in Changchun plans to

make 10,000 Land Cruisers a year. The statement said the Land Cruiser

Prado will be made later this year at Sichuan Toyota Automobile, a joint venture with another FAW affiliate in Southwest China's Sichuan Province.

The initial output for the Prado will stand at 5,000 units a year

Private EPZ act to be amended

The Bangladesh Private Export Processing Zones (EPZ) Act will be with current economic realities at home and abroad.

A decision with regard to updating the act was taken at the Private EPZ Board of Governance's 11th meeting held at the International Conference Centre with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair vesterday.

The Prime Minister directed the concerned authorities to form a amittee to look into the matter and prepare a report incorporating wellthought-out recommendations.

"Updating the law has become essential due to changing scenario in global politics and economy," she

The meeting had elaborate discus-

sions on the private EPZs, local and foreign investment, poverty alleviation, employment generation, foreign currency and the impact of private and government EPZs on the economy.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Land Minister M Shamsul Islam, Industries Minister MK Anwar, Shipping Minister Lt Col Akbar Hosain, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain, Prime Minister's Political Secretaries, Principal Secretary, Planning Secretary, Finance Secretary, Law Secretary, Environment Secretary, BOI Chairman and senior officials were

S'pore, India may sign open sky deal

ANN/The Straits Times

Singapore and India could sign an open sky agreement for charter flights as early as this year, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said yesterday. The agreement will allow tourists to

fly direct from Singapore to popular destinations such as Jaipur, Goa and Agra but will exclude the four major cities of New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata.

It will be a significant "'early harvest' measure of a wide-ranging bilateral economic pact now under negotiation.

Singapore has for years been trying to increase the number of flights between its air hub in Changi and India's airports. These efforts seem to be paying off at last.

An enhanced air services agreement for scheduled flights will also be part of the economic pact, known officially as the comprehensive economic cooperation agreement.

Both governments aim to complete

tarriff reductions and investment promotion, in just 12 months.

A joint study group consisting of Singapore and Indian officials had initially suggested a time frame of 12 to 18 months for negotiations.

But during a bilateral meeting on Tuesday night, Goh said the Indian Prime Minister Atal Biharee Vajpayee told him that 18 months was ""too slow for them, a statement that ""pleasantly surprised"" the Singapore leader.

Still, negotiations will be ""tough going", Goh told reporters in a press conference wrapping up his visit.

""The devil is in the details. When it comes to negotiating, I think it can be

quite tough going ""That can be expected because India's economy has always been

protected and there must be many companies that would like to have this protection for a little while longer," he



Managing Director of China-Bangla Ceramic Industries Ltd Sirajul Islam Mollah hands over prizes to the best dealers at the dealers' conference of the company in Dhaka Tuesday. Company CEO Zhou Xiao Lin was present.

EPL, Thai firm sign deal on market research STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Equity Partners Ltd (EPL), a merchant bank of Bangladesh, signed an agreement on reciprocal help with Brooker Group public limited company, an independent research and consulting firm of Thailand, at the latter's office in Bangkok recently.

undertake to support and strengthen each other's reach in the fields of independent market research as well as market entry, joint venture, start-up or market expansion work, said EPL in a press release Tuesday.

EPL, Managing Director Mark Reinecke commented, "Through this agreement, the Brooker Group's excellent reputation and blue-chip client base in the region will allow us to expose Bangladesh and its exciting opportunities to a wider audience. We feel that we will complement Brooker's capabilities in the Greater Mekong Region as well as in West Asia".

New president of Cargo Vessel Owners Assoc



KM Mahmudur Rahman, chairman of the High Speed Group, has been elected president of the Bangladesh Cargo Vessel Association, says a

press release. Gazi Belavet Hossain, chairman of the Siruba Group, has been made general secretary

The election of the association held ember committee including seven office

The office bearers are M Khurshid Alam senior vice-president, M Tofazzal Hossain vice-president, MA Samad, joint secretary, Mashiur Rahman, assistant secretary, Laksman Chandra Dhar, organising secretary, M Amir Hossain, publicity

secretary, and M Alamgir, treasurer. The members elected are Kazi Abdul Karim, Nazmul Hossain, M Abdul Jabbar, Amjad Hossain, M Nurul Haque, M Omar Ali, S S Ali, M Abdur Rahman, M Shahjahan,

New director of Sheraton hotel



Hafizullah has spent more that

deep and long-standing Bangladesh-China friendship. We assure our Chinese friends that this newspaper greatly appreciates our bilateral

corruption.

Our Reply

Marketing of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, says a press

ATM Hafizullah

has been pro-

moted to the

position of direc-

tor of Sales and