

BKB's special loan recovery programme

Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) has declared May and June 2003 as the months of loan recovery and disbursement, says a press release.

The Bank has deputed 132 officers from head office including 11 deputy general managers and 11 assistant general managers to help field workers in making the programme a success.

The newly deputed officers will work to fulfill the sector-wise loan disbursement, classified & would be classified loan recovery target.

AKM Sajedur Rahman, managing director of the bank, gave some directives to the officers at a briefing session at head office recently. Deputy managing directors and general manager (operation) were also present.

At its recent 'shuvo halkhata programme, the bank recovered Tk and money. 71 crore in a week out of which two third was classified loan.

StanChart, ALICO ink agreement on premium

payment

Standard Chartered Bank and American Life Insurance Company (ALICO) Bangladesh have signed an agreement for collection of insurance premium through 'autodebit'

Chief Accountant of ALICO Bangladesh M Ala Uddin Ahmed and Head of Corporate and Institutions of Standard Chartered Bank SAA Masrur signed the agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka recently, says a press release

M Nurul Islam, regional vicepresident and general manager of ALICO Bangladesh, David Fletcher Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank in Bangladesh, Thomas O' Donnell, visiting group head of Transaction Sales of Standard Chartered Bank, and other senior officials from both organisations were present.

Under the deal, ALICO policy owners having accounts with Standard Chartered Bank will be able to pay their insurance premiums through only one simple auto-debit instruction for the entire policy period.

New MD of **BRAC Bank**

Regulators freeze DSE

broker's membership

Commission," the SEC order said.

money worth Taka 40 lakh.

Signing Ceremony

M SHAMSUR RAHMAN

through "auto-debit.'

AFP, New Delhi

told AFP.

economy

Indian industry is planning to send

"We are planning to send a

business delegation to Pakistan

shortly. It will probably happen

after the summer," T.K. Bhowmick,

senior policy advisor of the Confederation of Indian Industry,

REUTERS, Basel, Switzerland

The world's leading central bank-

ers on Monday shrugged off the recent surge in the euro as a recov-

ery from weakness and said there

were rays of light in the global

After a regular meeting of top central bankers at the Bank for

International Settlements (BIS),

Bank of England Governor Sir

Edward George painted a slightly

rosier economic outlook now that

the uncertainty of war in Iraq had

passed, but added the picture was

far from bouyant. "There are one or

two rays of light. The uncertainties

related to the Iraq war are not

Malaysia and Germany agreed

Monday to set up a joint economic

ting up a joint economic commis-

Despite the sluggish global

Minister Rafidah Aziz

said Malaysian Trade

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

sion.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) yesterday froze membership of a stockbroker on allegation of defalcating investors

money and shares. In an order to the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), the SEC said they have received specific allegations from a number of clients of Toufiq Hossain Ali and Company complaining of non-payment of shares

hiding since April this year putting his office under lock and key after "Since it is important to restrict finding that his liability had the member from transferring his membership without settling become more than the value of his membership claims of the investors, the SEC

therefore orders the Dhaka Stock They said the member has a Exchange not to allow transfer of liability of around Taka one crore the stockbroker's membership to his clients. without prior approval from the

The latest SEC bar to sale of membership is the third of its kind The SEC officials said it received as the SEC had previously issued a total of around 23 complaints similar orders on two other memfrom the investors who said the bers -- SPM Limited and JR Capital stockbroker defalcated shares and -- on December 30, 2001 for not settling claims with investors.

Meanwhile, stock market When asked, the SEC officials sources said the broker has been in admitted that their decision to restrict sale of membership only prevents a broker from liquidating his membership and get away with the money but it does not help the clients to get back their money.

A senior SEC official said they have directed the DSE to realise whatever money they can by selling memberships of SPM Limited and JR Capital and settle the claims

of the clients. "We have made at least three requests to the DSE to sell the memberships of the two brokers for settling the investors' claim but they are yet to act on our orders,' the official said.

He said the SEC even directed the DSE to incorporate a provision in its articles to enable the bourse to sell membership of stockbroker who cheats clients

Strong euro wins finance

Global cumulation to zap local textiles, says BTMA Commerce ministry move comes under fire

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) blamed the Ministry of Commerce for undermining the interest of textile sector, saying it is advocating global cumulation for Bangladesh which will destroy local backward linkage industries.

"If global cumulation for Bangladesh is allowed it would destroy local textile industries. Due to inconsistencies in government policies, commerce ministry is advocating global cumulation, central bonded warehouse at home and abroad," said MA Awal. BTMA chairman at a press briefing

funds from the government, fund managers said.

The call money rate fell to its intra-day high of 17 per cent from Monday's 32 per cent even though the demand for call money was

"The government has paid

about Tk 300 crore to some banks due to maturity of treasury bills sold earlier which, eased pressure on liquidity and pushed down the

overnight money rate", fund man-

But in most deals, the call money rate was lower and ranged

between 13 per cent and 15 per cent yesterday compared to Monday's range between 25 per cent and 31 per cent, they said.

Some leasing companies and

BSS, Dhaka

strong, they said.

gers said.

at its office in Dhaka yesterday. If global cumulation is accepted, garment exporters will be allowed to import raw materials from anywhere and get generalised system of preference (GSP)

with 25 per cent local value addition, he mentioned. Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury recently told the European Union in Brussels that global cumulation should precede regional cumulation since rules of origin in case of regional cumulation is not contributing to LDC export incomes due to non-fulfilment of value addition requirement.

Regarding bonded warehouse,

Awal said local textile sector could expand more if there had not been any leakage from individual bonded warehouse

"We all are aware of the leakage from individual bonded warehouse which hit the local textiles hard. If central bonded warehouse is allowed, it would have negative impact on the backward linkage industries seriously," the BTMA chairman added.

Listing successes of local backward linkage industries, Awal said woven and knitwear productions have gone up four times since 1998 with three times local value addition

Lead-time problem has reduced tremendously and local exporters are able to cope with demand for changing fashions in the global market, he added.

Awal said European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy in his concluding speech at a recent conference in Brussels gave assurance that special measures for the least developed countries (LDCs) may be considered after phasing out of multi-fibre arrangement after 2004.

"We think, the assurance given by Pascal Lamy needs to be followed up. The government should take a proactive role and continue talks with the EC," he felt.

ing sector at the LDC commerce

ministerial conference beginning

May 31, the BTMA leader sug-

Oil prices higher

in Asian trading

Oil prices rose in Asian trading Tuesday after overnight blasts in

the Saudi capital of Riyadh trig-

gered concerns oil supplies from

the Middle East could be dis-

gested.

AFP, Singapore

rupted, dealers said.

Against this backdrop, the government should take a coordinated policy on textile and cloth-

liquidity scrunch since last week after most big deposit-based banks had placed their surplus funds in the government treasury bills



Bangladesh has opened its first ICT broad

private banks were forced to borrow call money between 16 per cent and 17 per cent", fund managers of some private banks said.

its high at 32 per cent Monday due to mismatch of fund flow that forced some private banks to face liquidity crunch.

To ease the pressure on their liquidity, some banks sold dollar holdings for taka which helped the local currency to gain further in the foreign exchange markets.

The dollar was traded lower at 58.50-58 taka to the dollar today compared to Monday's rates at 58.50-64 taka, foreign exchange dealers said.

The money market experienced

Commerce Secretary Suhel Ahmed led an ICT delegation to

ministers' backing **REUTERS**, Brussels Euro zone finance ministers with the backing of the European Central Bank, said on Monday a strong and stable euro was in the interests of the regional and global economies. The surging euro, up more than 10 per cent this year against the

HOTO: INTERSPEED

dollar to hit four-year highs on Monday, helps contain inflationary pressures and strengthens consumer buying power, said Nikos Christodoulakis, the Greek who chairs the Eurogroup.

"A strong and stable euro is in the interests of the euro area and the global economy. Naturally the exchange rate of the euro needs to reflect economic fundamentals, he said after a euro zone finance ministers' meeting attended by ECB Vice President Lucas Papademos

"The recovery expected for the second half of this year seems increasingly likely," he said, adding the caveat that the pick up may be slowed by weak job markets and corporate balance sheet repairs.

The finance ministers' and ECB

Call money rate falls The call money fell significantly yesterday mainly due to inflow of

The call money rate jumped to



M Ehsanul Haque recently joined BRAC Bank Ltd as its managing director, says a press release.

of global recovery Prior to joining BRAC Bank, Haque was working with The Trust Bank Ltd.

On completion of his postgraduate degree in Economics, he joined Grindlays Bank as a Management Trainee in 1980 and held various senior positions there.

During his career with ANZ Grindlays Bank, Haque was posted in India. He also worked with ANZ Bank in Vietnam.

He participated in trainings on various aspects of banking operations, systems, and leadership in Australia and India.

Workshop on Artha Rin Adalat Ain held at Gaibandha OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A daylong workshop on Artha Rin Adalat Ain-2003 was held at Gaibandha on Sunday.

AM Md Sayeed, district and session judge of Gaibandha, was present as the chief guest at the workshop which presided over by Md Golam Faruk, AGM of Sonali Bank of Gaibandha region.

commission to boost trade and business ties following Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's historic visit All the regional chiefs and branch managers of scheduled and private banks of the district here. attended the workshop.

Following meetings led by Schroeder and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, The workshop mainly focused on different aspects of the newly introduced law. "both parties have agreed on set-

AM Md Sayeed called upon the bank officials and panel bank lawyers to intensify drive to recover default loans under the existing laws

the possibility of strong business tion expected to visit New Delhi in ties amid peace moves between the arch-foes, an official said Monday. June

"We are taking a delegation of around 40 to 50 Pakistani businessmen to New Delhi for talks with Indian business leaders on promo-tion of bilateral trade," Illyas Ahmed Bilour, co-president of the Indo-Pak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told AFP in

Central bankers see signs

totally removed but have largely

disappeared," he said. "(But it's)

not a kind of bouyant picture, I

don't want to give that impression

Bankers expect economic

growth in the euro zone, where the

soaring euro has hurt the conti-

nent's export industry at a time

when a much-sought recovery

remains anaemic, of less than one

per cent this year, but recovering to

George said the top bankers discussed currencies only in the

sense of their impact on the

broader economy, but said the

euro's recent march was a recovery

from an abnormal situation

Malaysia, Germany vow

scenario, Rafidah said there was an

uptrend on German investments in

foundation between private sec-tors of the two countries and "we see trade improving," she told reporters after talks with German

Economics and Labour Minister

The German minister praised Malaysia's rapid development

growth and said the commission

would be particularly beneficial to

Rafidah and Clement earlier

There was already a strong

to boost economic ties

the country.

Wolfgang Clement.

the private sector.

2-2.5 per cent in 2004.

M Ala Uddin Ahmad, chief accountant of American Life Insurance Company Bangladesh and SAA Masrur, head of

Corporate and Institutions of Standard Chartered Bank, sign an agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka

recently. Under the deal, ALICO policyholders having accounts with the bank will be able to pay their premiums

Indian industry planning to

send delegation to Pakistan

gation will be as invitation letters

A similar trip is being organised

were still being sent to members.

[slamabad] He said it was too early to say what the size of the business dele Despite the strained relations

billion dollars annually and rising, industry officials here said.

They say the trade between the two neighbours could go up to four billion dollars in two to three years from around 200 million dollars currently -- if ties are normalised.

between the two countries, trade

through illegal channels is flour-

ishing and estimated at around 1.5

The restoration of normal ties could create a trade region next in size only to China, with a combined market of 350 million middle class families with a per capita income of at least 1,000 dollars annually.

"The sense was, in the case of

the euro, it was a recovery from

weakness rather than remarkable

strength," he said, noting the euro

was now back near levels at which

The US dollar plummeted on

Monday to its weakest level against

the euro and the Swiss franc in over

four years as markets doubted the

US commitment to a strong dollar.

(Exchange rates) are very much a

factor affecting the prospects for

macroeconomic growth ... domes-

tic demand and implications for

inflation. We focused on those

rather than on exchange rates per

and industry to strengthen eco-

partner with bilateral trade at 5.03

million dollars, and its top foreign

investments worth 1.32 millior

companies in Malaysia, led by

chemicals giant BASF AG and

industrial concern Siemens AG.

There are some 300 German

Last year, Germany was

nomic and trade relations.

dollars.

it was launched.

se," George said.

diessing to the currency strength came despite recent complaints from European corporate leaders who say it hurts profits and hampers competitiveness.

Instead the financial leaders welcomed the currency gains as contributing to an improving economic outlook for the euro zone, which European Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes said looks poised to grow by an average of one per cent this year.

"We continue to see a rebound in economic activity in the second half of the year, supported by the combination of favourable mone-tary conditions, lower oil prices, and improvements in the stock markets," Solbes said at the same news briefing.

Skywards wins programme of

the year' award

Skywards, the frequent flyer programme of Emirates, the Dubai-based global passenger and cargo air carrier, continues to outpace the industry, says a press release.

At InsideFlyer magazine's 15th Annual Freddie Awards dinner in Colorado Springs recently, Skywards finished first in six cate-gories, including the coveted international 'Programme of the year' award vear' award.

Only three years old and com-peting with the leading frequent flyer programmes of the world, Skywards pulled a stunning finish, unseating six-time 'Programme of the Year' winner, SAS EuroBonus. "It is a great honeur to be received." "It-is a great honour to be recog-nised so impressively by InsideFlyer and the travelling public," said Brian LaBelle, Skywards general manager.

"These awards reflect how international travellers respond to our commitment to provide the witnessed the signing of an agreement between the Malaysian and very best customer service in the world. This will help our future Germany chambers of commerce American customers to realise how serious we are about offering them superlative service when we start flying to the US next year." Malaysia's ninth largest trading

The airline also collected first place awards for Best Elite Level, Best Customer Service, Best Award Redemption, Best Web Site and investor with manufacturing Emirates' first-ever win in the category of Best Affinity Card for the co-branded Skywards-Citibank credit card. It placed second in the Best Newsletter

category

Information and Communication Technology Business Centre (BIBC) was formally inaugurated in the US ICT hub of Silicon Valley on Mondav

This is one of three such centres planned in USA and Europe to advertise Bangladesh's potentials in ICT and enter into the global market of ICT products and services.

The centres will be manned and maintained by private sector with policy supports from the govern-

message from Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was read out at the inaugural ceremony, according to a message received here vesterday. Supervisor of Santa Clara

County Pete McHugh and Santa Clara City Mayor Patricia Mahan spoke on the occasion, attended by US politicians, local business elite and non-resident Bangladeshis.

> Bangladesh's ICT industry leaders Habibullah N Karim Akhtaruzzaman Manju and Sabur Khan were also present.

At 12:16 pm (0416 GMT), US light sweet crude for June delivery traded at 27.74 dollars a barrel, up from its close of 27.35 dollars in

New York Monday. Three explosions rocked the Saudi capital Monday night on the eve of a visit to the kingdom by US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

The blasts were apparently targeted at residences or offices used by Americans.



PHOTO: JAMUNA RANK

SA Chowdhury, managing director of Jamuna Bank Limited, presides over a session of a workshop on Artho Rin Adalat Ain held at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. Md Atiar Rahman Mollah, faculty member of BIBM, and ASM Akram, panel lawyer of the bank, were present. KS Tabrez, senior executive vice-president of head office, and YN Adnan, executive vice-president and manager of the local office participated in the workshop as resource

Euro economies eye end to gloom despite budget woes The ministers, while hailing the fundamentals." added the Gree

The 12 countries sharing Europe's single currency welcomed Monday the euro's recent surge in value, while forecasting that a long hoped-for recovery later this year seems "increasingly likely.'

But at the same time the European Commission, the EU's executive body, reiterated its concern over slippage on strict budgetary rules underpinning the currency, with Germany the most recent in the firing line.

Hopes were also expressed that the European Central Bank (ECB) could cut interest rates in the next few weeks, a move increasingly called for to help boost recovery.

fundamentals," added the Greek minister.

2001

the interest of the euro area and the global economy," said Greek Finance Minister Nikos Christodoulakis after a meeting the tunnel.

> "Following a reduction of opolitical uncertainty and the decline of oil prices, the recovery expected for the second half of this year seems increasingly likely, said the Greek minister.

"Naturally the exchange rate of the euro needs to reflect economic

with his counterparts in Brussels.

The euro surged beyond the

1.16-dollar level on Monday for the

first time since January 1999 after

US Treasury Secretary John Snow

suggested at the weekend that a

weaker dollar would boost US

exports

good news so long as the value reflected economic fundamentals. "A strong and stable euro is in

euro's steep rise on exchange markets, agreed that it was only

These fundamentals have long been in the doldrums, amid a global economic slowdown deepened by the shock of September 11,

But the eurogroup of ministers. meeting for the first time since the end of the Iraq war, said they can see glimmers of light at the end of