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**Saifur finds media 'shy of country's achievements'**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday criticised the media for being "very shy" about the country's achievements in various sectors, especially the present trends of growing economy. Speaking as the chief guest at the Dutch-Bangla Bank's scholarship award giving ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital, he said at present Bangladesh is an economic model, and there is tremendous success in various sectors including economy, education, and human resources development. But a section of people with negative attitude are trying to underestimate the achievements, he added.

**BB for further fuel price hike to fight fiscal pressure**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Bangladesh Bank (BB) has suggested further adjustment in fuel prices to contain fiscal pressure and establishment of a central bonded warehouse to keep the country's ready-made garment industry competitive in the present quota-free world market. BB in its July-September, 2005 quarterly released yesterday pointed out that the country has met the challenges arisen out of the oil and commodity price hike and phasing out of MFA (Multi-Fibers Agreement) quota through adjustment of exchange and interest rates and fuel prices. "Further adjustment particularly in fuel prices will be necessary to contain the fiscal pressure. At the same time adjustment by the way of effective demand management will need to continue in near future to contain inflationary and BOP pressure," the quarterly reads. According to it: "Easing of the balance of payments pressure originating from high oil import prices and post MFA export growth slowdown will require Taka interest rates and exchange rate to continue adjusting flexibility, in a tight monetary stance, to contain domestic credit growth and import growth at sustainable levels". On the fiscal developments, the report observes that during the first quarter of fiscal year 2006, both revenue collection and expenditure

**Kuwait cabinet declares new emir too ill to rule**

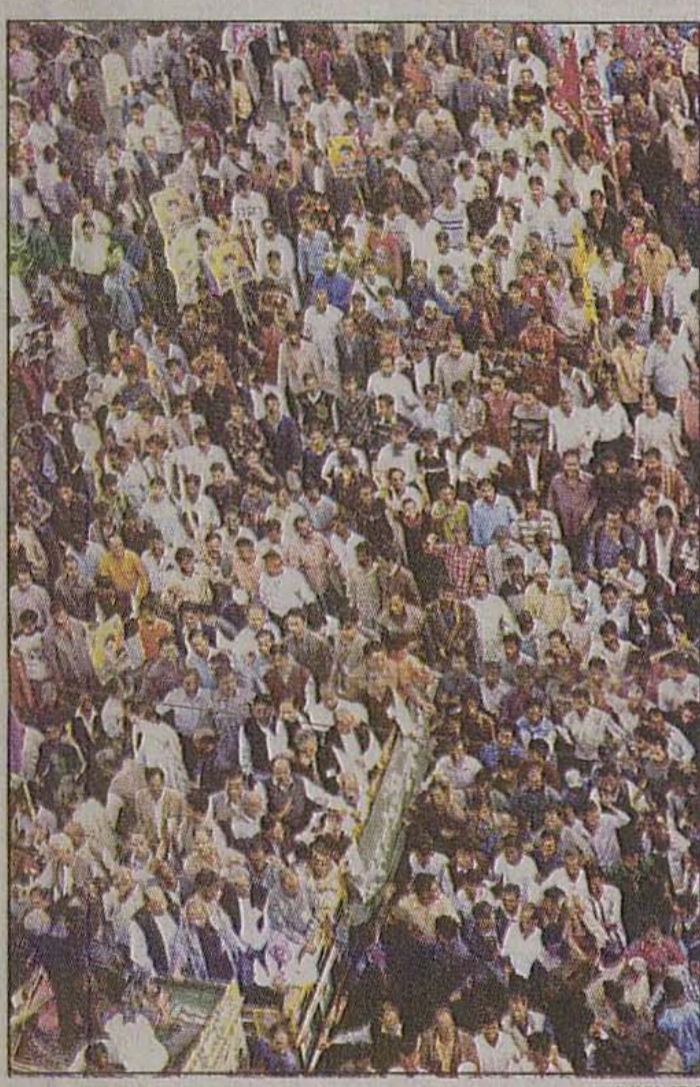
REUTERS, Tehran  
Mixing defiance with diplomacy, Iran said yesterday it did not fear Western threats over its nuclear programme and vowed to pursue uranium enrichment if taken to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. But it also called for more talks with the European Union to resolve a standoff that is helping drive up world oil prices. "We have invited our European friends to return to talks," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki told reporters. He said a "bridge of friendship" could be reached by respecting Iran's right to nuclear technology and by removing concerns it could divert this for an atomic arms programme. Leading EU powers Germany, Britain and France have refused to hold more negotiations until Tehran reinstates a moratorium on uranium enrichment and other sensitive nuclear work. The United States, keen for the UN nuclear watchdog to refer Iran to the council when it meets on February 2, called Tehran a potential threat to world security and energy supplies. Rising tensions over Iran have combined with other global supply worries to push oil prices up more than \$10 since late December to within sight of a record \$70.85 a barrel on August 30.

**Iran trashes threats, calls for more talks**

Iran denied on Sunday it had begun moving assets held abroad to protect them from any UN sanctions, contradicting reported statements by Iranian officials last week. The West suspects Iran is covertly seeking nuclear arms. Tehran says its programme aims only to generate electricity. Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani was quoted by London's Financial Times as saying Tehran would push ahead with uranium enrichment if referred to the Security Council. He also urged the EU to resume talks broken off this month after Tehran removed UN seals on enrichment equipment. "If the negotiating route is open, we prefer to reach a conclusion through talks," Larijani told the newspaper. "But if this route is closed, we are obliged to follow up our other scenario. Everything depends on the way we are treated." Asked if there was a timeframe for uranium enrichment on an industrial scale, he said: "Yes. We have a plan for resumption." Iran is not known to have any capacity for industrial-scale uranium enrichment. It declared this month that it was resuming a small-scale enrichment research project at its Natanz plant. Diplomats close to the International Atomic Energy

**Veena Sikri for complete lift of ban on yarn import thru' Benapole**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Veena Sikri yesterday urged the Bangladesh government to completely lift the ban on yarn import through Benapole land port. Sikri welcomed the recent reopening of the land port for yarn import only for 100 percent export-oriented knitwear manufacturers. She however said it represents only



Supporters of the 14-party opposition combine yesterday march towards Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhanmondi after a rally at Paltan Maidan in the city.

**Biman resumes ticketing thru' Amadeus**

REAZ AHMAD  
Hundreds of travel agents across the country heaved a sigh of relief yesterday with Biman resuming air ticket bookings through Amadeus, one of the four global distribution systems (GDS) in operation in Bangladesh. Amadeus, represented by Global Travel Distribution Bangla Limited (GTD) and owned by Amadeus India Pvt Ltd, counted a huge loss in revenues during the 45 days the national flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines had refrained from getting its tickets booked by the company, official sources said. After receiving a legal notice from the GTD on January 3, Biman finally withdrew the boycott it had slapped on Amadeus on December 8 in line with a High Court order following a writ petition filed by a group named Bangladesh Youth Economist Forum which had brought allegations of money laundering against the GTD.

**Principal secy Kamal gets fifth extension**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Principal Secretary to the prime minister Kamal Siddiqui got another year's contractual appointment yesterday. This is the fifth time Siddiqui's contractual appointment has been renewed. His fresh appointment was made effective from January 20. At present, Siddiqui is in Geneva on an official visit. Besides, a number of additional secretaries were also given new posts yesterday. Abdul Matin Chowdhury, who has been Officer on Special Duty, was made additional secretary (AS) to education ministry while Shahabullah was made AS to DG of

**3 die after taking spurious alcohol**

UNB, Gaibandha  
Three people died and seven others fell sick after taking spurious alcohol at Kmarpara Bazaar in Sadullapur upazila of the district on Sunday night. Locals said Noor Mohammad, 50, of Hatbamunia, Nazrul, 45, and Abdul Jalil, 40, of Keshaldanga village died soon after taking the alcohol. The seven others, who fell sick, are now undergoing treatment at Rangpur Medical College and Hospital. Of them, the condition of Lablu Mia, 28, and Wahed Mia, 32, of the same village are stated to be critical.

**Prayer Timing**

January 24		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-43	5-47
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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One of the objectives of Fair & Lovely Foundation is to empower women economically through education. And so this scholarship was introduced to provide assistance to Bangladeshi girls who would like to pursue higher education. This year 25,000 Taka scholarships (each) will be given to 200 meritorious girls from all over Bangladesh.

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• Medicine  
• Engineering  
• Science  
• Arts/Social Science  
• Commerce  
• Higher Agro-science

How do you apply?  
Simple! Just fill out the application form and mail it by 14 February 2006. The scholarships will be awarded to deserving individuals on the basis of academic performance, their family income and a personal interview with our panel of judges.

**Fair & Lovely FOUNDATION**  
TAKING YOU TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE  
A Social Initiative of Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.

Application form (for girls who passed HSC in 2004)  
(Please use ballpoint pen. Place a tick where necessary)

**Personal details:**  
Applicant's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Block Letters)  
Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Married  Unmarried Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Academic Qualifications:**

Name of Examination	Year of Passing	Board	School/College	Total Marks	Division/GPA
SSC					
HSC					

**Currently studying:**  
 Medicine  Engineering  Science  Arts/Social Science  Commerce  Higher Agro-science  
Name and address of current academic institute: \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Background:**

Name of Father/Husband/Guardian	Occupation & Designation	Business Address	Contact No.

Number of family members: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of dependent family members: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total family income (monthly): \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe your personal aspirations (Maximum 500 words, Bengali/English):**  
• Your personal strengths as an individual • Your goals and ambitions  
• Where do you see yourself 5 years from now

**You also need to attach these documents:**  
• Copies of all certificates (attested by 1st class gazetted officer)  
• Admission letter from current Academic Institute/University  
• Two recent passport size photographs  
• Salary Certificate of head of the family (attested by Employer/Commissioner/Chairman)

**Notes:**  
Incomplete forms will not be accepted. All applications must reach the given address by 14 Feb 2006. Decisions of the panelists/judges will be considered final. Fair & Lovely Foundation will not be responsible for applications reaching after the mentioned date. Any form of solicitation will be considered a disqualification.  
Please send your application form to:  
Fair and Lovely Foundation, G.P.O. Box No: 3806, Dhaka, Bangladesh.