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DHAKA SATURDAY JUNE 17, 2006 E-mail: business@thedailystar.net

## AUGMENTING EXPORTS TO NEI MARKET

# Non-tariff barriers seen main obstacle

MD HASAN

Despite having a huge demand for Bangladeshi products, local exporters have failed to make debut in the north-eastern Indian (NEI) market due to different non-tariff barriers imposed by the Indian government.

Local exporters said the Indian traders are keen to import Bangladeshi products as products brought from the rest of India for the north-eastern states involves a high transportation cost.

But the Indian market is not import-friendly for high tariff, non-tariff and para-tariff, the exporters said, alleging that the Indian customs are making obstruction to importing Bangladeshi products.

They identified some of the hurdles in harnessing the export potentiality to the NEI market, such as absence of warehouse, parking and banking facilities.

"The Indian customs do not give

the entry to the Bangladeshi products on the plea of laboratory test, standards and certification", said Mohammad Hasanuzzaman, an official of Sharif Melamine Industries Pvt Ltd.

"Some days ago we have got an export order from a buyer of Agartola. But our consignment was sent back as the Indian customs did not accept it", he added.

Bangladeshi handicrafts also have huge demand in the NEI market, said Khadiza Begum, an exporter, while talking to the Daily Star.

She sought removal of all hassles now being created by the customs houses of both sides, banks' support and enhancement of bilateral cooperation between the trade bodies of the two neighbouring countries to facilitate exports to the NEI market.

She said, "Non-tariff, para-tariff barriers are not new problems in exporting local products to India.

But unfortunately, these problems are yet to be solved."

Trade between Bangladesh and Indian seven sisters has been increased 6.4 percent during the 2004-05 fiscal year, but Bangladesh is always on the negative side in trade, which is unfortunate, said a high official of the Commerce Ministry.

According to the EPB statistics, in the 2004-05 fiscal, Bangladesh exported goods worth \$5.086 million to the NEI while it imported goods worth \$45.15 million from the seven sisters during the same period.

Bangladesh can supply these products to this market at a cheaper rate, benefiting the population of the 7-sister states, the official said.

"At first, political commitment is required between the two countries to solve these problems", he opined.

He, however, underscored the

need for diversification of the products to cater to the needs of the NEI market.

Showing the Export Promotion Bureau data he said, a total of 94 Bangladeshi products exported to India in the 2004-05 fiscal while only four products such as jute, jute goods, chemical fertiliser, frozen foods took 60 percent share of the total exports.

The official expressed the hope that a long-term solution to the problems relating to the trade between the two sides is imminent as talks on SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area) are underway.

Bangladeshi Jamdani saree, readymade garments, ceramic products, jute yarn, soap, biscuit, dry fish, mineral water, soybean oil, electrical and electronic goods, meat, Hilsa fish, furniture, cement, bicycle and show pieces have huge export potentials to the 7-sister states of India.

## Kushtia chamber seeks zero duty on capital machinery

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Kushtia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) has urged the government to withdraw the 5 per cent duty as proposed in the national budget for the 2006-07 fiscal on imported capital machinery, spare parts and raw materials, demanding a zero duty on them.

In a budget reaction, the chamber said in the interest of promoting the country's industrialisation process, imposition of zero duty on these items should be reconsidered, says a press release.

It also demanded continuation of cash incentives to all export-oriented industries.

Welcoming some of the provisions envisaged in the proposed budget, the KCCI put forward a recommendation for bringing lawyers, doctors and NGOs in the VAT net.

The trade body also welcomed the proposals of reduction in duties and supplementary duties on some important essential commodities in order to decrease inflation and imposition of specific duties on sugar to reduce tax burden to promote food industries.

The chamber praised the highest budgetary allocation for human resource development with emphasis on education and IT, although it demanded specific allocation for different educational systems in the budget, the release added.

## BB mulls maintaining restrictive credit policy

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Bank (BB) is expected to continue its existing restrictive credit policy for the first-half of the fiscal year 2007 in a bid to bring down inflation from its existing average level of 7.08 percent, sources said.

The central bank is expected to announce its monetary policy statement (MPS) by early next month.

The BB is considering bringing down inflation to 6.5 percent from the present level while the target of private sector credit growth may be kept at 14 percent in MPS.

The present contractionary policy will be relaxed slightly, a senior BB official said, adding that a 'cautious' monetary policy stance will be followed for the July-December period.

"There is no fixed definition of 'cautious'... but it can be defined as the median of contractionary and

expansionary monetary policies," he said.

He also said that the possibility of reducing inflation that was created by virtue of industrial and agricultural production growth in the current fiscal might not be exploited due to the upward revision of petroleum price by the government.

Meanwhile, economists cautioned on many occasions that the inflation might not be controlled in near future in view of government's election year development expenses.

On reduction of statutory liquidity requirement (SLR), the BB sources said, there remains a large possibility about not reducing it from the existing level of 18 percent.

BB Governor Salehuddin Ahmed had earlier also told journalists that the central bank will continue its cautious approach for next six months.

The BB in January this year released the first issue of its half-yearly MPS intended to present its outlook on real sector and monetary developments over the immediate future.

The MPS also announced its monetary policy stance based on its assessment of the developments over the preceding quarters.

The MPS predicted a GDP growth for FY06 within 6.3-6.8 percent, and projected an annual average inflation unlikely to exceed 7 percent. The MPS also targeted to restrict credit growth to private sector at 13.9 percent in two quarters over previous quarters.

BB statistics showed the private sector credit growth registered to 17.4 percent in January-March period of the FY 2006 as against the corresponding period of the last quarters. The statistics said the rate of average inflation till April of the current fiscal was 7.08 percent.

## Proton unveils new car

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's struggling national automaker Proton unveiled a new model Friday to reverse declining sales as Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi warned of stiff competition in the global auto industry.

The launch of the three-door hatchback Satria Neo saw Abdullah seated behind the wheel of a red model examining its interior at Proton's flagship service centre south of Kuala Lumpur.

The Satria Neo, bound for domestic and export markets, is the successor to the 1994 Satria model and is powered by Proton CAMPRO engines in 1.3 and 1.6 litre versions, said the company.

Managing director Syed Zainal Abidin Syed Mohamed Tahir said Proton expected to sell 14,000 to 15,000 units by December, but that the Satria Neo alone would not reverse the company's fortunes.

"I hope to increase our market share, which has been declining (but) Satria Neo alone is not going to pull Proton into profitability," he told reporters, adding the company had other models and initiatives up its sleeve.

While Abdullah lauded the model, he called on Proton to focus on opening new markets and forging strategic partnerships in the face of increasing global competition.

"Success is your only choice, failure is not an option," Abdullah told Proton staff in a speech.

"It is important that we can prove that Proton can continue to be a car company that is the pride of the nation," he added.

He said the country's auto industry was shifting into a "highly competitive phase" with several obstacles in store.

"These include industry consolidation, trade liberalisation, and growing fears of slower demand for cars given the high price of oil," he said.

Proton saw a dismal end to its financial year on May 30, posting profits of 47.0 million ringgit (13 million dollars), just one tenth of the earnings recorded in the previous year.

## Tea auction witnesses good demand

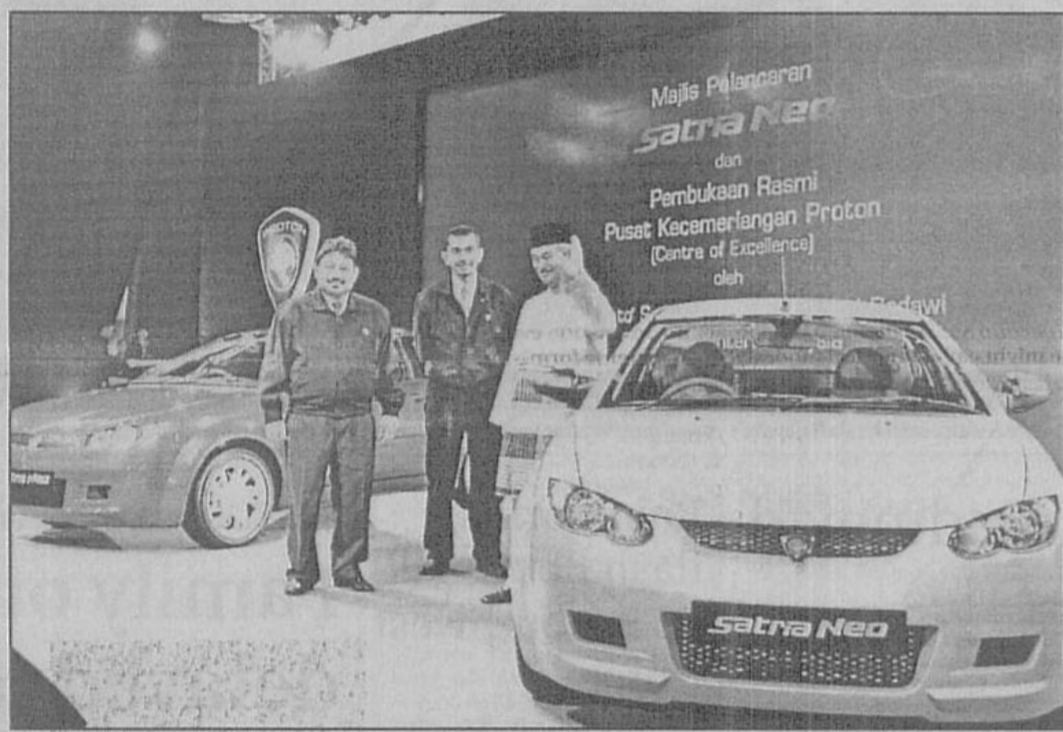
BSS, Ctg

The weekly tea auction held here on Thursday witnessed a fairly good demand, but prices were generally lower compared to the quality.

The auction, which is supposed to be held every Tuesday, could not have taken place on due date because of the 36-hour hartal, enforced by the 14-party alliance, market sources said.

According to the sources, good liquoring types continued to sell at a satisfactory level while plainer types saw a larger decline with a few remaining unsold.

There were some new export-inquiries as well from Pakistan. Good liquoring dusts saw an improved market at slightly dearer rates.



Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (R) gestures as Proton Chairman Mohammad Azlan Hashim (L) and Proton Managing Director Syed Zainal Abidin Syed Mohamed Tahir look on while flanked by two newly-unveiled Proton Satria Neo cars in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

## China may invest in RMG, textiles in Philippines

XINHUA, Manila

The Philippine government remains optimistic that more Chinese companies will invest in the (Philippine garments and textile, said the Philippine News Agency (PNA) Friday.

This was indicated in the great interest expressed by Chinese companies in the recently-concluded investment mission on textiles in Guangdong Province, China, which was led by Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Senior Undersecretary Thomas Aquino and DTI Special Consultant on Textiles and Garments Serafin Juliano.

Also present at the mission were more than 70 Filipino textile businessmen who are members of the Federation of Philippine Textile

Industries Inc., said the PNA report.

"Investment prospects are high as shown in keen consideration of Chinese textile firms to invest in the country as well as the high-level of support to Philippine textile companies from the Guangdong provincial government," PNA quoted Emmanuel Ang, DTI Commercial Attache to Guangzhou, as saying in a report to Philippine Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

According to Ang, a cooperation memo between Philippine textile firms and Guangdong Province was signed during the mission.

"The memorandum of understanding will serve as the enabling platform for all future business cooperation between Chinese and Philippine textile firms," Ang said.

Garments and textiles is the Philippines' second top export product, accounting for 6.23 percent of total exports in the first quarter of 2006. It reached 677.86 million US dollars in the first quarter of 2006, according to data from the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion.

The three-day mission kicked off with the Textiles Economic and Trade Forum. More than 300 businessmen representing 218 Chinese companies from the Guangdong textile industry participating in the forum to look for business opportunities with their Philippine counterparts.

At the forum, Aquino presented an overview of the advantages of locating in the Philippines, and the specific opportunities available for Chinese textile and garment companies, according to the report.

## Seminar on marketing fine quality rice held

UNS, Rajshahi

A seminar on producing, exporting and marketing fine quality and sweet-smelling varieties of rice and role of mill owners, traders and exporters in this regard was held here on Thursday.

The main objective of the seminar was to increase mass awareness about production of fine and sweet-smelling rice among the farmers and export of those to foreign countries.

The speakers said Bangladesh imports on an average some 22 to 23 lakh tonnes of rice every year to meet the local demand. It has become very necessary now to grow high yielding and high quality rice in the country, they added.

When production of such rice begun in Bangladesh in 1992, the amount of production of this variety was 14,000 tonnes. At present, the production is about one million tonnes and Bangladesh exports 54 varieties of fine rice, they told the seminar.

Stressing the need for maintaining quality of fine rice, the speakers said training for farmers and mill owners have to be arranged henceforth, according to an official release.

Presided over by Additional Chief Engineer of Barind Development Authority M Sirajul Islam, the seminar was addressed, among others, by Barind's Executive Director Asad-uz-Zaman, senior officer of Agriculture Ministry Shah M Helal Uddin and Director of Food Department M Mohafez Ali.

## Current account deficit narrows in US

AFP, Washington

The US current account deficit, the broadest measure of trade and investment flows, narrowed to 208.7 billion dollars in the first quarter from 223.1 billion in the prior quarter, official data showed Friday.

The deficit reported by the Commerce Department was smaller than the average market estimate of 223 billion dollars, and thus could ease pressure on the US dollar.

The deficit is equivalent to a huge debt owed by the United States to the rest of the world. So far, the US economy has financed its current account gap on favorable terms thanks to foreign demand for US securities.

The agency made a small downward revision to the deficit for the fourth quarter of 2005, which was initially estimated at 224.9 billion dollars. The revision placed the deficit for the year 2005 at 791.5 billion dollars.

## Agrani Bank, IDLC arrange Tk198cr loan for BSRM Steels

Agrani Bank and IDLC (Industrial Development Leasing Company of Bangladesh Ltd) jointly arranged a syndicated term loan of Tk 198 crore for BSRM Steels Ltd, a new unit of H Akberali Group, to set up the country's largest steel re-rolling project.

The Tk 284 crore BSRM project will be fully automated with an annual production capacity of 300,000 tonnes. The machineries will be imported from Denieli of Italy, says a press release.

A total of twenty banks and financial institutions participated in the syndicated facility for which Agrani Bank will be the agent.

The participants are Agrani Bank, Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd, Bank Alfalah Ltd, Bank Asia Ltd, BRAC Bank Ltd, The City Bank Ltd, Commercial Bank of Ceylon Ltd, Dhaka Bank Ltd, Eastern Bank Ltd,

IFIC Bank Ltd, Janata Bank, Mercantile Bank Ltd, National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd, Prime Bank Ltd, Pubali Bank Ltd, Saudi-Bangladesh Industrial and Agricultural Investment Company Ltd, Standard Bank Ltd, The Trust Bank Ltd, United Commercial Bank Ltd and Uttara Bank Ltd.

The deal was signed at a ceremony on Thursday in Dhaka where Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed spoke as chief guest.

Alihussain Akberali, chairman of BSRM Steels, Syed Abu Naser Bukhtear Ahmed, managing director and chief executive officer of IDLC of Bangladesh Ltd and Shah Md Nurul Alam, managing director and chief executive officer of Mercantile Bank Ltd, also spoke on the occasion.

## New MD of Nat'l Life Insurance



Habibur Rahman Sikder has been appointed managing director of National Life Insurance Company Ltd effective from June 1, 2006, says a press release.

Prior to taking over his current office, Rahman served as the managing director of Padma Life Insurance Company Ltd.

Starting his career in the insurance field 31 years ago, Rahman has successfully accomplished his duties from different positions.

**বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিব মেডিক্যাল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়**  
**Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University**  
শাহবাগ, ঢাকা, বাংলাদেশ

নং-বিএসএমএমইউ/২০০৬/৪৬০৯ তারিখঃ ১৪-০৬-২০০৬ইং

### নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিয়োগবিধি অনুযায়ী নিম্নে বর্ণিত পদগুলো পূরণের জন্য বাংলাদেশের নাগরিকদের কাছ থেকে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও বেতন স্কেল	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার তথ্য
১।	অধ্যাপকঃ বেতন স্কেলঃ টাঃ ১৬,৮০০-২০,৭০০/- ক) ইউরোলজি (রেনাল ট্রান্সপ্লান্টেশন সার্জারি)-১ খ) হেমাটোলজি-১ গ) হেমাটোলজি (ক্লিনিক্যাল হেমাটোলজি)-১ ঘ) নেফ্রোলজি (রেনাল ট্রান্সপ্লান্টেশন এন্ড ডায়ালাইসিস)-১ ঙ) মেডিসিন (রিউম্যাটোলজি)-১ চ) গাইনী এন্ড অবসঃ (ফিটোমেটর্নাল মেডিসিন)-১	০৬ (ছয়)	
২।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপকঃ বেতন স্কেলঃ টাঃ ১৫,০০০-১৯,৮০০/- ক) ইউরোলজি (ইউরো অনকোলজি)-১ খ) ইউরোলজি (পেডিয়াট্রিক ইউরোলজি)-১ গ) নেফ্রোলজি (রেনাল ট্রান্সপ্লান্টেশন এন্ড ডায়ালাইসিস)-১ ঘ) মেডিসিন (মেডিক্যাল অনকোলজি)-১ ঙ) মেডিসিন-১ চ) ফিজিক্যাল মেডিসিন এন্ড রিহাবিলিটেশন-১ ছ) ফার্মাকোলজি-১ জ) চর্ম ও যৌন ব্যাধি-১ ঝ) কার্ডিয়াক সার্জারি-১ ঞ) ফিজিওলজি-১	১০ (দশ)	নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিস থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

● বিশেষ যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে যে কোনো শর্ত শিথিলযোগ্য।

শর্তাবলীঃ

- প্রার্থীগণকে রেজিস্ট্রার, বিএসএমএমইউ-এর অনুকূলে পূর্বালী ব্যাংক, ঢাকার শাহবাগ এভিনিউ শাখার উপর ২০০/- (দুইশত) টাকার অফেরতযোগ্য ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারসহ নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে প্রাপ্তব্য নির্দিষ্ট আবেদনপত্রে ০৮ (আট) কপি আবেদন, পাসপোর্ট আকারের ৮ কপি ছবি এবং ৮ (আট) সেট স্কুল সার্টিফিকেটের কপি আগামী ৫-৭-২০০৬ইং তারিখ বেলা ০২-৩০ টার মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে পৌঁছাতে হবে।
- চাকুরিরত প্রার্থীগণকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে।
- অসম্পন্ন আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
- নির্দিষ্ট সময়সীমার পর প্রাপ্ত আবেদন সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

মুহাম্মাদ আবদুল গফুর  
রেজিস্ট্রার

জিডি-১৫৭৩