

Dynamism in agricultural research stressed
Star Economic Report

The Vice-Chancellor of the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU), Prof M Asadurrahman on Wednesday urged the agricultural scientists and researchers to develop technologies in the context of rural Bangladesh.

Inaugurating a three-day workshop to evaluate the annual research progress of BAU for the 1990-91, he stated the dynamism in agricultural research was a pre-requisite to the planned development of agriculture.

Dr MA Hamid Miah of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC)

Who addressed the inaugural session as the special guest stressed the need for establishing a viable inter-institutional linkage between the BAU and various research institutions of the country. He said such linkage would speed up research activities of high quality.

BSEC workers demand publication of Wages Commission report '89
Star Economic Report

An extended meeting of the Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) workers and employees federation on Wednesday demanded the immediate announcement of the report of 1989 Wages Commission with a minimum wage of Taka 1400 per month with effect from July 90.

The meeting also demanded removal of the disparities in fringe benefits and leave of the blue and white colour workers.

The meeting presided over by working president Kutubuddin Ahmed also urged the government to stop its de-nationalisation policy.

The meeting demanded the restoration of collective bargaining and trade union rights according to International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention.

Asian Development Bank study says Telecom sector growing faster than economy
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An internal Asian Development Bank study of 106 countries suggests that increased economic efficiency is partly based on improved telecommunications.

In 92 countries, the study reveals, the telecommunications sector is growing faster than the economy. Furthermore, the gap between the growth rates for the telecommunications sector and the economy widens in countries experiencing slow or negative growth.

Results of the study were presented in a paper by the ADB's Bruce Murray, a senior project economist with the Infrastructure Department.

The socio-economic benefits of improved telecommunications are numerous, said Murray. Telecommunication, especially the telephone, improves family well-being by providing access to services which could save life, health and property and by increasing contacts with family, friends and special interest groups.

In business, a better telecommunications service saves time and labour at all levels of a business organization, improves market efficiency with better communication between buyers and sellers, helps to reduce inven-

ories and cuts down or avoids production stoppages caused by machine breakdowns or shortages of materials, said Mr Murray.

An improved communications service also enables business to expand by reaching a wider range of customers, develops international trade, reduces transportation and distribution costs and improves financial performance by facilitating the collection of receivables and helping to process transactions, manage portfolios and monitor market developments.

Finally, noted Murray, better telecommunications improves the administration of government programmes and helps to redress regional imbalances between urban and rural areas.

Meanwhile, Ian Gill, ADB Information Officer, writes: The Asia-Pacific region ranks third behind Europe and North America in telecommunications spending — but still has a long way to go towards meeting its needs. Although the region is home to 58 per cent of the global population, it has only one sixth of the world's telephones.

To meet demand, expenditure in the region's telecoms sector is expected to more

than triple from \$45 billion to \$150 billion annually over the next five years.

These points showing the sector's potential for expansion were made by Chao Thongma, Executive Director of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) at a regional telecommunications conference in Bangkok from 19 to 22 March 1991.

The conference on 'The Information Age — Challenges for the Telecommunications Sector in the Asia-Pacific Region', was the first to be jointly sponsored by the Asian Development Bank and APT. Attending the meeting were 250 delegates representing private firms, governments — including 23 of the Bank's developing member countries (DMCs) — and international organizations.

Despite the large amounts of capital the sector is expected to attract over the next few years, there will still be shortfall, according to the Secretary-General of the Geneva-based International Telecommunications Union, Pekka Tarjanne, who gave the keynote address.

Most countries in the Asia-Pacific still do not invest adequately in their information systems, Tarjanne maintains.

He believes that countries should invest in telecommunications not less than 2 per cent of GDP per annum where the telecommunication infrastructure is inadequate.

The Republic of Korea, Singapore and Malaysia were cited as three countries which have invested heavily in high-quality, extensive communications — and have been rewarded by gains in productivity.

For its part, the ADB had substantially increased its lending to the telecommunications sector in the 1980s and would increase this further in the 1990s, said the Bank's Vice-President for Projects, In Yong Chung, in the welcome address. Vice-President Chung noted that the Bank had so far provided loans totalling nearly \$650 million and technical assistance grants amounting to more than \$4 million to the sector.

One important conclusion of the conference was that the telecommunications sector should be a financially viable sector which need not rely on government budgets. Investment funds can come from four broad sources: (i) internal cash generation by operating companies, which involves both revenue growth

and cost reduction through improved efficiency; (ii) long-term loans from multilateral, bilateral and commercial sources; (iii) innovative schemes to mobilize private sector financial resources such as equity participation, joint ventures and build-operate-and-transfer (BOT) arrangements; and (iv) subscriber investment plans.

The conference noted that pricing policies are becoming increasingly important in generating adequate returns on investment to ensure continued telecommunications development. While international toll revenue has traditionally been used to cross-subsidize less lucrative parts of the sector, there is substantial downward pressure on such rates.

Nevertheless, several countries have been able to maintain the financial viability of the telecommunications sector without significantly increasing domestic tariffs because of the rapid growth in traffic, the introduction of new high-value services, lower costs and increased efficiency.

As well as the investment and financing aspect of the industry, the conference focused on three other major themes: (i) trends in technology; (ii) management, organization and

institutional restructuring; and (iii) the socio-economic impact of telecommunications investment.

Rapid technological changes have had three significant effects on the sector. One is a dramatic reduction in costs. For example, the cost of providing satellite services has been cut by nearly 140 times in real terms over the past 25 years. There has been a similar drop in the cost of computerized switching.

A second consequence is that the introduction of many new network and terminal services — facsimile, packet switching, video conferencing and mobile telephones, for instance — has made the sector more market responsive.

Thirdly, the cost reductions and technological advances have made it possible for smaller companies to challenge traditional telecommunication monopolies.

On the sector's restructuring, the conference was told that the winds of market forces are bringing about sweeping management, organization and institutional changes in the region.

In one paper, a project engineer from the ADB's Infrastructure Department, Silvio Cattolar, noted that government departments responsible for telecommunications are being converted into government-owned corporations in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Western Samoa. The Cook Islands and Thailand are studying the possibility of privatizing government telecommunication departments. Fiji and Malaysia have already converted government departments to government corporations.

In the Philippines, the government recently affirmed its policy for the private sector to provide services and is currently seeking, with assistance from ADB, to privatize government-owned telecommunication facilities.

Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and United Kingdom, added Cattolar, transformed government telecommunication departments first to government corporations and then to private companies with publicly-held shares. In Australia, a similar process is under way with the government having decided to merge the national and international carriers and to allow a privately-owned entity to compete in all areas.

Rice sells at fair price in Narsingdi

Emergency Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice at fair price in Palash upazila under Narsingdi District has been organised in the wake of floods in the area, reports BSS.

A Moyeen Khan MP of Palash has organised this emergency OMS programme in cooperation with upazila food officer in Palash in all major markets in the upazila, a press release said Thursday.

The measure has been taken to arrest the unusual price rise of rice as flood waters have already caused significant damage to transplanted rice saplings in vast areas of the upazila.

The measure which was organised this week in all hats and bazars of the upazila has produced visible effects bringing considerable relief to the people of the locality, the press release said.

Studies on remote sensing technology in progress
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Sectoral studies undertaken by the Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation (SPARRSO) are progressing well. Funded by UNDP and FAO, the studies relate mainly to service-oriented application of remote sensing technology in agriculture, water resources, fisheries and forestry sectors.

SPARRSO Scientists and the experts from the cooperating agencies are conducting the studies. Base maps of several project areas have already been prepared.

Satellite data on most of the study areas have been printed from the available imagery. New data required for the studies have also been ordered. A number of meetings took place at SPARRSO to exchange ideas and to finalise working principles and a viable work schedule of these projects. A positive response has been shown by the working scientists and the contact persons of the user organisations.

Field trips were undertaken under the project for a few of the sectoral studies. A ground mission was undertaken in the north-western part (Rajshahi, Bogra, Rangpur and Dinajpur) of Bangladesh to study the environmental and land degradation in the region. Visit was also made to the greater Sylhet area in connection with the fisheries study. Scientists also visited Jamalpur and Dewanganj in connection with seasonal monitoring of flooding. Gaibandha was also visited for preparation of landuse map.

CAB demands steps to check price hike
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Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) on Friday demanded the necessary amendment, addition and application of the laws which serve the consumers.

CAB also demanded pragmatic steps to check the price hike and sought government co-operation in speeding up consumer movement.

A general meeting of CAB on Friday presided over by Forhan Ahmed also expressed the concern that enough initiatives are not being taken to conserve the rights of the con-

sumers. The meeting viewed that the cash memos of different products and the utilities bills contain such conditions which hamper the rights of the consumers. CAB demanded the withdrawal of such conditions which are tagged with the products. The meeting also stressed the need for quality control of products.

The meeting also demanded a national health policy which will make medical services available to all, especially the rural people.

France approves tight budget

PARIS, Sept 20 : The French cabinet approved a cautious, tightly controlled 1992 budget on Wednesday that tilts spending towards President Francois Mitterrand's priorities of education and research, reports Reuter.

Although Finance Minister Pierre Bergeyovoy expects France to grow faster than most other big industrial countries in the next 12 months, the government decided not to take any chances with its growth and revenue forecasts, spokesman Jack Lang said.

The Cabinet was told experts were expecting 2.4 per cent growth but chose to be prudent and budget for just 2.2 per cent, Lang told reporters after a Cabinet meeting.

"A good surprise is better than bad news," he said. The government wants to avoid a repeat of its frantic search earlier this year for 26 billion Francs (4.6 billion Dollars) in spending cuts and new income to offset a shortfall in taxes caused by slow growth.

Growth this year is now expected to be 1.4 per cent at most instead of the rate of 2.7 per cent initially envisaged.

Lang quoted Bergeyovoy as saying France was well placed to benefit from the anticipated moderate recovery because success in taming inflation had helped firms keep their costs down.

The task of the budget was to tackle unemployment, now at a high 9.5 per cent, by making companies even more competitive.

In line with a pledge by President Francois Mitterrand, there will be no net increase in taxes.

Government spending will rise 3.1 per cent in 1992, only slightly more than the likely 2.8 per cent increase in prices, and the budget deficit will be limited to 89.5 billion Francs (15.7 billion Dollars).

The deficit was originally forecast this year to be about 80 billion Francs (14 billion Dollars), but because of slow growth it is now likely to exceed 95 billion Francs (16.7 billion Dollars), economists estimate.

The 1992 deficit target amounts to 1.26 per cent of gross domestic product, which Lang said compared favourably with Germany's public deficit of 3.1 per cent.

This cap on spending is in line with the search for cost cutting that the government began as soon as the economy started to weaken in the summer of 1990. It has one aim: to get through the current economic difficulties without a surge in the deficit or higher taxes, a government statement said.

Within this corset, the government will raise spending on education by 5.7 per cent and on research by 5.9 per cent.

Price of jute falling

GAIBANDHA, Sept 20 : The price of jute is gradually falling in Sadar, Sadullapur, Sundarganj and Saghatia upazilas of the district for want of buyers, reports UNB.

Low quality jute is now selling in different hats of the district between Tk 120 and 130 and tosha variety between Tk 140 and 150 per mound which is much below the production cost.

The situation has turned acute in Dariapur, Lakshimpur, Kamarjani and Badakhilhat hats of Sadar upazila, Kalibari hat of Palashbari, Dhaperhat of Sadullapur upazila, Bamondang of Sundarganj and Bharatkhal of Saghatia upazila.

Some jute growers said due to low price, they are compelled to return home from the market with unsold jute. All the government purchasing centres have not yet started purchasing jute in the district.

It has been reported that the brokers and farias of the local market are propagating the idea that future of jute in Bangladesh was uncertain.

Prices of construction materials rise by 35 p.c.

MAGURA, Sept 20 : Construction and renovation of houses are being hampered in four upazilas of the district due to acute shortage of building materials, reports UNB.

Prices of brick, cement, sands, timber, bamboo and other materials have registered a rise by about 30 to 35 per cent adversely affecting the buyers.

A bag of cement is being sold between Tk 220 and 240 in the local markets. The dealers have attributed the price hike to short supply of the construction materials.

One truck of bricks is being at Tk 3,600 or more at the dictate of the brickfield owners, an official source said. Timber is sold at Tk 800 per CFT for the lowest quality.

Sales-Purchase-Tender & Employment News

Employment

- (1) Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd. 17, Dhanmondi RA Road No. 2, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh requires 'Product Officers' in the Marketing Department. Applicants must have either Post Graduate degree in Pharmacy/Chemistry/Bio-Chemistry or allied fields with several experience in Selling or Business graduates with marketing major. Please apply in hand writing together with a photograph and a 400 word monograph or understanding of the job to the Marketing Manager, Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd, 17, Dhanmondi RA Road, 2, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh not later than 30.9.91.
- (2) Director General (Current Charge), Department of Shipping, 142-143 (7th floor) Motiheel Commercial Area, Dhaka requires 'Engineer Surveyor and Examiner', must be First Class Marine Engineer Certificates holder with 10 yrs experience. Please apply with complete bio-data together with attested photo copies of educational qualifications certificates, 2 copies of recent PP size attested photographs and character certificate from 1st class gazetted officer to the above address by 10.10.91.
- (3) The Advertiser, GPO Box No. 3714, Dhaka requires 'Director, Finance', must be a Chartered Accountant with 5 yrs experience or Post graduate in Commerce/IBA with major in Accounting/Finance with 10 yrs experience. Please apply with bio-data, attested copies of certificates and recent P.P. photograph by 3.10.91.
- (4) Principal-in-Charge, K.M. Degree College, Shanga, Faridpur wants Lecturers in Chemistry, Botany, Management, English and Islamic History and also wants an experienced Principal, preferably M.A. with honours in English. Please apply with full bio-data within 30.9.91.

Tender

- (5) General Manager, Ujala Match Factory, Shyamspur, Dhaka, invites sealed international tenders for supply of Red Phosphorus on C&F (C) Ctg. basis. Tender documents available from (a) BCIC Bhaban, Dhaka (b) BCIC Branch Office, 6, Agrabad, Ctg. and Ujala Match Factory. Tenders will be received up to 11.00 A.M. of 22.10.91.
- (6) Managing Director, Zia Fertilizer Company Limited, Ashugani, B. Baria, invites sealed international tenders for supply of Double graders, Centre Lift, Floor Control, Over-head Travelling Electric Crane for Compressor House on C&F (a) Chittagong basis. Tender documents available from Controller of Accounts, BCIC, BCIC Shipping and Liaison Office, 6, Agrabad, Ctg. Chittagong (b) General Manager, (Accounts & Finance) ZFCI, Ashugani, Brahmanbaria from 11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M. Tender will be received up to 2.30 P.M. of 28.9.91.
- (7) People's Jute Mills Ltd. invites sealed tenders from experienced contractors for handling of jute purchased at PUM Jute Purchase Centre, Sonatala, Bogra and transportation of jute from Agency to the Mill. Tender documents available from the offices of (a) Controller (Accounts & Finance), B.M.C., Adampore Court, Motiheel C/A, Dhaka, (b) General Manager (Accounts & Finance), B.M.C. (Khulna Zone), Halfzuddin Road, Town Khulishpur, Khulna, (c) Deputy General Manager (Accounts & Finance), People's Jute Mills Ltd., Town Khulishpur, Khulna. Tender must be submitted in the tender boxes kept at the offices of Deputy General Manager (Administration), P.M. Ltd., and Deputy General Manager (Administration) B.M.C. (KZ), Churnhat, Khulna by 11.00 A.M. of 28.9.91.
- (8) Executive Engineer, (RHD), Road Division, Rangpur, invites sealed tenders in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 for rehabilitation and reconstruction of part by providing sub-base, base course premixed bituminous carpeting and seal coat work at K.M. 2 (a), Stp, 485 on Seidpur-Parbatipur Road under Road Division, Rangpur during 1991-92. Tender documents available from the office of Executive Engineer, (RHD), Road Division, Rangpur/Dinajpur/Bogra/Rajshahi/Road Construction Division-III, Dhaka/Planning and Programming Division, Dhaka up to 6.10.91. Tenders will be received by (a) Addl. Chief Engineer, (RHD), Rajshahi Zone, Rajshahi (b) Superintendent Engineer, (RHD), Road Circle, Rangpur, (c) Superintending Engineer, (RHD) Project Control, Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, (d) Executive Engineer, (RHD), Road Division, Rangpur/Dinajpur/Bogra up to 12-30 P.M. of 7.10.91.

Market Prices of Listed Shares and Debentures with Dhaka Stock Exchange

At the close of trading on September 12 and September 19, 1991.

Company	EX/ML*	1990-91			
		August 12	September 19	High	Low
BANKS (Ten)					
AL Bank	1000/1	800.00	783.43	1010.00	725.00
AD Bank	100/5	180.00	180.00	185.00	135.00
City Bank	100/5	290.00	290.00	290.00	178.00
LFIC	100/5	177.00	177.00	202.00	140.00
Islami Bank	1000/1	1190.00	1190.00	1400.00	1000.00
National Bank	100/5	117.00	118.00	125.00	102.00
Pubali Bank	100/5	91.00	86.00	110.00	90.00
Rupali Bank	100/10	80.00	80.00	110.00	75.00
U.C.B.L.	100/5	121.00	121.00	138.00	120.00
Uttara Bank	100/5	190.00	190.00	230.00	180.00
INVESTMENT (Eight)					
ICB	100/5	90.00	92.00	100.00	90.00
1st ICB M.Fund	100/5	390.00	390.00	450.00	390.00
2nd ICB Fund	100/5	158.00	154.00	200.00	160.00
3rd ICB M. Fund	100/5	134.88	135.00	168.00	130.00
4th ICB M. Fund	100/10	30.00	31.00	37.00	23.00
5th ICB M. Fund	100/10	106.00	107.50	139.00	94.00
6th ICB M. Fund	100/10	75.00	69.55	100.00	59.50
ICB Unit Cert.	100/5	115.00	115.00		
Sales Price		110.00	110.00		
RE-PURCHASE					
Re-purchase					
INSURANCE (Four)					
BGIC	100/10	109.00XD	107.50	117.50	104.00
Green Delta	100/10	117.00	117.58	122.00	104.50
Peoples	100/10	127.50AL	128.00AL	130.00	108.00
United	100/10	124.00	124.00	124.00	105.00
ENGINEERING (Nineteen)					
Arab Automobiles	100/5	207.00	207.00	220.00	194.00
Atlas Bangladesh	100/5	41.00	40.50	44.00	36.00
Auto Pipes	100/5	250.00	250.00	250.00	219.00
Bangladesh Autocars	100/5	102.00	98.25	123.00	100.00
Bangladesh Lamp	105/5	265.00	265.00	290.00	230.00
B-Thai Aluminium	100/10	92.00	91.50	110.00	75.00
Bengal Carbide	100/5	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
Bengal Steel	100/5	18.00	18.00		
Eastern Cables	100/5	83.47	83.00	109.00	75.00
Hoivader PVC	100/10	102.50	104.00	122.00	97.00
Karim Pipe	100/5	128.54	129.07	130.00	110.00
Metalox Corp.	100/5	110.00	112.00	110.00	75.00
Mono Staffers	100/5	209.00	209.00	209.00	209.00
Mono Jute	100/5	210.00	210.00	210.00	210.00
National Tubes	100/10	109.00	109.00	137.00	103.00
Pausher Steel	10/50	6.00	6.00		
Quasem Drywall	10/50	8.13	8.20	9.30	7.50
Rennick Joiners	100/5	70.00	70.00	74.00	48.00
Singer Bangladesh	100/5	990.00	990.00	1125.00	990.00
FOOD & ALLIED (Twenty one)					
AB Biscuit	100/5	190.00	190.00	200.00	190.00
Alpha Tobacco	100/50	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00
Aman Sea Food	100/5	36.00	36.00	40.00	36.00
Apex Food	100/5	340.00	340.00	340.00	270.00
Aroma Tea	100/5	85.00	85.00	85.00	45.00
Bangra	100/5	305.00	305.00		
Bengal Food	100/5	141.87	125.00XD	255.00	140.00
B.L.T.C.	100/5	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
B.T.C.	10/50	42.00	42.00	83.00	35.00
Cig. Vegetable	100/50	99.00	99.00	117.00	92.00
Eastern Vegetable	100/5	138.50	138.00	175.00	127.00
E.L. Confection	100/5	700.00	700.00	700.00	500.00
Frogleg Export	10/50	4.50	4.50	6.75	4.00
Gemini Sea Food	100/100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Modern Industries	100/5	160.00	160.00	160.00	135.00
N.T.C.	100/5	27			