

Nationalised jute mills lose Tk 1301 cr

Star Economic Report

Nationalised jute mills of the country incurred a loss of Tk 1301.14 crore during the last 18 years since 1972.

State Minister for Jute Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan informed the Jatiya Sangsad this on Saturday replying to a question from Nurul Islam Mondol (Ind-Barguna).

Abdul Mannan, replying to Prof. Rafiqul Islam (AL-Jessore), also said that the mills lost Tk 1148.14 cr in nine years from 1981-82 to 1989-90.

He attributed the losses to continuous fall of demand and prices of jute products and uneven competition with synthetics in the world market.

Besides, higher production cost due to higher wages and fringe benefits, power and fuel rates, price hike of maintenance materials due to inflation and higher bank interests added substantially to the losses, he said.

He said that the government took a number of measures to overcome the losses.

The measures included ensuring better working condition to increase efficiency in the jute mills, drive to maintain and expand jute goods market, campaigning about the good affects of jute products and bad affects of synthetics on human health and environment and promulgation of laws restricting internal production and use of synthetics to expand the local market for jute products.

Abdul Mannan told Sardar Sakhawat Hossain (BNP-Narsingdi) that the public sector jute mills had outstanding bank loans of Tk 1145.11 crore of which Tk 611.20 crore were short-term and Tk 533.91 crore long-term.

Answering to another question from Hossain the State Minister said that the Adamjee Jute Mills had 23,099 permanent and 7,243 exchange workers whose monthly wages amounted Tk 5.15 crore. He said that the expenditure of the mill in 1989-90 fiscal year was Tk 245.45 crore against an income of Tk 152.47 crore.



French and English workers of TML (Trans Manch Link) burst in joy after a giant drilling machine broke through the last section in the cross-channel tunnel on Friday. The tunnel is officially due to open in June 1993 — AFP photo

Tamil Nadu asks Lankan refugees to register or face deportation

NEW DELHI, June 29 : India's Tamil Nadu state, where former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by suspected Sri Lankan Tamil militants, ordered refugees from the Indian Ocean island today to register with police or face deportation, report agencies.

Landlords and employers must register Sri Lankan Tamil tenants and workers, it said. "Failure to do so or supply of wrong information will be dealt with severely."

Later the men seized their kidnappers' guns and fought back. One Israeli was killed but four escaped, three of them wounded. Yitzhaki said in a telephone interview on Friday that he had got separated from his friends during the gunfight, was attacked by Kashmiri villagers, and was rescued by the JKLF.

The JKLF said at first that it would free him at once. Then, apparently under pressure from other separatist groups who refuse to believe the Israelis were ordinary tourists. It said it would hold Yitzhaki while it investigated the gunfight.

Asked how long the investigation would take, Meer said: "It's up to the committee."

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Independence call

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which the army would withdraw. Slovenia and Croatia to suspend their declarations of independence made on Tuesday and the appointment of Croatia's Stipe Mesić as President.

Serbia, Croatia's arch-rival, blocked Mesić's election on May 15, saying he would break up Yugoslavia. The Balkan country has been without a President and Commander-in-Chief of its Armed Forces since then. Serbia on Saturday lifted its veto.

Tanjug did not say when the postponed session was likely to take place.

Slovenia President Milan Kucan said today that his republic wanted its declaration of independence from Yugoslavia to remain in effect, despite a three month moratorium agreed in negotiations with the European Community.

Kucan, quoted by the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, implied that the moratorium applied only to the practical application of last Tuesday's declaration.

He also declared that no guarantee existed that Yugoslav troops would return to their barracks as provided for under the ceasefire accord brokered by an EC delegation. "I wonder who could give such an order to the army," he said.

The statement appeared to be a veiled reference to the federal presidency, which acts as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces under the constitution.

On his return from Zagreb where he had reached agreement with federal authorities to end the military clashes in Slovenia, Kucan said in Ljubljana he did not give way on the principal issue of Slovenian independence. There is no possible way back as far as our independence is concerned," he told a press conference.

The agreed three month moratorium was a mere respite before procedures for total sovereignty would be resumed, he said.

"I do not envisage a democratic way for Slovenia to again become a part of Yugoslavia, he said, adding that Slovenia could only be temporarily annexed after the elimination of its legitimate authorities.

Questioned on future talks with the centre, Kucan said after this war between David and Goliath, we no longer have

the minimum of trust needed to open talks.

Kucan said he had no information that Yugoslav army units were pulling out of Slovenia.

In spite of the agreement to halt all fighting at least four people have died since late Friday and continued violence was reported.

Serbia's information minister Jelko Kacin told the press conference that the Yugoslav Air Force raided the Hrvatinia border post, held by Slovenes, before noon (100 GMT) and combats were raging near the Crkije military airbase.

A still unknown number of foreigners were killed by the Air Force in raids on vehicles blocking tank advances, he said.

The bodies of two Austrian journalists who died in an air raid on Ljubljana's Brnik airport Friday were still on the ground because of continuing fighting between Slovenian forces and the Yugoslav army which each control parts of the airport.

Observers would not rule out new clashes as Slovenian authorities said they will not give up control over border posts still held.

"The main border passages are under our control and we will keep them," Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel said.

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The heaviest burden should be borne by the strongest shoulders," said an influential MP commenting on the suggested changes in the new fiscal measures.

Duties on unrefined soybean oil and palm oil have been increased to 50 per cent and 40 per cent respectively from 23 per cent and excise duty on gas has been raised to 10 per cent for domestic and other uses.

The BNPPP members said exemption from fresh taxation of essential items, utility service and agricultural inputs would help mitigate sufferings of the commonman and the peasantry, already groaning under poverty and unemployment.

Presided over by Deputy Leader of the House Prof. AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Col. (Rtd) Akbar Hossain, Khandaker Abdul Malek, Dr Sirajul Islam Bhuiyan and Mahbul Huq Tara.

The Awami League Parliamentary Party on Saturday held a meeting at Sangsard Bhaban with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the chair, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed country's political and economic situation with particular reference to fiscal measures proposed in the national budget, constitutional amendment bill and warrant of precedence.

In a condolence resolution, the meeting expressed deep shock at the death of Moulvibazar District Awami League leader and freedom fighter Babu Pradonna Roy and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

The meeting, held in the opposition's conference room, was adjourned till 9 am today, ALPP sources said.

At a flag meeting between BSF and BDR commanders today, the Bangladesh side was informed that Mofazzel was taken to Karpur Hospital in Nadia district for treatment under police custody.

The Indian side did not say anything about Mofazzel's actual condition. The BSF Commander assured the BDR Commander that they will hand over the victim to Bangladesh authorities after his release from police custody.

The flag meeting from 5 pm to 7 pm was held near Mujib Nagar border outpost. Bangladesh side was led by 13 Battalion Commander Lt Col Mostafa Anwar and the Indian side by 59 Battalion BSF Commander.

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