

Pricing of contraceptives suggested

Speakers at a seminar Monday stressed the need for pricing contraceptive items in view of the increasing cost of population control activities, reports UNB.

They called for a modest pricing of condoms and oral pills, now being distributed free, so that the poor people of rural areas could avail the family planning facilities.

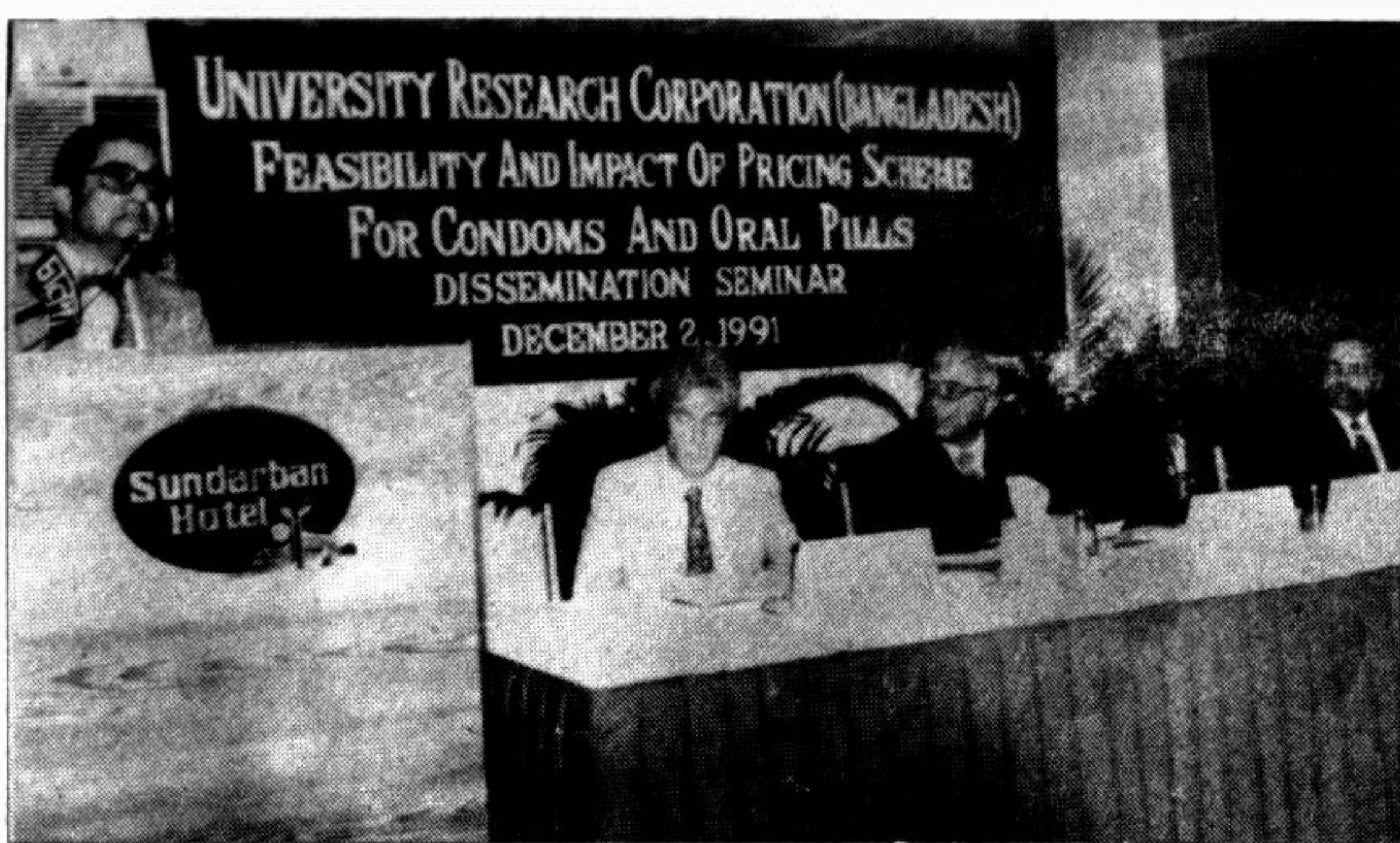
Health Secretary M Mokammel Haq attended the seminar titled "Feasibility and Impact of Pricing Schemes for Condoms and Oral Pills" held at a city hotel under the auspices of University Research Corporation (URC), Monday.

President of Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) Alamgir M A Kabir chaired the seminar which was addressed by William R Goldman, Director at the office of Population and Health of USAID and Prof Barkat-e-Khuda of Dhaka University.

The Health Secretary said pricing of contraceptive items has become necessary due to increased cost of population control activities, the largest single programme in social sector undertaken by the government.

He, however, called for considering the capabilities of the rural poor while formulating a pricing policy for the contraceptives.

Bangladesh has achieved a remarkable progress in the field of population control, Goldman remarked adding that the significant fall in fer-



Mr Mokammel Haque, speaking at the seminar on contraceptive pricing organized by University Research Corporation (Bangladesh) at a city hotel Monday.

tility rate has increased the demand for contraceptives.

Pricing contraceptive items will generate considerable revenue for population control programmes, he said assuring of USAID funding in various research undertakings related to the programmes.

In his presidential speech Alamgir M A Kabir said it is imperative that the people should pay for social services rendered to them and called for giving up habit of getting everything free.

Kabir, the pioneer in popu-

lation activities in the country, said charging for contraceptive items will ensure the sense of accountability and suggested that a similar rate be followed by all supplying agencies.

Condom was priced in September last year while pricing of oral pills was introduced only in one union of the country.

Justify charges for contraceptives, Prof Khuda said supplying cost will increase in future because of its increasing use by eligible couples and their use of contraception to space or to terminate births.

Prof Khuda, who carried out a study in 11 unions of Monohardi upazila of Narsingdi district, said contraceptive pricing will not necessarily result in major decline in contraceptive prevalence rate.

The study showed that there were strong reservations about the pricing policy as the clients used to receive supplied free of charge.

It said price introduction may work against the interest of the poor and distribution of condoms and pills may decline.

Advantage of cheap labour for software export stressed

By Staff Correspondent

Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Humayun Khan Panni Thursday highlighted Bangladesh's advantage of cheap labour in exporting computer software and other services in the world market.

He was speaking at the certificate awarding ceremony for the participants of computer courses of Computer Consultancy Services (CCS) Ltd. About 50 participants from different government and private organisations took part in the course.

Earlier, the Chairman of CCS, Akbaruddin Ahmed, in his welcome speech urged the government for patronisation to computer consulting firms and software houses for competition in the global market. He also urged the government to take steps to make the Bangladesh Computer Council more dynamic.

Plan to sell BCIC units protested

Leaders of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Sramik Federation Sunday protested the government decision for selling out BCIC's enterprises to the private sector, reports BSS.

The protest was made when a 30-member delegation comprising leaders of various trade unions under the federation led by its President Tofayel Ahmed and General Secretary Belayet Hossain Majumder called on Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, according to a press release issued by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's office.

A Awal Mia MP was, among others, present during the meeting.

The trade-union leaders told the Deputy Leaders of the Opposition the government decision for selling out the BCIC enterprises must be withdrawn in the greater national interest.

Abdus Samad Azad stressed on the need for creating national consensus to resist what he termed wrong policies of the government and said such steps of the government would lead the "already fragile economy to a disastrous stage."

Azad urged the government to stay away from such steps, the press release added.

Sharp increase in tea export : Revenue earnings marginal

The volume of tea export from Bangladesh increased by about 50 per cent in the first four months of fiscal 1991-92 compared to the corresponding period of the last fiscal year.

About 12 million kg of tea was charged to 17 countries till October of this fiscal while the volume was about 8.8 million kg for the same period of fiscal 1990-91.

The export witnessed a rise by over .4 million kg in October compared to September, 1991. About 4.9 million kg was exported in October and the earning stood at over Taka 27.6 crore. In September, the volume was about 4.5 million kg with an

earning of Tk 27.5 crore. The rise in the revenue was marginal compared to increase in the volume exported due to a sharp fall in the average price of tea in the international market. The average price of tea per kg was about Taka 54 in October while it was over Taka 60 in September.

During the first four months of fiscal 1991-92, Iran turned out to be the top buyer. In the same period of the last fiscal year, Egypt topped the list. Iran lifted 5.9 million kg till October. It has been actively buying tea from Bangladesh since August, 1991. In August, it lifted .54 million kg. The export increased to 3.10 mil-

lion kg in September. It purchased 2.30 million kg in October. Sources said Iran is likely to lift more tea in the following months.

Egypt, Oman and the USSR are also emerging as dominant buyers for Bangladeshi tea. Egypt lifted about 2.7 million kg of tea during the four-month period. It purchased .95 million kg in August, 1.80 million kg in October while it did not buy any tea in September. Oman's share increased from 10 thousand kg in August to 21,000 kg in October. The USSR lifted two million kg till October. The volume was only 6.6 lakh kg during the same period of the last fiscal.

Delhi may bow to trade unions

NEW DELHI, Dec 2 : A one-day strike which crippled key parts of India's economy signals that the government has to accommodate trade unions in its plans for economic restructuring, newspapers said, reports Reuter.

Friday's strike, called by left-wing unions to protest against government moves to privatise parts of the state-dominated economy, halted work at banks and insurance companies, forced cancellation of airline flights, disrupted public transport and shut down state industrial plants.

It was the first challenge to Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's sweeping plans to revitalise India's economy, which he initiated soon after taking power in June this year.

Trade union leaders, who fear the reforms will lead to widespread layoffs, claimed more than 15 million workers joined the strike, but the government said it has little impact.

Acting Labour Minister P A Sangma said only 15 per cent of the work force joined the strike. The output loss could be about 400 million Rupees (\$ 15 million), which was marginal, he said.

"Whatever the degree of success, the protest should be enough to make authorities sit up and initiate a meaningful dialogue with the trade unions," commented the business and political observer, a newspaper based in Delhi.

"If India has to carry out a successful economic renewal...it cannot afford to antagonise labour," said the widely-read Times of India.

"Discussion, consensus and agreed modalities of industrial restructuring will alone provide the golden mean."

Of India's 244 state-owned companies, more than 100 are unprofitable and 50 more have been declared incapable of coming out of the red. The companies employ a total of 2.3 million workers.

Western diplomats said the fact that the strike was not a complete success could give the government renewed confidence to push through restructuring of the bloated public enterprises.

But the Times of India said: "India is a functioning democracy where the protection of trade union rights is an important ingredient of its politics."

The government has said the restructuring was impossible to avoid because it inherited a massive economic crisis a mammoth budget deficit and a 71 billion dollar foreign debt.

Union say most of the reforms were prescribed by the International Monetary Fund, which has loaned India four billion dollars to avoid it defaulting on debt.

Mechanism to take textile trade out of MFA yet to be decided

WASHINGTON, Dec 2 : There appears little doubt that the current multilateral system governing trade in textiles and apparel is coming to an end. But what will replace it remains less certain as both textile exporting and importing nations, meeting in Geneva as part of the Uruguay Round of global trade negotiations, remain far apart on the most important issues, US officials say, according to a USIS press release.

Currently most textiles and clothing are traded under bilateral quota agreements negotiated by importing and exporting countries under a 17-year-old accord called the Multifiber Arrangement (MFA).

Many exporting countries now want to take textile trade out of the MFA and bring it under international trade rules negotiated under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Under the five-year-old Uruguay Round talks nations have agreed to this transition, but are far apart on the mechanism for doing so.

There has been "no progress" during the last 12 months on any of the key issues in the textile negotiations, a US trade official told USA.

Those issues include the duration of the transition period for ending the current system, what products and

countries would be covered, growth rates for product quotas during the transition period, the pace at which textile trade will be integrated into the GATT system, and what "safeguard" mechanism would be available to protect domestic industries from surges in imports, the official said.

A draft text of an agreement has been presented by the chairman of the Uruguay Round textile negotiating group, but textile industries in importing countries say the proposed approach will damage them. Meanwhile, exporting countries say the pace of the proposed integration is too slow.

According to US officials,

the major outstanding issues in the draft text include:

Transition period : A consensus seems to be emerging on a ten-year phase-out, though the European Community (EC), which seeks a longer period, has not yet committed itself;

Product coverage : The United States, the EC, Japan and most other industrial countries believe that virtually all textiles and apparel products covered in MFA, with the exception of a few products like leather, should be included in a transitional system.

Another group of countries, led principally by India and Pakistan, want to limit product coverage in a transitional system to only those textiles and apparels currently covered by specific quotas. This approach would remove some 35 to 40 per cent of all textile and apparel products from import restrictions.

Percentage rate of integration : The chairman's draft calls for the immediate integration of 10 per cent of all products upon the signing of an accord, another 15 per cent after four years, a further 20 per cent after another three years and the remaining 55 per cent at the end of the 10-year period.

Growth rate of imports : The draft calls for the growth rate of imports under quota to progressively increase during the transition period.

For example, a product currently having a growth rate under quota of 4 per cent would initially be increased by a factor of 1.16, or by 4.64 per cent. During the second stage, after four years, the quota would increase by a factor of 1.21 or by 5.61 per cent. After the third stage, the quota would increase by a factor of 1.26 or by 7.07 per cent. After ten years there would be no quotas.

Importing countries say these proposed growth rates are more than adequate, while exporters argue they are insufficient.

Current US growth rates on textile products range from 0.5 per cent to 7 per cent, averaging around 4 per cent.

Safeguards : The chairman's text would make safeguard actions dependent on the importing country showing that imports have increased in the product concerned. Any selective restrictions against an exporting country would require a showing that imports had increased sharply from that country.

US officials say they can accept the chairman's language on safeguards but that exporting countries want a system that would make it very difficult for the importing countries to take any safeguard actions.

Non-MFA members : US officials say that there is general agreement that any GATT accord would apply to all GATT members, whether or not they were part of the MFA. As far as non-GATT members are concerned, such as China, US officials say that imports would remain under the existing bilateral quota system.

Market Prices of Listed Shares and Debentures with Dhaka Stock Exchange

At the close of trading on December 2, 1991.

Company	EV/ML*	Closing Rate	Company	10/50	NT
BANKS (Ten)			Gawata Jute	100/50	NT
AL Baraka Bank	1000/1	1060.00	Islam Jute	100/5	75.00
AJ Bank	100/5	177.00	Jute Spinner	100/5	95.00
City Bank	100/5	272.00	Mutual Jute	100/50	100.00
FLIC	100/5	162.00	Northern Jute	10/50	NT
Islami Bank	1000/1	1300.00	Shamser Jute	100/5	100.00
National Bank	100/5	105.00	Specialised Jute	10/50	NT
Pubali Bank	100/5	100.00	Shine Pukur Jute	100/5	100.00
Rupali Bank	100/10	90.00	Sonali Aansh	100/5	96.00
U.C.B.L	100/5	120.00	PHARMACEUTICALS & CHEMICALS (Fifteen)		
Utara Bank	100/5	190.00	Amber Pharma	10/50	13.80
INVESTMENT (Eight)			Bangli Process	100/5	58.00
ICB	100/5	92.00	Beximco Pharma	100/5	182.00
1st ICB M.Fund	100/5	345.00	Glazo	10/50	125.00
2nd ICB Fund	100/5	153.00	ICI	10/50	10.00
3rd ICB M. Fund	100/5	132.00	Kohinoor Chemical	100/5	105.64
4th ICB M. Fund	100/10	125.00	Petro Synthetic	10/50	12.50
5th ICB M. Fund	100/10	96.00	Pfizer	100/5	110.00
6th ICB M. Fund	100/10	65.00	Pharma Aids	100/5	170.00
ICB Unit Cert.			Pharmaco	100/5	55.00
Sales Price		118.00	Progressive Plastic	110/5	40.00
Repurchase		111.00	Reckitt & Colman	100/50	240.00
INSURANCE (Four)			Rahman Chemicals	100/10	50.00AL
BCIC	100/10	107.00	Therapeutics	100/5	51.33
Green Delta	100/10	113.00	The Ibinosa	100/10	92.00
Peoples	100/10	120.00	PAPER & PRINTING (Six)		
United	100/10	128.00	Eagle Box	10/50	34.00
ENGINEERING (Nineteen)			Monospool	100/5	106.50
Afhab Automobiles	100/5	195.00	Paper Converting	100/5	113.00
Atlas Bangladesh	10/50	40.00	Paper Processing	100/10	75.00
Aziz Pipes	100/5	240.00	Padma Printers	10/50	50.00
Bangladesh Autocars	100/5	86.00	Sonali Paper	10/50	50.00
Bangladesh Lamps	100/5	235.00	SERVICE (Two)		
Bangladesh Carbide	100/10	87.40	Bangladesh Hotel	10/50	12.00
Bengal Steer	10/50	18.00	Bd. Service	10/50	NT
Eastern Cables	100/5	90.00	TEXTILE (Eighteen)		
Howlader PVC	100/10	101.50	Alhaj Textile	10/50	NT
Karim Pipe	100/5	130.00	Arbec Textile	100/10	NT
Metalex Corp.	100/5	120.00	Ashraf Textile	10/50	28.39
Monzo Staffers	10/5	200.00	Chand Textile	10/50	NT
Monzo Jute	100/5	240.00	Chand Spinning	10/50	NT
National Tubes	100/10	124.33	Deah Garments	100/10	61.00
Panther Steel	10/50	6.00	Dulamia Cotton	100/10	89.00
Quasem Drycells	10/50	8.07	Eagle Star	10/50	38.95
Renwick Jajrawar	100/5	93.00	GMG Ind. Corp.	10/50	13.00
Singer Bangladesh	100/5	700.00	Modern Dying	100/5	35.00
FOOD & ALLIED (Twenty one)			Quasem Silk	10/50	5.50
AJ Biscuit	100/5	180.00	Quasem Textile	10/50	7.75
Alpha Tobacco	10/50	48.00	Rahim Textile	100/5	55.00
Aman Sea Food	100/5	36.00	Saifan Textile	100/10	89.00
Apex Food	100/5	440.00	S.T.M. (ORD)	100/5	50.00
Aroma Tea	100/5	70.00	Stylcraft	100/5	100.00
Bargas	100/5	305.00	Swan Textile	100/5	60.00
Bengal Food	100/5	114.00	Tallu Spinning	100/10	118.00
B.L.T.C.	100/5	480.00	MISCELLANEOUS (Fourteen)		
B.T.C.	10/50	40.00	Apex Tannery	100/5	185.00
Cig. Vegetable	100/10	98.00	Aramit	10/50	NT
Dhaka Vegetable	100/5	149.00	Bata Sho	10/100	35.00
E.L. Camella	100/5	1000.00	Beximco	10/100	9.50
Frogging Export	10/50	4.50	BSC	100/5	50.00
Genini Sea Food	100/15	100.00	Chittagong Cement	100/5	205.35
Modern Industries	100/5	160.00	G. G. Ball Pen	10/50	50.00
N.T.C.	100/5	280.40	Himadri Ltd.	10/100	8.00
Rabeya Flour	100/100	NT	Morana Ceramic	100/5	32.00
Rupam Oil	100/10	5.30	Phoenix Leather	100/5	90.00
Tulip Dairy	100/10	97.11	Savar Refractories	100/5	114.00
Yousuf Flour	10/50	NT	The Engineers	100/5	100.00
Zeal Bangla Sugar	10/50	12.00	Umanita Glass	100/5	215.00
FUEL & POWER (Three)			DEBENTURES (Four)		
Padma Oil Co.	10/50	40.00	Apex Tannery	1000/1	1090.00
Eastern Lubricant	10/50	14.00	(17% 1992)		
Oxygen	10/50	47.00	Bengal Food	900/1	950.00
JUTE (Twelve)			(18.5% 1992)		
Ahad Jute	100/10	NT	Beximco	2500/1	2190.00
Anwara Jute	10/50	NT	(17% 1994)		
Delta Jute	10/50	8.50	Beximco Pharma	1571/1	1660.00

* EV = Face Value ML = Market Lot NT = Not Traded. AL = Allotment Letter



Mrs Kiyoko Trnaka, Co-ordinator, Osaka Foundation of International Exchange, Japan called on Professor M. Maniruzzaman, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dhaka on Monday at the latter's office.

Biman staff asked to improve service

By Staff Correspondent

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan stressed the need for better customer services to make Biman a truly service-oriented commercial airline.

The state minister called upon the Biman employees to work with sincerity and said the airline would be able to continue its existence only through serving the passengers in the best possible way in a highly competitive market.

He advised them to keep up the goodwill and image of the national flag-carrier by discharging their duties properly in their respective fields of services.

He was speaking as chief guest at a discussion meeting organised by Bangladesh Biman Sramik Union, Chittagong unit on the death anniversary of its founder president Abu Rezzan and marking the reception of the newly-elected central committee and the farewell of the outgoing president of the union at Chittagong on November 28.

Biman's Managing Director Abdul Mueed Chowdhury attending as the special guest emphasised the role of the Biman employees in building up the airline as a commercial organisation under the ownership of the state. Presided over by the

President of BBSU Chittagong unit SR Khan, the discussion meeting was attended by, among others, Syed Obidul Alam MP and Md Strajul Islam MP.

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Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port					
Name of Vessels	Berthed	ETD	Berth No	L Port	L Agent
Al Swamruz	26/11	05/12	J/1	Hong	ASSL