

### No plan to make Ctg free port

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told the Jatiya Sangsad Thursday that the government had no plan to make Chittagong a free port, reports BSS.

### Solution to Biman men's demand soon

The government is hopeful of a solution to the issue of allowances with the employees of Biman Bangladesh soon, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism MA Mannan told the Jatiya Sangsad Thursday, reports BSS.

While making a statement on the prevailing situation of Biman as was demanded by Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, the State Minister said the 14-hour long siege of Biman employees was withdrawn in the morning of January 16 in response to requests from the management of Biman.

"We had several rounds of talks with representatives of Biman employees and we are optimistic of finding a solution through negotiations," he said. He said he had talks for three hours on January 16 with representatives of Biman employees. He said despite the programme observed by Biman employees there was no disruption in flight schedules so far.

Referring to the statement made by Opposition Chief Whip in the Sangsad on January 16 the State Minister said there was need for updating the information on it. He said the peaceful siege by employees of Biman in support of enhanced allowances which began on January 15 was withdrawn when so requested by the management board.

The government was aware of siege and walk out but so long it was in peaceful the government would pursue the path of negotiated settlement of the issue, he said.

### Tourism firms asked to reap more benefit from PATA

Director of Member Services, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Renton de Alwis called upon the members of PATA Bangladesh Chapter for enhancing reciprocal cooperation between PATA and its Bangladesh Chapter for reaping more benefit from PATA.

He was speaking at a PATA presentation ceremony on Wednesday held under the auspices of PATA Bangladesh Chapter at Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) Training Institute at Mohakhali in the capital.

The function was also addressed by AMM Nasrullah Khan, Chairman of (BPC) and Alhaj Akram Hossain, chairman, PATA Bangladesh Chapter.

Nasrullah Khan in his speech stressed the need for closer cooperation between PATA and BPC and other tourism related organisations in the private sector.

### Jakarta joins the row to cut oil output

BRUSSELS, Jan 23: Indonesia on Wednesday joined a drive within OPEC to cut oil production to try to halt the slide in crude prices, reports AP.

But some analysts said the cuts were too small to lift prices much. Indonesia became the latest member of the 13-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries pledging immediate output reductions in an effort to clear some of the glut off the market.

In all nine nations, including Saudi Arabia, have promised cuts of a combined 415,000 barrels of oil a day less than 2 per cent of the cartel's total production of about 24.2 million barrels a day.

### Tokyo shares go up

TOKYO, Jan 23: Tokyo share prices edged higher in light trading Thursday, extending the previous day's rebound, while the U.S. dollar slipped further against the Japanese yen, reports AP.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average rose 40.60 points, or 0.22 per cent, closing at 21,590.72. The average gained 675.82 points, or 3.2 per cent, on Wednesday after a four-day decline that totalled 916.83 points and took it to a 16-month low.

### New satellite in city soon

## T&T won't be privatised

The Government has no plan to transfer the T&T Board to the private sector, Telegraph and Telecommunications Minister Keramat Ali told parliament Thursday, reports UNB.

Replying to a question from Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury (JP), Keramat Ali said the Government is giving due importance to the T&T Board for improving the country's telecommunication network.

He told Tabibur Rahman Sarder of Awami League that a new high technology satellite will be set up in the capital

soon for development of telecommunications. The Government is negotiating with World Bank (WB) for setting up the planned satellite, he added.

A team from World Bank will shortly visit Dhaka to study the project, he said.

Replying to a supplementary question from Ebadur Rahman the minister told the House the T&T Board has undertaken a plan to give 1.5 lakh new telephone connections from its own resources. He said as part of this programme a 300-line telephone exchange was re-

cently been installed in Natore. Replying to Abul Hasanat Abdullah of Awami League, Keramat Ali said the government plans to provide 15,000 new telephone lines during the current fiscal year (1991-92).

Of these, 7,355 connections have already been given, he added.

The minister told Kazi Abdur Rashid of Awami League that the Board earned Tk 61.38 crore from international trunk calls during the first five months of the current financial year.

## Debt till June-91 \$ 11527 m

The total amount of foreign loans to Bangladesh since independence till 30, 1991 stood at 11,527.277 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 28163.10 crore, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told the Jatiya Sangsad Thursday, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Mansur Ahmed (BNP-Satkhira), the Finance Minister said the amount of foreign loans to Bangladesh till June 30, 1975 stood at 859.569 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 729.43 crore (at the prevailing exchange rate).

Giving a year-wise break up of foreign loans, the Finance Minister pointed out that the

highest amount of 1043.675 US million dollar equivalent to Taka 3435.78 crore was received in 1989-90, followed by 901.128 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 3215.22 crore in 1990-91.

Replying to another question from Nazir Hussain (CPB-Sunamganj), the Finance Minister said Bangladesh received foreign loans amounting to 212.689 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 797.58 crore so far during the current fiscal year (1991-92), the loan giving countries and agencies included Japan, Saudi Arabia, China, Asian Development Bank.

The amount of grants in 1991-92 till November 1991

stood at 220.052 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 525.20 crore. The donor countries and agencies were France, Japan, the USA, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, the EEC, the World Food Organisation and the UNICEF.

Replying to another question from Mashur Rahman (BNP-Jhenedah), the Finance Minister said the country had received exemption of its foreign loans and the United States exempted 291.6 million US dollar equivalent to Taka 1093.50 crore emerging as the largest loan exempting country.

## Thailand considering tariff concession for jute goods

Leader of Thai trade delegation Lt. Gen. Anand Bamrunghruk Thursday said Thai government was considering to give Bangladesh a preferential tariff and special duty concession for Bangladeshi carpets and jute goods, reports BSS.

Addressing the members of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) at the DCCI conference room Thursday evening, Bamrunghruk said Thai businessmen were keen to invest in Bangladesh and ready to buy more jute goods and fish.

DCCI President Mahabubur Rahman, DCCI Vice-President Masudur Rahman and a number of Thai businessmen spoke on the occasion. The 47-member trade delegation, part of the 198-member Thai National Defence College team now visiting Bangladesh, will leave Dhaka Friday.

Stressing the need for expanding the trade and economic cooperation between the two friendly countries, the DCCI President said a democratic government is in power in Bangladesh now and there exists a congenial investment climate.

Citing various reforms in the economic policies and incentive packages offered by the Bangladesh Government, the DCCI President said Thai Businessmen could invest here in composite textile industries and Thailand could cooperate with Bangladesh in development aquamarine, leather industries and electronics through which both the countries could be equally benefited.

The DCCI President lauded the open door policy of the present democratically elected Government.

## Ban on battery import demanded

Drycell Battery manufacturers of Bangladesh in a memorandum to the Commerce Minister on January 14 demanded reimposition of ban on import of standard and medium sized batteries.

They said that the imported batteries along with huge quantity of smuggled ones cost much less than the locally produced batteries. This, they stated, is threatening the existence of the local battery industries.

The manufacturers association in their memorandum said that the local makers were capable of meeting country's demand. The government had banned the import of standard and medium sized batteries in 1982 and there had never been any shortage since the time, they claimed. They viewed that the sud-

den lift of ban on imported dry cell batteries in the Import Policy of 1991-93 was unfair and disastrous for the industry.

Manufacturers said that when any major decision affecting local industries was taken both trade and industry circles were consulted. But local battery manufacturers were not consulted in this case, they complained.

They said that with the withdrawal of ban, huge numbers of LCs were opened and alleged that some unscrupulous importers indulged in heavy underinvoicing.

Moreover, countries like Hong Kong, China and India are exporting batteries at a dumping price compared to international price, they added. They said that although the government fixed tariff

value for standard sized battery at Taka 70 per dozen to give some protection to local industries but the measure was not proved to be effective as huge quantities of batteries were being smuggled into the country.

The manufacturers claimed that only about 20 per cent batteries were imported while the rest were smuggled in.

They further said that with the lifting of ban, production of local units had gone down alarmingly in the past months affecting 5000 workers engaged in the industry.

The manufacturers said that if the ban was not reimposed, various linkage industries like carbon rod, sealing compound and brass cap manufacturing units which developed in the years would also face closure.

## Govt to procure foodgrains thru' private entrepreneurs

Government has made arrangements for the internal procurement of foodgrains under private entrepreneur-ship alongside the government initiatives, reports AP.

This was stated by Food Ministry M Shamsul Islam while addressing heads of different financial institutions at his office Thursday.

The Food Minister stressed

the need for simplification of credit system facilities to the traders by the financial institutions, which he said will ensure spontaneous participation of the private traders in food-grain trading.

Islam said the present government emphasised on private entrepreneurship to strengthen the economic structure of the country and

ameliorate the lot of common-man.

He said the government will take necessary steps for proper food preservation.

The meeting was attended, among other, by Bangladesh Bank Government SB Chowdhury and Chairman and managing directors of different commercial banks.



Saudia recently organised a training course on "Dangerous goods acceptance" for local cargo agents at Sonargaon Hotel. The course was conducted by senior instructor of Saudi Marketing Department, Jeddah. The photo shows Saudia Country Manager Tariq AR Katoah (8th from R), instructor Wazir Balt (9th from L), Ishtiaq Usmani (5th from L) and MA Hamid (8th from L) of Saudia sales department with the participants.

## Guaranteed express post underway

Minister for Posts and Telecommunications M. Keramat Ali told the Jatiya Sangsad Thursday that the Government had taken a number of steps to improve the postal system in the country, reports BSS.

In a written reply to a question from Abul Hasan Chowdhury (AL-Tangail) he said among the steps were the Guaranteed Express Post (GEP) for quick transport and distribution of postal articles within the country and setting up of Express Mail Service

(MES) with foreign countries. In addition he said that for the convenience of the public Intelpost (Fax service) with foreign countries was in operation and efforts were on to expand its network.

The Post and Telecommunications Minister M Keramat Ali further said that steps had been taken to mechanise the postal service, there was a scheme to expand the postal training centre to increase the skill of the employees, he said.

## Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port					
Name of Vessels	Berthed	ETA	ETA	L. Port No	L. Agent
Mild	11/01	22/01	J/1	Singapore	CSA
Northern Novo	19/01	25/01	J/2	BOM	MSA
Hai Ning	05/01	22/01	J/3	NA	NA
Continent-1	20/01	24/01	J/4	Pena	CLA
Loyal Bird	21/01	25/01	J/5	NA	NA
Este Presco	21/01	25/01	J/6	NA	NA
Elli-M	21/01	27/01	J/7	NA	NA
Knud Jespersen	20/01	23/01	J/8	Singapore	CT
Al Reza	09/01	24/01	J/9	Mong	AQUA
Jonathan	18/01	23/01	J/13	NA	SEACOM
Elli-M	18/01	22/01	MPB/2	Moro	AQUA
Banglar Asha	19/01	24/01	CSJ	NA	BSC
Kang Dong	19/01	24/01	CSJ	Singapore	OSA
Banglar Shourabh	17/01	24/01	RM/6	NA	BSC
Fong Yun	06/01	25/01	DDJ/1	Singapore	BDSHIP
Banglar Sampad	18/01	22/01	DDJ/2	NA	BSC
Piya-1	12/01	22/01	RM/8	Singapore	OSA
Banglar Swapna	05/12	30/01	RM/9	NA	BSC

Vessels Ready at Outer Anchorage			
Name of Vessels	Ready	L. Port	L. Agent
Vishva Pprafulla	18/01	Mad	Ssl
Gemini	25/01	Durb	Aqua
Olga	23/01	Kand	Delmure
Aghion Oros	24/01	Ind	Aqua
Reliant	24/01	NA	NA

Vessels Due at Outer Anchorage			
Name of Vessels	ETA	L. Port Call	L. Agent
Fong Shin	22/01/92	Singapore	BDSHIP
Atlantic clipper	22/01/92	Singapore	BDSHIP
Banglar Kollol	22/01/92	Munda	GLOBE
Ubarana	23/01/92	NA	JF
Ronjoy Choomie	23/01/92	NA	PSAL
Tabuk	23/01/92	Kand	ENCL
Banglar Shobha	24/01/92	NA	BSC
Lilas	24/01/92	NA	PROG
Endurance Sea	24/01/92	Aquaba	UMAL
Songrim	24/01/92	NA	RRSA
Blue Ocean	25/01/92	Cal	TSLL
Optima	25/01/92	Col	RSL
Infinity	25/01/92	Singapore	ULA
Stonewall Jackson	25/01/92	Phuk	ULA
Shalmar	26/01/92	Col	BSC
Vishva Pankaj	27/01/92	NA	SSL
Fong Shan	27/01/92	Tamp	OWSL
Laurissa	28/01/92	Chin	OSA
Eastern Breeze	28/01/92	NA	RRSA
Chong Chon Gang	30/01/92	NA	RRSA
Felicity	30/01/92	Tamp	OWSL
Seabulk Hope	31/01/92	NA	BBA
New Genlord	01/02/92	NA	BDSHIP
Kota Buana	01/02/92	NA	NA

Chalna Port				
Name of Vessel	Berthed	ETA	L. Port	L. Agent
Tea Chong	22/01	NA	Quingca	Bright
Mild	22/01	NA	Chittagong	Overseas
Continent-1	22/01	NA	Chittagong	BSSL
Marine Three	22/01	NA	Chittagong	BML
Stefan Czarecki	21/01	24/01	Calcutta	BBA
Hai Hing	23/01	NA	Chittagong	Triumph
Reliant	23/01	NA	Chittagong	AGT
Shalmar	24/01	31/01	Chittagong	BSC
NOS Ranger	25/01	NA	Chittagong	BSSL
Sulut-1	25/01	NA	W. Sumat	Al-Amin
Royal Bird	25/01	30/01	Chittagong	OWSL
Vishva Prafulla	25/01	NA	Chittagong	SSL
Sea Rhapsody	26/01	NA	Vizag	HIL
Kang Dong	26/01	NA	Chittagong	Overseas
Vishva Parag	27/01	NA	Calcutta	SSL
Sea Carol	28/01	NA	Vizag	HIL
Banglar Bari	28/01	NA	Chittagong	BSSL
Al-Bashir	30/01	NA	India	TMIL
Yom Bun Jin	30/01	NA	DPRK	Greenland
Felicity	05/02	NA	Chittagong	OWSL
Mun Su Bong	05/02	NA	China	Greenland
Gold Future	15/02	NA	Chittagong	AGM

Notes: Berthed= Vessel at Port Jetty. ETA= Expected time of departure. ETA= Expected time of arrival. NA= Not available. ETB= Expected to berth. Source: Aquamarine Limited.

## Price Index

Essentials		SPICES (Taka Per kg)	
RICE (Taka per kg)		Onion	9.00-10.00
Armani(fine)	14.00-15.00	Garlic	36.00-42.00
Fajim	13.00-14.00	Chillies	75.00-80.00
Libbi	13.00-14.00	Turmeric(Round)	40.00-45.00
VEGETABLES (Taka per kg)		(Long)	45.00-50.00
Potato	6.00-7.00	Green chillies	22.00-24.00
Brinjal	22.00-24.00	Ginger	12.00-14.00
Karola	3.00-4.00	Cinnamon* (10gms)	3.00-3.50
Kashish	4.00-5.00	Cardamom (large)	3.00-4.00
Pappi	4.00-5.00	John (50gms)	6.50-7.00
Green Beans (Four Pieces)	4.00-6.00	MILK (Two kg)	
OTHER FOODGRAIN (Taka per kg)		Dano	290.00-292.00
Flour	12.00-13.00	Red-Cow	285.00-286.00
Amo	10.50-11.00	Eaten	NA
FISH (Taka per kg)		MISCELLANEOUS (Taka)	
Rohibig	140.00-150.00	Onion (one kg)	220.00-240.00
Katibig	90.00-100.00	Salt	6.50-7.00
Hilaha	60.00-62.00	Sugar	35.50-37.00
Pragga	90.00-100.00	Molasses	15.00-16.00
Shringibig	74.00-76.00		
Koi	80.00-90.00		
MEAT (Taka per kg)			
Beef	55.00-60.00		
Mutton	80.00-85.00		
CHECKEN (Taka per kg)			
Large	60.00-62.00		
Moderate	62.00-64.00		
Small	66.00-68.00		
TEA (Taka per kg)			
Dust (Plain)	70.00-80.00		
ESG (Special)	12.00		
Hot	10.00		
Fin	12.00		
PULSES (Taka per kg)			
Mashur	28.00-30.00		
Mooch	23.00-24.00		
Kharai	13.00-14.00		
Oil (Taka per litre)			
Mustard	52.00-54.00		
Soyabean	39.00-40.00		
Coconut (Columbo)	90.00-95.00		
Vegetable Ghee	45.00-48.00		

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## Exchange Rates

Currency	SELLING	BUYING
US dollar	38.9326	38.7087
Poundsterling	70.2651	69.9218
DM	24.5013	24.3451
FF	7.1878	7.1425
S Riyal	10.4106	10.3597
D guilders	21.7561	21.6189
S Kroner	6.7398	6.6953
Singapore dollar	23.8660	23.7267
UAE dirham	10.6364	10.5753
Kuwait dinar		