

Commentary

WB's concern should have been our own

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Guest Columnist

World Bank president Lewis T. Preston recently visited Bangladesh. He signalled that unless Bangladesh performs better economically, it will face hardship in future in getting aid. He specifically mentioned Vietnam, Cambodia and former Soviet Republics as other candidates for World Bank's soft loan.

The World Bank president also broke tradition to meet the politicians at the other end, who are not directly in the government but who are often found to be critical about World Bank's policy to LDCs. For the first time, the crymongering politicians heard directly from a chief executive whose organisation in many ways is influencing the direction and level of Bangladesh's development.

One concern the World Bank (WB) has in mind is the proper use of the money it lends to Bangladesh. The second concern is about overall health of our economy, in the face of growing population and poverty despite billions of dollar of aid. The Bank, it seems, now emphasises on two aspects — preventing poverty from further aggravation and stimulating the economy to achieve sustainable growth through various structural reforms and adjustments.

The Bank prescribed withdrawal of subsidies from the state-run enterprises, retrenchment of the excess employees from the public sector, privatisation of public enterprises and tying the wages to productivity — to achieve these objectives, especially the latter. No sane mind will find fault with these prescriptions. The Bank prescribes these when a particular LDC does not do these on their own but turn to it for aid after its tail is further sunk in the mud.

Bangladesh is a typical LDC which miserably failed in her in-house economic management, and very frequently turns to the Bank for soft loans. We must understand that there is a limit to soft loans because all other LDCs also seek the same. Also, soft loan has a cost. First, the loan cannot be used at will by a recipient, and second, the amount of soft loan is always small, not enough to undertake any big economic development programme. Other loans carry interest rates which a country like ours finds hard to pay.

Many poor countries including Bangladesh are investing much less than required amount to attain a targeted growth rate. The result is that year after year these countries are moving around the same level of economic development which is very low and marked by widespread poverty, unemployment and high population growth rate. The WB, at best, can help to break this vicious circle but it itself cannot pull these LDCs from this state of malaise. The poor countries themselves are to put their own efforts together keeping in mind the changing situation of the world.

Very often it is argued that when the western industrialised countries including USA are subsidising their agriculture, what is the logic of withdrawing subsidy from Bangladesh's agriculture sector as the WB prescribes. It is true that the USA and western European countries are subsidising their agriculture, but they do not subsidise many other sectors of the economy like Bangladesh. When a sector or two are singled out as priority sectors, they can be given support

in the form of subsidy, but whole economy, on no pretext, can be subsidised. The problem with Bangladesh is that it wants to subsidise too many sectors and wants to forget that subsidy underwrites inefficiency in many forms.

When public enterprises in industrial sector cannot be run on commercial basis then wherefrom money is to come to keep them going? Critics will say earning by public enterprises is a relative matter, because when imports are restricted they will earn profit and when imports are liberalised earnings will fall. We cannot expect an import-restricted regime always. If import restriction prevails for a long time consumers pay a higher price for what they consume. Whether money is used in public enterprises or private enterprises does really make a lot of difference. Money used in the private sector bring more profit, hence privatisation of public enterprises is advocated.

Many other say that public enterprises offer social benefits like employing more people, reporting truth to the government and keeping the price level stable for products. But if they actually lose monetarily by doing so, the ultimate result will be that social cost will be higher than the social benefits the public enterprises are thought to be rendering.

Our energy sector is in a total mess — 45 per cent of the total electricity produced are lost through system loss, which is nothing but a collusive product of corruption and inefficiency. In our neighbourhood, the loss is no more than 25 per cent. The WB kept credit to this sector suspended for about two years as a result of such inefficiency. Government formed the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) to pacify the WB with a much drum beat, but any one who believes that DESA will be able to reduce the system loss will be only fooling himself.

DESA itself is a public enterprise, how can then it be expected to rectify the inefficiency prevailing in the PDB which is another public enterprise? The important step would have been allowing an organisation for the distribution purpose in the private sector, or at least, having a public-private joint collaborative project.

True, we are facing additional problems because of the suspension, but it is more true that unless we do something seriously about this sector, money will be simply misused in the present framework. The production of electricity in the private sector also can be considered. Production of energy through private sector-based small generators is found to be cost efficient. Bangladesh should consider a switch to private sector-based system both for production and distribution purposes.

The energy sector, it seems, is hostage to militant trade unionists. They are dictating almost every aspect of energy management. It is the government which is to face them politically. If it cannot face them, it will be no use to take the issue to the WB and say that but we are helpless because of the labour unions. The WB should also see whether a government is governing or being governed, no matter how democratic it claims to be.

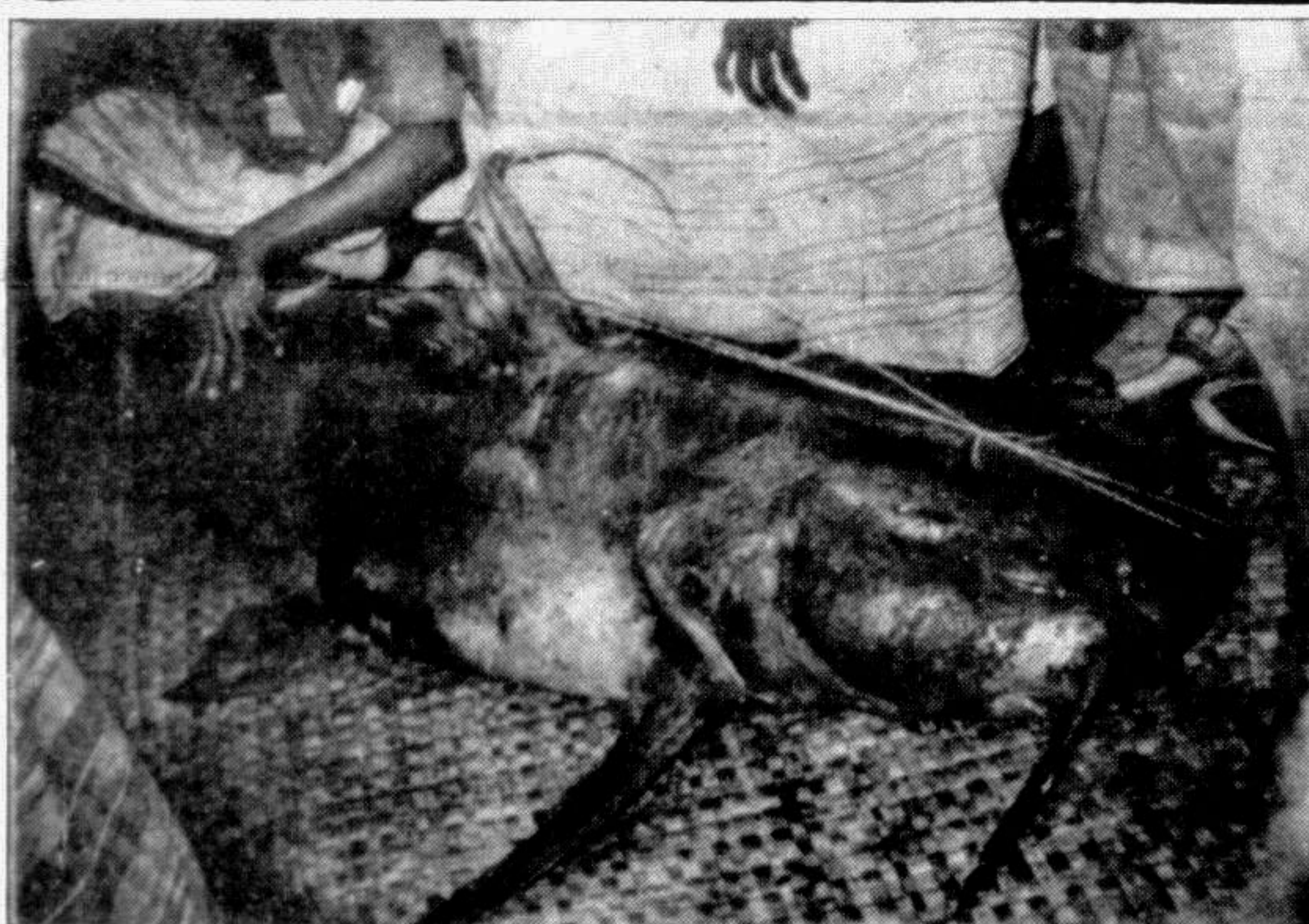
DPRK keen to help develop mineral resources

North Korea is eager to co-operate in exploration and development of Bangladesh's mineral resources like coal, hardrock and limestone, reports UNB.

This was stated Saturday by outgoing Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kang Dal Son when he called on Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain at the latter's office.

The Minister appreciated the valuable contribution of Ambassador Kang in promoting the friendly relations between the two countries. He hoped that the existing relations would further be strengthened in days to come.

The North Korean ambassador thanked the Minister and the Bangladesh government for giving all-out cooperation in discharging his duties during his tenure.



MAULVIBAZAR: A 'tiger fish' weighing about 280 kg was brought at the local market recently. The fish was sold at Taka 15,000.

People of Rangpur hit hard by shortfall in fish production

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, Dec 4: The people of the district have been facing acute shortage of fish as the production has drastically fallen.

According to a Fishery Department survey, the annual consumption of fish in the district is roughly eight thousand metric tons whereas only three to four thousand metric tons are available meeting below 50 per cent of consumer's demands.

The causes of such shortfall in fish production include siltation of rivers, ponds and spread of diseases. According to the Fishery Department officials, fish production — is seriously affected as silts fill

up most of the project sites in pond, beels and rivers. Siltation occurs mostly during rainy seasons in the ponds and beels but siltation in rivers occurs round the year.

There are 47 rivers and tributaries, 170 beels out of which 118 are owned by the government and about 12,500 ponds and tanks belonging to private and public ownership in the district.

The enlisted number of pisciculturists in the district are estimated to be 2,670 while the actual number may exceed 30 thousand.

Government's tough policy towards disbursing loans for these pisciculture projects is

another cause for low output.

During the current fiscal year, a known figure of 318 fishermen had applied for loans. Following thorough revisions only 152 were named as loan recipients.

In spite of directions to disburse loans, the branches of the banks failed to act accordingly causing harassment to the recipients.

Only 22 fishermen received a total amount of Taka 2,75,000.00 out of Taka 46,14,518.00 allocated for development of the pisciculture projects in the district. Banks however, showed cause of non-availability of fund for the recipients.

Concerted Govt-NGO activities on development stressed

Commerce Minister MK Anwar on Saturday said that the programmes of the voluntary and non-government organisations (NGOs) should be broadly constituted in conformity with government's development activities, reports BSS.

He was addressing the opening session of a seminar on "voluntarism and sustainable development" organised by International Voluntary Services Organisation (IVS) as chief guest at Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC) auditorium in Dhaka on Saturday.

Presided over by Dr Quazi Faruque Ahmed, Chairperson of ADAS and Executive Director of Proshika, the ses-

sion was addressed, among others, by Abdur Rab Chowdhury MP, Linda Worthington, Executive Director, IVS, Mary Kilgour, Mission Director, USAID in Dhaka, F R Chowdhury, Director General NGO Affairs Bureau and Abdul Matin, Country Director, IVS in Bangladesh.

Dr A T Ariyaratna, President, Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka was the key note speaker in the seminar.

Commerce Minister said that the services rendered by the voluntary organisations must be cost effective and the

models developed by them must be applicable in respect of cost and management skills of the implementing agency. He also said that equitable geographical distribution of development activities must be ensured for just and balanced development of the country.

Anwar said participation of the people for whom the development programmes are designed must be ensured for sustainable development. "If we fail to involve the local people in the development activities, all attempts made by the government or non-government organisations will be fruitless and frustrated," he added.

Shipping Intelligence

CHITTAGONG PORT

Berth Position and Performance of Vessels As On 05-12-92									
Berth No	Name of Vessels	Cargo	L. Port	Local Agent	Date of Leaving				
J/1	Scandinavian	GI	Mad	SSL	3/12				
J/2	Express	Wheat (P)	P Land	Royal	22/11	12/12			
J/3	Supreme	GI	Sing	CLA	30/11	5/12			
J/4	Continent-1	GI	Sing	TSL	25/11	7/12			
J/6	Bi Ryu Gang	Sugar	Bank		30/11	10/12			
J/7	Damon	Wheat (P)	Mers	Royal	8/11	12/12			
J/10	Endurance Sea	Repair	Aqaba	EOSL	25/11	15/12			
J/11	Soarer Bellona	Wheat (P)	Sing	OWSL	16/11	10/12			
J/12	You Yue	Wheat (P)	USA	Royal	23/11	11/12			
CGJ	Thai Binh	C Clink	Aqaba	UMAL	R/A	6/12			
CSJ	Banglar Robi	Wheat		BSC	R/A				
TSP	Aetos	R Phos	Jedda	SSST	1/12	9/12			
RM/3	Bunga Kesumba	Cdso	Damam	TSL	2/12	5/12			
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil		BSC	R/A	5/12			
DD	Banglar Kiron	Repair		BSC	R/A	9/12			
DD/1	S E Haider	Cemebt	Kara	ASLL	R/A	10/12			
RM/8	Safer	Repair	Col	ASLL	19/11	6/12			
RM/9	Banglar Asha	Repair		BSC	R/A	8/12			
CURJ	Banglar Doot	Urea	Mong	BSC	28/11	6/12			
KAPCO	M T Lori	P Cargo	Sing	ILA	4/12	6/12			

VESSELS DUE AT OUTER ANCHORAGE

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Vishva Yash	6/12		SSL		Ilyiche
Sea Progress	6/12		AML	Cement	
Al Reza	6/12	Mong	KSL		Sudan
Shenton	7/12	Sing	OMNI	Cont	Sing
Al Swamuz	7/12		ASLL	GI	
Ahler Breeze	7/12	Visa	RSL	Cont	Sing
Fong Shin	7/12	Sing	BDSHIP	Cont	Sing
Dekhoda	7/12	Hazira	SSL	H B Iron	
Pratapgad	8/12	Rang	HSL	Logs	
Knud Jespersen	9/12	Sing	CT	Cont	Sing
NGS Ranger	9/12	Sing	BDSHIP	Cont	Sing
Al Fesari	10/12		RRSA	Cement	
Banglar Kallol	10/12	Male	BSC	GI	
Vishva Parag	10/12	Mong	SSL	E/L Dundee. Ant	
Banglar Baari	10/12	Pena	Cross	Sugar (P)	
Bharatendu	10/12		SSL	GI	
Komsomole's Rossil	7/12		Sunbeam	GI (Copro)	
Anteliki-II	11/12		KSL		
Silver Lake	11/12		PROG	GI	
Optima	11/12	Sing	RSL	Cont	Sing
Kiukiang Carrier	13/12	Lapa	ANCIENT	Wheat (G)	
Norman Prince	13/12		BSL	Wheat (G)	
Lena	15/12	Bank	PROG	Const. Materials	
I Yamburenko	15/12		CT	Cont.	Sing

TANKER DUE

Chilham Castle	9/12	MSPL	SKO
Seaborn	9/12	ECSL	Furnace Oil

VESSELS AT KUTUBDIA

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local Agent	Date of Arrival
T T Energy		Col	ARL	27/4
Aspiros	C Oil	Jebel	DSL	30/11
Banglar Shourabh	C Oil		BSC	R/A

VESSELS AT OUTER ANCHORAGE

READY ON					
Tanary Star	Urea	Mong	PSAL	28/11	
Trans Asia	GI	Bank	BOAL	1/12	
Kota Berant	Sugar (P)	Bang	OWSL	2/12	
ESSO Bangkok	HSD/JF-1	Sing	MSPL	2/12	
Hafez (E/L)	EL	Mong	SSL	4/12	
Kota Buana	Cont	Sing	CTS	4/12	

VESSELS NOT READY:

Scavenus	Wheat	L. Pall	Ancient	2/12
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VESSELS AWAITING INSTRUCTION

Artemis-1	Cement		Bright	R/A (21/11)
Samudra Raj	GI	Kara	SSL	R/A (30/11)

VESSELS NOT ENTERING

OLGA-1	Cement	Pada	USTC	1/12
Relay Choomie	Cement	Sing	PSAL	30/11
Sea Destiny	Cement	Pada	AML	5/12

MOVEMENT OF VESSELS FOR 6/12/92:

OUTGOING			INCOMING		
CGJ	Thai Binh		DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	
RM/6	E Bangkok		J/13	Vishva Yash	
CURJ	Banglar Shourabh		J/5	Kota Berant	
	Banglar Doot		CURJ	Tanary Star	

We above were the Saturday's Shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

Price Index

Essentials			Small	75.00-76.00
RICE	(Taka per kg)		TEA	
Aman(fine)	13.50-15.00		Dust (Plain)	80.00-90.00
Pajon	11.50-12.00		EGG	(4 pos)
VEGETABLES	(Taka per kg)		Hon	11.00-11.50
Potato (local)	9.00-9.50		Duck	11.00-12.00
Brinjal	6.00-8.00		Fam	11.00-12.00
Karolla	11.00-12.00		PULSES	(Taka per kg)
Laishak	4.00-5.00		Mashur	29.00-31.00
Tomato	30.00-35.00		Moogh	34.00-35.00
Cauliflower	6.00-10.00		Chola	23.00-24.00
Gourd	10.00-15.00		Khasari	16.00-18.00
OTHER FOODGRAN	(Taka per kg)		FRUITS	(One piece)
Flour	13.00-13.50		Green Coconut (Small)	4.50-5.00
Atta	10.50-11.00		Coconut (Large)	9.00-10.00
PSH	(Taka per kg)		Banana	(One piece)
Rauhi(big)	150.00-170.00		Sagar (Large)	12.00-14.00
Kail(big)	110.00-130.00		Champa	3.00-4.00
Haba	45.00-50.00			(Taka per kg)
Pong	125.00-140.00		Dans	55.00-60.00
Shrimp(big)	120.00-140.00		OIL	(Taka per litre)
Sing	125.00-130.00		Mustard	54.00-56.00
Koi	140.00-150.00		Soybean	36.00-38.00
MEAT			Coconut (Colombo)	90.00-95.00
Beef	NA		Vegetable Ghoe (1kg)	48.00-52.00
Mutton	NA		SPICES	(Taka per kg)
CHICKEN			Onion (local)	10.00-11.00
Large	64.00-66.00			
Moderate	68.00-70.00			

Source: Department of Agriculture marketing

Exchange Rates

The following are the Commercial Bank's BC selling and TT (C) OD transfer buying rates for some selected foreign currencies effective on December 5, (Figures in Taka).

Currency	Selling B.C.	T.T. (C)	Buying OD Transfers
US Dollar	39.1326	38.9087	38.6339
Poundsterling	60.7272	60.4091	59.0054
DM	24.8698	24.7118	24.5372
FE	7.2968	7.2483	7.1971
S Riyal	10.4641	10.4042	10.3307
D Ouliders	21.0689	21.0689	21.8174
S Kroner	5.7650	5.7151	5.6748
Singapore Dollar	23.9343	23.7974	23.6293
UAE Dirham	10.6911	10.6299	10.5548
Kuwait Dinar	131.3606	130.6087	129.6853
Indian Rupee (AMU)	1.5104	1.5035	1.4960
Pak Rupee (AMU)	1.5225	1.5156	1.5081

Authorised dealers will apply T T clean buying rate for purchase of remittances of Bangladeshis working abroad. Note: AMU—Asian Monetary Union.

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on December 5, 1992

Trading opens with bullish note

The week's trading on the floor of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) opened with a bullish note on Saturday. Both the turnovers made a record gain. Value showed an increase of 220.377 per cent from Taka 762720 to Taka 2443577.50. Volume reached 39613 from 15653, a rise of 153.070 per cent.

Thirty-two stocks were traded on the day against Thursday's 24. Losers took control on the floor leading by 15 to 10 while seven shares were traded at their previous rates.

The DSE index continued to decline, it dropped from 368.6890 to 368.6390, a little fall of 0.050 point.

DAY'S TRADING AT A GLANCE

DSE Share Price Index	368.6390
Market Capitalisation Tk	10,538,293,483
Turnover in Volume	39613
Turnover in Value Tk	2443577.50

Company	Previous Price Tk	Closing Price Tk	Change (Absolute)	Change (% over shares/debentures)	Number of shares/debentures sold
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Gains (10)

Shares:					
Ashraf Textile	33.50	34.00	0.500	1.493	700
Karim Pipe	100.00	101.00	1.000	1.000	100
B Thai Aluminium	78.00	78.70	0.700	0.898	100
Eastern Cable	76.50	77.00	0.500	0.654	50
Rahman Chemicals	34.84	35.05	0.200	0.574	50
Kohinoor Chemicals	77.00	77.38	0.380	0.494	200
GQ Ball Pen	84.00	84.20	0.200	0.238	300
Satham Textile	79.50	79.60	0.100	0.126	490
IFIC	178.89	179.00	0.110	0.062	50

Debtenture:

Bexim
