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# The Daily Star BUSINESS

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DHAKA TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1993

## Pepsico cancels contract with Michael Jackson

WASHINGTON, Nov 15: Pepsico Incorporated, sponsor of Michael Jackson's world tour "dangerous," has cancelled its multi-million dollar contract with the US pop star after he abandoned the tour to seek treatment for addiction to painkillers, reports AFP.

"The cancellation really effectively cancels our relationship with Michael right now," Pepsico spokesman Gary Hemphill was quoted as saying in Monday's edition of the Washington Post.

"We just hope he is able to resolve his problems," Jackson, who is believed to be in Europe but whose exact whereabouts are unknown, announced Friday he had become dependent on painkillers that he has taken since undergoing a scalp operation.

Jackson sustained scalp burns several years ago while shooting a commercial for Pepsi.

He signed his first contract with Pepsi in 1984 for six million dollars, a record for an agreement between a company and a pop star.

Pepsico, an affiliate of Pepsi-Cola, has since then sponsored three Jackson tours, paying him fees estimated at 20 million dollars.

## Activist groups to stage protest during APEC meet in Seattle

SEATTLE, Nov 15: Dozens of activist groups hope to grab at least some of the spotlight this week when world media attention focuses on a summit of the 15-nation Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, reports Reuters.

AIDS activists, environmental activists and supporters of Tibetan rights will stage protest marches, rallies and candlelight vigils in an effort to catch the attention of some 2,500 story-hungry reporters, photographers and television camera operators.

David Ortman of the Seattle citizen's host committee, an umbrella group coordinating many of the demonstrations, said the groups hope to remain the public and government leaders that trade agreements must not ignore human rights, environmental concerns and other social issues.

He said the protests should be more appealing to idle journalists than the "usual chamber of commerce boxed lunch, dog and pony show."

## Riyadh lifts ban on imports of S African goods

RIYADH, Nov 15: Saudi Arabia has decided to lift a ban on imports of South African goods, Saudi Commerce Minister Salim Al-Salim said Sunday, reports AFP.

"The establishment of commercial ties with South Africa is now no more than a formality, and Saudi customs will be instructed to allow traders to import from South Africa," Salim told reporters.

Saudi and South African officials are already negotiating the sale of Saudi oil to South Africa and the opening of an air route between the two countries.

Several South African business delegations have already visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain.

# Natural gas in Bangladesh: How much for how long?

By Dr Badrul Imam

Natural gas meets about 68 per cent of the country's primary commercial energy requirements — the rest being met by imported oil (25 per cent), imported coal (3 per cent) and hydroelectricity (4 per cent). The imported oil bill of the country is presently running at about Taka 1400 crore per year and there is a growing need for further replacing the imported oil by indigenous natural gas available in the country.

Until now 17 gas fields have been discovered in Bangladesh although gas is being produced from only five of the fields with an average total production of 650 million cubic feet of gas per day (MMCFD). The produced gas is being utilised in different sectors in the following ratio: electricity generation — 43 per cent, fertilizer production — 34 per cent, industry — 16 per cent, commercial — 2 per cent and domestic — 5 per cent.

The demand of natural gas in the country is increasing at a rate of 13.4 per cent per year and is expected to reach an average of about 1000 MMCFD in 1996 and about 1900 MMCFD by the year 2000.

Taking the above demand of natural gas in the coming years the forecast follows that the present gas reserve of the country will be consumed by the year 2010. This estimation is based on the total estimated reserve of 21.30 trillion cubic feet of gas in the 17 gas fields with a recoverable reserve of 12.43 trillion cubic feet (Table 1). From the above recoverable reserve, a cumulative production of 1.876 trillion cubic feet of gas till December 1992 from eight gas fields, namely Titas, Habiganj, Bakhrabad, Sylhet, Kailashtila, Chhataak, Feni and Kamta, has left a remaining recoverable reserve of 10.554 trillion cubic feet (Table 2). It is not very difficult to envisage that should there be no significant new oil or gas discovery in the near future, the country is likely to be plunged into a period of serious energy crisis well in the first decade of the next century.

From the data shown in Table 1, as presented in the recently held Petroleum Investment Round Table Conference in Houston, USA, hosted by Bangladesh and participated by many international oil companies, it appears that more than 80 per cent of the total gas reserve of the country is housed within only seven gas fields (fields with estimated total reserve in excess of one trillion cubic feet), the rest are being only small in size. The total reserves that have been shown for the gas fields are actually referred to what are technically termed as "Proved and Probable Reserve". There is, therefore, always a degree of uncertainty as to the absolute reserves. How much accurate are these gas reserve data depend on how much certainties are there in the values of parameters required for the reserve calculations, i.e. areal extent of the gas horizon, gas saturation in the reservoir rock, net thickness of the gas column, porosity of the reservoir — to mention some of the important ones.

The areal extent of the gas horizon in a field, for example, could never be known with a satisfactory degree of confidence with the discovery well. Drilling of appraisal wells is a basic requirement for the above and is an standard practice before the development programme of the field is undertaken.

So those fields whose reserve estimates are based on only one or a couple of well will have certain degree of uncertainties in their calculated reserves. In the volumetric method of reserve calculation, dealing with such uncertain parameters is an accepted method of working; however in a later stage of field development where enough pressure data from the produced gas

is available, the Material Balance method of reserve calculation could probably give a more accurate picture of the reserve.

How much gas is there in the Chhataak gas field (for example)? The field discovered in 1959 and located about 23 miles north-west of the Sylhet town, has an estimated total reserve of 1.90 trillion cubic feet of gas with a recoverable reserve of about 1.14 trillion cubic feet of gas, according to the Petrobrangia data (Table 1). Gas production at this field started in 1960 and continued till 1985 when the production was suspended after a cumulative production of 0.026 trillion cubic feet of gas, leaving a remaining recoverable reserve of 1.13 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Chhataak stands fifth as to the size of the gas reserve among the 17 gas fields discovered in the country, according to the above data. However, there has been only one well drilled in Chhataak field (Titas field has ten and Bakhrabad has eight

Field	Total Reserve (Trillion cubic feet)	Recoverable Reserve (Trillion cubic feet)
Reserves estimated by IKM (Canada):		
1. Titas	4.13	2.10
2. Habiganj	3.66	1.90
3. Kailashtila	3.65	2.33
4. Rashidpur	2.24	1.31
5. Bakhrabad	1.43	0.86
6. Bearbazar	0.24	0.11
7. Belabo	0.19	0.13
8. Meghna	0.16	0.10
Reserves estimated by Petrobrangia/Bapex/others:		
9. Chhataak	1.90	1.14
10. Jalalabad	1.50	0.90
11. Kutubdia	0.78	0.47
12. Sylhet	0.44	0.27
13. Fenchuganj	0.35	0.21
14. Kamta	0.32	0.20
15. Semutang	0.16	0.10
16. Feni	0.13	0.08
17. Beganganj	0.02	0.02
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.30</b>	<b>12.43</b>

Field	Cumulative Production till Dec. 1992 (Trillion cubic feet)	Production suspended
1. Titas	0.959	
2. Habiganj	0.349	
3. Bakhrabad	0.304	
4. Sylhet	0.151	Production suspended
5. Kailashtila	0.058	Production suspended
6. Chhataak	0.026	Production suspended
7. Kamta	0.021	Production suspended
8. Feni	0.008	
<b>Total Production</b>	<b>1.876</b>	<b>TCF</b>
<b>Total Original Recoverable Reserve</b>	<b>12.43</b>	<b>TCF</b>
<b>(in 17 fields)</b>		
<b>Total Remaining Reserve</b>	<b>10.554</b>	<b>TCF</b>
<b>(in 17 fields)</b>		

## Sales at Parjatan's duty free shop slump

Sales at the duty-free shop of Parjatan Corporation came down to a record low under a tax-load imposed on its wage-earner passengers, reports UNB.

Officials sources said sales proceed in the shop, which was on an average 5 to 6 lakh US dollars every month till February this year, fell to 20-25 thousand dollars with the withdrawal of wage-earner passengers' benefit and rise in customs duty and tariff value.

With the slump in the trading of electronic items at the duty-free shop, the government is also deprived of huge foreign exchange, they said.

The government in February withdrew 30 per cent rebate for the expatriate Bangladeshis and increased tax to 60 per cent, which made an electronic item dearer than one bought in open market.

Again, on October 28, there was rise in tariff value, raising the brows of the staff. "I am afraid, we may have to fold up soon in absence of buyers," said one of them.

An official of the PBC told UNB on condition of anonymity that "it is a planned move to privatise the duty-free shop."

The shop at Mohakhali, which was opened in late 1986, made a huge contribution to the earning of the corporation, he said.

"If a passenger can buy an electronic item at much lesser price from Baitul Mukarram market, and also pay in local currency, then why will he come to the duty-free shop?" Questioned a source at the corporation.

In 1992-93, tax on a coloured 21-inch 'Sony' television set was Tk 7,632. With the withdrawal of 30 per cent benefit for the wage earners in last February, tax went up to Tk 13,359, and with the increase in tariff value last month, payable total tax rose Tk 15,364. The price of a TV set is 510 US dollars.

The total price of a TV set after paying all taxes now comes around Tk 35,764 in local currency, while it sells at Tk 30 to 32 thousand in open market.

The price of a VCR in the duty-free shop is 350 dollars when the tax is Tk 15,080, up from Tk 8,889 until February this year.

When a VCR is available at Tk 8-10 thousand in open market, the duty-free shop is selling it at Tk 15,000. The tax for a VCP which was Tk 4,594 in February has now been fixed at Tk 7,800.

## State Minister for Finance tells Daily Star Women should be brought in mainstream dev process

By Staff Correspondent

Women should be brought in the mainstream of country's development process for reaching the target of economic development.

This was observed by the State Minister for Finance, Mojibur Rahman while talking to The Daily Star recently.

"The country has a fine macro-economic environment and the women should not lag behind. Rather they should engage themselves in economic activities to push up the GDP to the desired level," he said.

"It is in this context that the government has been attaching importance to women resource development," the State Minister added.

Talking about the Nationalised Commercial Banks (NCBs), Rahman ruled out any idea of immediate privatisation or downsizing the NCBs. "We would rather see some new private banks to come into the market," the State Minister informed The Daily Star that these banks would render their services in a competitive way.

He also observed that the

size of the economy right now demands new banks to emerge.

On the issue of bad debts of the commercial banks, Mojibur Rahman said, "we are taking



Mojibur Rahman

positive steps to solving the problem." The rehabilitation of the inoperative industrial units, he pointed out, is a step towards that goal. "We are trying to rehabilitate the viable units so that they can repay their loans which otherwise would have become bad debts beyond

recovery." Those units which have no chance of becoming viable no matter what actions would be taken against for recovery of the loans.

He also mentioned that after coming to power the present government has got decrees in more than 600 cases.

When asked about the dollar dominated bonds as announced earlier the State Minister said the idea is still in the offing and it will take some time to introduce this.

Dispelling the reported low investment rate in the country, Rahman said during 1992-93, the Board of Investment sanctioned 600 large industries of which 54 were in joint ventures.

He said 26 of these industries are now ready to go into production while 170 units have gone into partial production. Eighty units are under construction and 189 units are likely to be completed soon.

"These indications are quite positive," the State Minister said, "we would certainly be able to achieve our goals in attaining the vibrant economy."

## Ctg Port cargo sheds trigger congestion, space crisis

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Nov 15: Shipping MK Anwar at a recent meeting here with port and customs officials ordered them to sort out the problem to make the port sheds congestion-free.

Port officials say, "We have been facing a chronic problem for dumping of several thousands of either undelivered or unclaimed PCL (Full Container Load) container cargo at the sheds."

The cumbersome auction procedure followed by customs causes the delay to clear off these unclaimed cargoes from port sheds and until unless measures are taken to speed up the auctioning of those cargoes, the problem cannot be solved," they opined.

Custom sources, however, said efforts are underway to simplify the existing auction procedures soon. The problem has already been taken up with the higher authority for active consideration.

Presently, around four thousand such containers remained heaped up at port sheds waiting for auctions, they also informed.

The Minister's order came following complaints raised in the meeting by the port users.

According to port officials, the container cargoes which cross 75 days at the sheds since the unloading date from the ships and are left over by the importers either following a dispute with customs or any other reason, are normally declared unclaimed or undelivered ones.

At least 15 to 20 containers with imported cargoes are listed daily as unclaimed and those are handed over to the customs here by papers for disposal through auction, port officials informed.

Presently, around four thousand such containers remained heaped up at port sheds waiting for auctions, they also informed.

## Stocks tumble, US dollar closes lower in Tokyo

TOKYO, Nov 15: Share prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange tumbled in light trading Monday, while the US dollar closed lower against the Japanese yen, reports AP.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average fell 446.95 points, or 2.27 per cent, closing at 18,046.60. The index rose 335.03 points, or 1.85 per cent, on Friday.

The Tokyo Stock Price Index of all issues listed on the first section was down 28.54 points, or 1.86 per cent, to 1,537.53. On Friday, the TOPIX gained 31.49 points, or 2.05 per cent.

Monday's losses reversed Friday's single-day upturn, which came in a technical reaction to three straight weeks of declines. Dealers said the Finance Ministry fueled the turnaround by urging dealers to buy.

Toshio Sumitani, an analyst with Tokyo Securities, said there were few buyers Monday and that many dumped holdings they had bought on Friday.

An estimated 280 million shares changed hands on the first section, down from Friday's 438 million shares. Meanwhile, the dollar closed at 105.79 yen, down 0.68 yen from Friday's close but just above its finish in New York Friday at 105.75 yen.

## Four-day IJO meet begins

A four-day ninth and final meeting of the Coordinating Committee on Jute (CCJ) project began here yesterday with the objective of increasing the productivity and quality of jute to meet new international market demands, reports UNB.

Inaugurating the meeting as chief guest Dr S D Chowdhury said the project had succeeded in developing an effective infrastructure and necessary resources, for the development of improved jute varieties in the major producing countries.

IJO Germplasm Project was launched in September 1987 with the participation of Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand.

Scientists of the six countries will compile and analyse the results of regional research on Jute Germplasm evaluation and utilisation and develop a core list of elite lines for the upgrading of jute breeding programmes, says a press release.

Shamsul Haque Chishty, IJO Executive Director, informed the meeting that the International Jute Organisation, was actively seeking funds to implement a follow-up project.

## Nat'l silk conf meet at Rajshahi Nov 18

RAJSHAHI, Nov 15: A two-day national silk conference organised by Ministry of Textiles will be held at Rajshahi Zila Parishad auditorium on November 18 and 19, reports BSS.

Several papers relating to development of silk including plant cultivation, cocoon culture and silk yarn and cloth manufacture will be presented at different sessions of the conference.

A sericulture exhibition will also be held on the occasion.

## Indo-British Bombay trade week begins

NEW DELHI, Nov 15: The Indo-British Bombay Week' aimed at further promoting bilateral trade between the two countries began yesterday in India's southwestern port city of Bombay, reports Xinhua.

Under the auspices of the Indo-British partnership initiative, the week is being held to provide Indian and British business persons an opportunity to conclude agreements and jointly address several impediments in the way of healthy trade relations between the two countries.

Billed as the largest ever British trade team to tour India, a 300-member delegation with representatives from 120 small and medium sector companies of the kingdom is arriving at the city.

Frank Hunt, the head of the Asia desk of the India department of trade and industry told reporters that the focus during the week would be on the areas of power generation and transmission, food processing technology, financial and legal services and telecommunication and manufacturing technology.

Contracts worth nearly two billion pound in sterling would be signed between the two countries, businessmen tomorrow which would be the highlight of the week.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd would also pay a two-day visit to India starting from today to show the British government's support for the Indo-British partnership initiative, which was set up by the prime ministers of both countries during John Major's visit last January.



## New GM of Sonargaon Hotel

Richard Vrijmoet joins the Sonargaon Hotel as the new General Manager, says a press release.

A hotel executive with 30 years of experience, Vrijmoet received his training in the hotel business in the Netherlands. He started his career in London as an Assistant Restaurant Manager. From there he had the opportunity to serve in different leading hotels in France, USA, Canada, the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia in different positions.

## RHD Notice Inviting Tender

No. 23/SRD/1993-94

- Tender Notice No. : 23/SRD/1993-94.
- Name of work : Tender for earth work at different KM on Sylhet-Sunamganj Road under Sunamganj Road Division during the year 1993-94 Ch. 168 Maint. (93-Flood-Midterm-1st phase) (In 3 (Three) Groups).
- Name of the Offices of availability of tender : Undersigned/Executive Engineer (RHD) Road Division, Sylhet/M. Bazar/Hobigonj/Planning & Design Division, Comilla.
- Name of the Officer to receive tender : Undersigned/Superintending Engineer (RHD), Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet.
- Last date of selling tender : 5:00 PM of 20-11-93.
- Last date of receiving tender : Up to 12:30 PM of 21-11-93.
- Date & time of opening tender : At 12:45 PM of 21-11-93.
- Group list of work :

Gr No.	Name & location of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Time allowed	Eligibility of contractor
1. (One)	At 55th (P) & 56 (P) KM of Sylhet-Sunamganj Road.	Tk. 230440/=	Tk. 4610/=	25 (Twenty Five) days.	"A" to "E" class contractor of general category of RHD.
2. (Two)	At 57th (P) of Sylhet-Sunamganj Road	Tk. 323006/=	Tk. 6460/=	-Do-	-Do-
3. (Three)	At 58th (P) of Sylhet-Sunamganj Road	Tk. 376442/=	Tk. 7535/=	-Do-	-Do-

Engr Md Abdul Matin Molla  
Executive Engineer (RHD)  
Sunamganj Road Division