The Baily Star

Best with the views

## Quality products can help establish country's image in global markets sions that are held about the

Consumers in international markets have many products from which to choose. As more countries gain industrial competence, the number of products vying for consumers' attention and patronage is expected to grow.

in this context, the image of a country can be crucial in determining how its products will fare in overseas markets. Some countries - notably Japan, USA, and Germanycommand a large share of the global market. They also command a large share of he consumers' hearts and minds since their products evoke positive images. Other countries do not have such advantages. While a few of them are beginning to be recognized as important if not major players, the remaining countries and their products may find success in overseas markets difficult and elusive.

Gaining an understanding of the effects of country image is important because it has been shown to affect consumers' product choice behaviours. In particular, countries with a poor image have found exchange difficult to achieve in international markets. The image hurdle may be especially difficult for Bangladesh to surmount. The country's continued dependence on concessions from other countries

perpetuates a poor image: increases dependence and stifles its ability to create favourable impressions in overseas markets. Without a positive image, products from . Bangladesh stand a slim chance in the competitive dynamics of global

markets. The images that products from Bangladesh evoke relative to products from other countries was studied in the United States. The results of our study indicated that products from USA, Germany, and Japan were categorised by the respondents into one cluster while products from Bangladesh. India, Indonesia, and Thailand were categorized into another cluster. A third category of countries included Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea. These results suggest that the impressions consumers have about products from Bangladesh are similar to their impressions of products from other developing countries. Specifically, products from Bangladesh are likely to be associate with the nature and quality of products as well as with the technological, economic, and other relevant characteristics of developing countries. This act of categorizing products from different countries is termed the coun-

try-category effect. The study also indicated

that country-category effects are fairly stable across different product classes: a similar clustering of countries was found for different products. In this regard, several decades of psychological research suggests that people have strong preconceptions regarding a typical category. These preconceptions are very stable and may be difficult to change When using country-of-origin information to assess a product, what may be most threatening is that even if Bangladeshi products improve significantly, the perceptions of overseas customers may not change much. These prior impressions could be so strong that they could easily override new information about any quality gains that may have been made by Bangladeshi products. Such impressions can serve as significant obstacles to Bangladesh's desire to

The study also examine how products from Bangladesh were evaluated relative to products from other countries. Products from USA, Japan, and Germany were seen as highest in overall reliability, quality, and level of skills. German products were consistently rated as expensive. The evaluations regarding Bangladeshi

persuade potential customers

in overseas markets to buy its

products.

products were rather dismal. can position itself as an effec-On six bi-polar rating scales, they were rated as unreliable. cheap, unattractive, non-Ceramics, and Tea are potendurable, poor quality, an unskillfully made. This is not to say that all products from Bangladesh are actually poor on these dimensions. The real problem for the country seems to lie in the minds of its over seas customers. Thus, exporters from Bangladesh have to meet the challenge of creating in the minds of their target customers the perception that they are producers of quality products. While the challenge is daunting, it is not insurmountable. In this regard, the case of Japan is exemplary. For example, its products were associated with very poor quality in the past. According to sevin place in the country. It is eral researchers, it took Japan over three decades to overimportant to choose that tech nology in which Bangladesh come the negative impressions its products once evoked. For has the best chance of moving rapidly down the learning

are proposed here. First, it is important for Bangladesh to select those products for export where there exists substantial experience or where the experience can be acquired quickly. The country should, thus, choose

Bangladesh to market products

in ways that evoke favourable

and lasting impressions, sev-

eral strategy considerations

Dr Syed Saad Andaleeb specialised niches in which it tive and efficient producer. Jute, Leather, Garments, tial sectors where significant experience exists. Through vertical and horizontal integra tion, attempts must be made to gain scale efficiencies. An alternative seenario calls for concentrating on producing a specific set of simple basic products that have worldwide demand. In these product cat egories, it is possible to ac quire the needed skills rapidly and to offer them at competi overseas markets. tive prices. Certain service Third, it is imperative for sectors such as computer software development, ship repair, banking, etc. also de serve a hard look since the requisite skills may already be

> internationally Second, it is important to focus on a long-term perspec tive and work toward establi shing a reputation for manufacturing quality products. Since negative images are not dispelled in a short time, the long-term perspective is essential. Product quality must

curve to be able to compete

play a pivotal role in this strategic perspective. Its importance is reflected in the enormous and burgeoning lit erature that addresses such issues as TQM (Total Quality Management). CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) or Kalzen (in Japan) Instilling qua lity in all products targeted by exporters for international markets must receive the highest priority and the facili tating agencies in the country must ensure that only quality products leave the country. Only then will it be possible to bury the negative images of the past and establish a destrable reputation in the long run in

exporters to build partner ships with facilitators of exchange both within and out side the country. For example, the adversarial relationships that currently exist between exporters and the govern ment's facilitating agencies IE G. customs, power sector. commerce ministry, tax offi cials, etc.) must be addressed Such relationships can create an environment of conflict and frustration that saps the will of both parties to work toward mutual goals For exporters, it destroys their creative and entrepreneurial spirit. For export facilitators, conflict leads to the exercise of power in

misdirected ways. Such rela tionships also lead to lost opportunities in the fast-moving dynamics of the international markets. Exporters and export facilitators within the country must see themselves as a team working jointly toward establishing a credible reputation and creating marketing opportunities overseas. The role of MITI in enhancing the ability of Japanese exporters to ex pioit opportunities rapidly in the global market is exem-Exporters also need to de-

velop strong partnership rela tions with the international facilitating agencies (e.g., distributors, agents, buyers of retail establishments, etc). Such partnership arrangements can lead to reduce costs and access to specific markets that can otherwise be difficult to each For example, South Korea allows some or all of the functions of organizing exports activities to be carried out by overseas firms.

A fourth solution lies in a more global perspective Countries characterized as developing countries must begin to recognise that they need to work together to address the negative impressions that are held about their products collectively, since it may be difficult for one country alone to break away from the imprescountry-category to which it belongs. They must engage in join efforts to enhance each other's image in international markets. Efforts such as that of ASEAN are commendable in this regard. By developing cooperation and market exchange among themselves. these countries can establish initial credibility as reflected in their enhanced international trade gains. They must not rely on favours and concessions in terms of market access, technology, or aid from the developed countries Efforts must also be devoted by the exporters to create needsatisfying products that represent value and quality for the ultimate buyer. In this regard. success can begin by under standing customer needs and genuinely desiring to satisfy these needs. Bangladeshi exporters must also invest in knowledge, innovation, and continuous improvement to deliver satisfaction to customers in the international markets who are becoming ever more sophisticated and

(The author teaches Marketing and conducts research at The School of Business, Pennsylvania State University, The Behrend College. This article is based on a study that he concluded in USA).

demanding each day

## Singaporeans defy bid to discourage car ownership

SINGAPORE, Nov 22: Singaporeans this month defied the government's bid to discourage car ownership, spending tens of thousands of dollar just to earn the right to buy a car, reports Reuter.

Anybody willing to buy a new car will have to pay about Singapore 40,000 (US 25,000) or more for a Certificate of Entitlement (COE) to own a car, according to tender results published on Wednesday by the registry of tehicles.

That doesn't include the price of the car itself or the 195 per cent taxes, which make

16-160b

Singapore one of the most expensive places in the world to buy a car.

The government sets a quota and holds tender for COEs every month, with bidders submitting sealed bids. The lowest successful bid becomes the COE premium.

Planners fear a flood of cars and trucks will quickly clog the tiny island's streets, causing the sort of traffic JAMs that paral-yse many other Asian cities.

But many Singaporeans have found the complex rules lead to big profits as secondhand car prices spiral along with expensive new cars.

### 'Aussie economic recovery starts like jumbo jet'

SYDNEY, Nov 22: Two of Australia's leading bankers cautiously backed Sunday comments by federal treasurer John Dawkins last week that economic recovery is starting to take off here "like a jumbo jet", reports AFP.

Robert Joss, chief executive of the Westpac Banking Corporation said he saw real growth up to three per cent this year as businesses rebuild.

And national Australia bank Managing Director Don Argus said "there are patches where you can visibly see the recov-

বনরপা, রাজামাটি, দুরালাপনী ঃ ২১২০

## Politicking without link to economic priorities hits investment: MCCI

By Staff Correspondent

Despite an expected booming Asian economy in the future, coupled with increased flow of investments, Bangladesh seems to be left out of the vibrancy because of politicking without links to economic priorities.

This was felt by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in its editorial write-up of the cham-

. It said the Asian success lies in vigorous export, rapid emergence of a regional market and

Thai Air

reception

Dhaka last Friday, says a press

at a local hotel to celebrate the

launching of Thai's new twice

weekly service Bangkok-

Dhaka-Dubai and return effec-

Thai Airways currently op-

erates to Dhaka daily except on

Saturday while the return

flights to Bangkok are also

Officials, Airline Patrons and

executives from travel agencies

were present at the reception.

Also present was Thai Air's

Regional, Director for Middle-

East and South Asian Sub-con-

dressed by Thai Ambassador in

Bangladesh Vichai Vannasin.

The reception was ad-

It was followed by a cultural

tinent.

Diplomats, High Govt

daily except on Wednesday.

tive from November 3.

Thai Airways International held an inaugural reception in

The function was arranged

its attraction to foreign investors.

In the home front, macroeconomic scenario is exceller: and "signs of growth of the Jomestic private sector is also not bad considering inadeouate rate of savings and pour capital market facilities.'

"But where Bangladesh is being quoted adversely is its contentious socio-political situation", the MCCI write-up

lt said analysts predict an accelerated flow of foreign investment in the region. A recent survey of investment plans at several hundred manufacturing and service companies in Japan shows that more than half of their investments would be directed to Asia.

These investments will be maximum to the Asian countries which can have best of so-clo-political milieu, micro-economic stability and growth of domestic private sector.

Among the Asian countries. Bangladesh was the most insignificant recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). During 1986-91, Bangladesh received only 11 million US dollar which means an amount of 1.8 million US dollar per annum as against India's share of 223 million dollar and Pakistan's 189 million dollar per annum.

"Bangladesh will miss the investment train if the sociopolitical situation is not found to be congenial by the foreign investors," the MCCI observed.

The MCCl quot a economist's comment that "because of preference to bad politics, Bangladesh's economy has been



Marshall M Bouton, Executive Vice President, The Asia Society speaking at a meeting of the American Bangladesh Economic Forum (ABEF) at Dhaka Sheraton on Sunday on "South Asia and the United States after the cold war". (Sitting from right) RC Offenheiser, Representative-Bangladesh, the Ford Foundation, Marshall Bouton, Aftabul Islam, Executive Director-ABEF and A Gafur, Executive Secretary-ABEF.

# WB suggests transparency in privatisation procedures

The World Bank is pressing for completion of the off-loading process in the country's jute and textile sectors without further delay and creating confidence in the government's privatisation programme for its success, reports UNB.

Highly placed sources said the World Bank had suggested the government to streamline the administration and institute transparency in the privatisation procedures for creating an atmosphere wherein the divested industrial units can find a new lease of

life and run and grow freely. An official quoted a recent

WB report to have said swift action must be taken in the fiscal year (FY) '93 and FY '94 to assure private entrepreneurs that the government is determined to imple-

commitment, creating a market-friendly environment, financial restructuring and labour shedding before privatisation, are also needed, the

nationalisation scenario, the WB report said privatisation efforts started as early as in

policies were articulated in the New Industrial Policy (NIP)

Upto 1981, some 389 units,

mainly smaller ones run by

ment its stated policies. Clear objectives and a firm report said. Giving a resume on the de-

1973 and the privatisation

management boards, were divested. During 1982-86, 94 industrial units were off loaded. Besides, 35 of the 66 jute mills (representing about 35 per cent of the total capacity), 27 of the 68 textile mills (representing about 40 per cent of the total capacity) and two commercial banks --Pubali and Uttara - were denationalised. During 1986-90, an additional 22 units were privatised. The privatisation of smaller units seems to have achieved the objectives of reducing the drain on the budget and improving the allocation of resources, but the denationalisation of large jute and textile mills and two commercial banks was less successful, Some 49.2 per cent of the divested units have closed down.

Out of a total 497 divested industrial units, excluding the jute and cotton mills, 245 have closed down. These 245 units which were very small, employing less than 60 workers each, and another 196 were divested before 1981.

The private jute and textile mills continued recording colossal annual losses since privatisation, although they performed better than public sector mills, and the two denationalised banks are in a very

weak financial position. All this is mainly because privatisation was not accompanied by improvement in the policy environment, according

to the World Bank. After-denationalisation, the

government maintains its control on input/output prices. employment and wages, continued financing the jute mills with directed credit from NCB's regardless of their financial performance, and imposed restrictions on mill closure and retrenchment to protect employment.

As a result, the donor agency observed, the denationalised mills, particularly in the jute industry, continued operating like public enterprises.

### Smartly dressed Thai Air Hostesses conducting a raffle draw, with the kind assistance of Daily Star Editor, Mahfuz Anam, during an inaugural reception hosted by Thai Airways International on Nov, 19 to mark the opening of its new twice weekly service from Bangkok to Dubai via Dhaka.

#### গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় অশ্রেণীভক্ত বনাঞ্চল বনীকরণ বিভাগ

বনরপা, রাঙ্গামাটি।

পুনঃ টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-১৯ তারিখ ঃ ১৪-১১-১৩ইং

বিভাগীর বন কর্মকর্তা, অশ্রেণীভুক্ত বনাঞ্চল বনীকরণ বিভাগ, রাঙ্গামাটি-এর আওতায় ১৯৯৩-৯৪ অর্থ বৎসরে নিম্ন ভফ্সিলে বর্ণিত শ্লীউবোট (ইঞ্জিনসহ), মোটর সাইকেল, বাইসাইকেল ইত্যাদি সরবরাহ কাজ সম্পাদনে ইচ্ছুক প্রকৃত সরবরাহকারী সংস্থা/ব্যবসা প্রতিষ্ঠান/আমদানিকারক/ঠিকাদারগণের নিকট হইতে নিজস্ব প্যাডে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে পুনঃ টেভার (৩য় বার) আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে। টেভার অবশ্যই আগামী ৩০-১১-৯৩ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২-৩০ মিনিট অথবা তদুর্ধে নিম্নত্বাক্ষরকারী বরাবরে অত্র কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত টেভার বাঙ্গে জমা দিতে হইবে। টেভার ঐ দিন বেলা ১-০০ ঘটিকার সময় খোলা হইবে। টেভার খোলার সময় টেন্ডারদাতা অথবা তাহার প্রতিনিধি ইচ্ছা করিলে উপস্থিত থাকিতে পারিবেন। টেন্ডার নোটিশের শর্তাবলী ও অন্যান্য জ্ঞাজন্ত বিষয়াটি অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (বল্কেব দিন বাডীড) অত্র অফিস হইতে জানিতে পারা যাইবে।

ক্রমিক 🌱 নং	যানবাহন ইত্যাদির বিবরণ	সংখ্যা	সরবরাহ কাজ সমান্তির মেয়াদ	যেই প্রকল্প হইতে ব্যয় নির্বাহ করা হইবে
(文字公子) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1	নীত বেটি (ইঞ্জিনসহ) ঃ  ক) স্পীতবেটি-এর বিবরণ ঃ  পূর্ণ নতুন ফাইবার গ্লাস বোট, দৈর্ঘ্য ১৬ –  রীম ৬-৬, গভীরতা ২ – ৯, ওজন  ০০ হইতে ৯০০ পাঃ উইভ শিল্ড, এ্যালুমি- রাম ফেমসহ, ২টি বাকেট সীল, কুশন সীট/ রার কুশন সীট, স্টিয়ারিংসহ অথবা ছাড়া, ফাভিং ক্যানোপি এবং রিমোট কটোল  প্রেম ও ইন্টারিয়র কার্পেট, ৭ হইতে ৮  রাসন বিশিষ্ট।  ৪) সম্পূর্ণ নতুন ৫৫-অপুশক্তি সম্পন্ন  রেণ্ট্) সিলেভার আউটবোট ইঞ্জিন, ৪৫০০–  ৫০০ আরপিএম স্টিয়ারিং হেভেলসহ ২ (দুই)  সলিভার ইঞ্জিন, প্রপেলার ফুয়েল ট্যাংক  এবং ফুয়েল লাইন, উন্নতমানের একসেসারিজ	fG.	কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির ২০ (বিশ) দিনের মধ্যে	পার্বতা চট্টগ্রামের অপ্রেণীভূক বনাঞ্চলে বনীকরণ ও ঝুমিয় পুনর্বাসন (২য় পর্যায়) প্রকল্প পুনর্বাসিত ঝুমিয়া পরিবারের উনুয়ন ও নিরাপত্তা ক্যাম্পের চারিপার্শ্বে বনায়ন প্রকল্প।
21 3	৪ টুলসসহ। দম্পূর্ণ নতুন মোটর সাইকেল ১০০/১১০ সিসি নির্নাপদ হেলহেট ও টুলস বক্সসহ।	১ (এক) টি	8	পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রামের অপ্রেণীভুক্ত বনা ক্ষলে বনীকরণ ও ঝুমিয়া পুনর্বাস (২য় পর্যায়) প্রকল্প।
2.	বাই-সাইকেল ক্রয়-এর বিবরণ ঃ ২৬ ফনিক্স বাইসাইকেল (অরিজিনাল) ডবল ষ্ট্যান্ড, সামনে পিছনে কেরিয়ার, তালা, ১ সেট টায়ার (টিউবসহ) বেল ও পাম্পার ইত্যাদিসহ।	্ (দুই) টি		–ঐ– আলাউদ্দিন বিশ্বাস বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্ড

### function and an audio-visual reduced to shambles. Rafsanjani urges OPEC members to stabilise oil market

TEHRAN, Nov 22: Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in a meeting Sunday with Qatar's foreign minister urged OPEC member states to coordinate action to stabilise the oil market, Tehran Radio said, reports AFP.

Rafsanjani, in the meeting with Hamad Ibn Jasemn Ibn Jaber Al-Thani, called for complete "cooperation among members of the Organisation of

Petroleum Exporting Countries. "These countries should adopt a coordinated mechanism to stabilise the market and ensure reasonable oil prices," he was quoted as saying.

The president also called for strengthening of relations with the Gulf Arab states and for a better use of resources in the

Thani, who arrived here Saturday for a two-day visit, called for expansion of political, economic and technical links with Iran, the radio said.

The minister, who is heading a high-level delegation, also called for strengthening of ties among the countries in the region on the basis of mutual interest and respect.

Iran and Qatar have main-

tained good political and eco-

nomic relations and the two

countries share a sizeable off-

shore gas field in the southern Gulf with reserves of some five trillion cubic metres on the Qatari side and three trillion cubic metres on the Iranian.

During a visit here in 1991 by the prince of Gatar, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al-Thani, the two countries agreed to build a pipeline for the supply of drinking water to Qatar. The costs for the project have been estimated at 13 billion dollar.

Last October, Tehran and Doha decided to create a joint commission to boost cooperation in natural gas and production of oil-related products.

### Obscure US firms emerge as biggest companies this yr

NEW YORK, Nov 22: This year's list of top US companies that shun the stock markets includes Levi Strauss, Hallmark Cards, Mars and United Parcel Service, reports AP. It also includes some ob-

popular products, like pizza. The largest 400 private companies have 598 billion dollar in sales, according to the annual ranking published in the December 6 issue of

Forbes magazine.

scure firms that sell some



Abundant supply of small fishes at Kawran Bazar whole sale market put the sellers to utmost difficulties yesterday. Lack of storage facilities, they were compelled to sell fishes -Star photo at throw away prices.