

DHAKA WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1993

Industrial output slumps sharply

By Inam Ahmed

The country's industrial production showed a sharp decline in September this year compared to the corresponding period last year.

According to official statistics, of 50 selected industrial sectors, production declined in 23 while performance in two sectors remained unchanged.

"Despite all efforts to harness the industrial units, and to gear up production, there seems to be little recovery," an authoritative source in the Industries Ministry said, "but we hope to overcome this soon."

The jute and textile sub-sectors showed a discouraging picture with declining production. Even the garment sector was short of meeting up the

September, 1992 target.

Cotton cloth production came down almost to half with only 2576000 meters in September this year compared to 4922000 meters of the same period last year. Cotton yarn production also fell to 4174000 meters from 5603000 meters last September. Experts say most textile units have become sick over the last year and local demand is now met by import and smuggling of cloth.

In jute sector, production fell by 3319 metric tons to 37113 metric tons. Experts also suggest that the wrecked situation of the jute industry as a show caused the shortfall in production.

Frozen food sector, a booming sector, also showed a slump in production by 11 metric tons in September than last year's same period.

Cigarette production fell to 933 million sticks from last year's 945 million sticks, soft drink production fell to 845000 dozen bottles from 952000 dozens.

Newsprint production in the country also fell to 3598 metric tons from last year's 4348 metric tons.

Production of both black and white and colour televisions fell to 2553 and 1223 sets in September from 5019 and 2773 sets respectively last year.

Motor cycle manufacturing also fell almost by half up to

250 pieces from 550 pieces.

Meanwhile, leather and leather footwear witnessed a production boom. Leather production went up to 1377000 square meters in September from 1191 square meters last year. Footwear production rose by 1000 pairs to 241000 pairs.

Paper production also boomed to 3074 metric tons in September from the previous year's 1667 metric tons.

Fertilizer production also rose to 192371 metric tons compared to 160907 metric tons last year.

Vegetable oil, pharmaceuticals, soaps, bicycle tyres, motor vehicles and ceiling fans productions also boomed in September.

EC approves Tk 18 cr grant for JDLBS project

The Commission of the European Communities has approved a grant of 4,000,000 ECU (approx. Taka 18 crore) for the Jamuna-Dhaleswari Left Bank Studies (JDLBS) project, reports BSS.

The project is one of the follow-up segments of Bangladesh's Flood Action Plan.

A press release of the delegation of European Commission said, the JDLBS comprises two separate studies. The main objectives of Jamuna-Dhaleswari Left Bank Study part one will be to complete the environment impact assessment, public consultation and participation exercise in addition to further detailed data collection and analysis for the Jamalpur project based on its feasibility study (also financed by the European Community) which was finalised in January 1993.

The main objectives of JDLBS — part two will be to examine the priorities indicated by the north central regional study in the light of more detailed data to be collected, and to carry out a feasibility study on an area, approximately 150,000 hectares to provide the background for the next stage of water resources development in this region.

The project will be funded by a grant from the European Community's budget, under its programme of financial and technical assistance to the developing countries of Asia and Latin America, and co-funded by an equal contribution from the government of France.

The formal signing of the agreement between the government of Bangladesh and the commission is expected to take place soon, the press release said.



MCCI President Latifur Rahman (M) addressing a meeting of the members of the National Board of Revenue at the chamber's conference hall yesterday. NBR Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan sitting on his right. — Star photo

JICA takes up survey on export of agri-products from Bangladesh

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has taken up a project formulation survey on export possibilities of agri-based products like fruits and vegetables from Bangladesh, says a press release.

The survey commenced from December 1992.

The first phase of the study was completed in March 1993.

The second phase is being undertaken by a group of four experts. They are: Kozo Yamakawa, Team Leader, Dr. Altaf Ali, Deputy Team Leader, Dr. Mahfuzul Haq, Consultant, Marketing and Dr. SF Rubbi, Consultant, Preservation.

The team had already visited Singapore and Thailand commencing from November 23 to December 1, 1993. During their visit to Singapore, the team reviewed and surveyed the market condition in relation to supply and demand for fresh, semi-processed and processed fruits and vegetables.

In Thailand, the team tried to have an in-depth study of Thai export programme right from the farmer's field to the export point.

Biswas for setting up jt venture shipping cos among OIC

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday opened the executive committee meeting and general assembly of the Islamic Shipowners' Association (ISA) with a call for establishing joint venture shipping companies among the OIC member states, reports BSS.

The President urged the ISA member states to work out strategies for expansion of maritime trade not only among themselves but also with the other parts of the world and thereby revive the glorious traditions of the Muslims in maritime supremacy and trade and business.

President Biswas held out the assurance that Bangladesh would lend all-out support for such an effort.

Hosted by Bangladesh Ocean Going Ship Owners' Association (BOGSOA), the three-day general assembly of the Jeddah-based ISA is being attended by about 40 delegates from 19 Islamic states.

Minister for Shipping MK Anwar, President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Dr Ahmed Mohammad Ali, Chairman of the Executive Commif-

tee of the ISA Mohammad Shauqi Yunus, Secretary General of the Association Dr. Abdullahi A Sultan, chairman of BOGSOA Abdul Awal Mintoo and a representative of the OIC also addressed the inaugural session held at a local hotel.

The meeting assumes special significance as it is going to discuss the resolution regarding the establishing of joint venture Islamic shipping companies adopted by the OIC foreign ministers conference held in Karachi.

President Biswas expressed his confidence that the shipping communities of the Islamic world would be benefited by cooperation between the member countries of OIC.

He said, Bangladesh as an active member of OIC attached great importance to mutual cooperation between the Islamic countries for economic emancipation and development.

In this connection, the President referred to the prominent role played by OIC in undertaking joint action for Islamic countries for protection of rights of Islamic minorities all over the world and establish-

ment of affiliated organs in different fields of specialised activities.

President Biswas said the ISA established under the auspices of OIC aimed at coordinating and unifying the efforts of Islamic countries. It also aimed at utilising the maximum potential of the fleet of their companies in protecting the interest of the member states by providing sound counsel and supporting them with greater voice in international maritime affairs, he said.

Referring to the lack of adequate shipping and transportation facilities of Bangladesh, the President said this hampered the achieving of export targets to Middle-East and African regions.

He noted that the support from the Islamic world for expansion and development of the country's shipping sector would be highly appreciated.

President Biswas underscored the need for foreign greater unity and solidarity among the Muslim nations and ensuring more economic cooperation among the Islamic countries.

3-day workshop on MR training begins

By Staff Correspondent

A three-day in-service training workshop for trainers and doctors of MR organisations under the auspices of Menstrual Regulation Training & Services Programme (MRTSP) began at Hotel Sheraton yesterday. About 25 doctors from different Medical Colleges and health centres are participating in the workshop.

Presided over by Prof (ret'd) S Feroza Begum, President, MRTSP, Dr. M. Shamsher Ali, Vice-Chancellor, Open University inaugurated the workshop as the chief guest.

In his address of welcome Dr. Mesbahul Karim, Executive Director, MRTSP said an estimated eight lakh women attempt induced abortion in our country every year usually in secret places in highly unsafe conditions. Moreover, approximately 8000 women die every year (25-30% of all maternal deaths and countless number are rendered either sterile or left with severe chronic health problems. Safe MR services can help reduce maternal deaths by more than one quarter, he said.

Ms. Gabrielle Ross, Programme Officer, International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), USA in her speech dwelt on the change in outlook to accept MR in larger proportions. She assured about assistance from her organisation for further expansion of MR activities in Bangladesh. She lauded the role of MRTSP for the quality of services it has provided so far.

Sigvard Schwartzman, SIDA representative, in his deliberation said "MR is a good start for family planning". Expressing his satisfaction over the performance of MRTSP, he said spread of sex education among the females could make the programme successful in future. He called upon more organisation to provide moral and monetary support to MR Programmes.

Dr. Hamida Akhter Begum, Treasurer, MRTSP offered vote of thanks to the participants and guests at the workshop and wished it a complete success.

Professor Firoza Begum said 20,000 maternal deaths occur in the country annually in the hands of untrained people. Women determined to regulate their fertility often meet their tragic ends at the hands of these people who perform operations under extremely dangerous and unhealthy conditions specially in the rural areas, she said.

Highlighting the significance of dissemination of information about the availability of MR services via providers of family planning services, Professor Firoza Begum urged the participating doctors to be equipped with modern technology and skills to ensure high quality delivery of MR services to clients in the rural health and maternity centres.

Dr. M Shamsher Ali, in his address said MRTSP could be more popular through Micro-electronic revolution in the country. Stressing the importance of follow-up programme after MR, he gave an assurance to make a module of five to ten minutes duration to have safe access to MR services.

According to an official source, the projects were implemented under the IDA and ADB assistance.

The projects included the construction of 115 kilometres of embankment, 25 closures, 23 sluice gates, 14 bridges, two kilometres of diversion channels, three culverts, 69 flushing inlets, repair of 21 bridges and re-excavation of 58.25 kilometres of canals.

A total of 27,000 hectares of cultivable land under Bauphal and Galachipa thanas of the district have been brought under irrigation facilities and saved from salinity, flood protection source added.

Xiamen trade fair shows fruit of foreign-funded enterprises

XIAMEN, Dec 7: The second trade fair of export commodities by foreign-funded enterprises, which ended Monday in Xiamen, in fast China's Fujian province, shows that foreign investment has become an important part of China's economy, reports Xinhua.

During the trade fair, more than 1,000 foreign-funded enterprises from around the country exhibited thousands of commodities covering more than 20 industrial sectors.

China instituted the policy of opening to the outside world in the late 1970s so as to catch up with the world economic development.

Since then more than 150,000 foreign-funded enterprises have been approved in China, which account for about one per cent of the country's gross product and export volume.

Foreign-funded enterprises have participated in the international markets as a part of China's economy.

Over the past decade or so, China has accumulated a lot of experience in the management of foreign-funded enterprises. From the launching of satellites and the manufacturing of aircraft to the construction of railroads and ports, from the establishment of schools to the opening of banks, and from the running of hotels to commercial information services, China has provided various opportunities to foreign investors.



A striking postman in New Delhi takes a snooze among heaps of postal bags full of undelivered mail after some 700,000 postal employees launched a strike demanding higher wages and pension benefits. — AFP photo

India's postal employees go on indefinite strike

BOMBAY, Dec 7: Tens of millions of undelivered letters piled up at post offices all over India today as mail carriers walked off the job to force the government to meet demands for higher wages and pension benefits, reports AFP.

Some 700,000 employees all over the country joined the indefinite strike, ignoring last-minute government appeals.

A skeletal postal service was being operated in Bombay, India's commercial capital and biggest mail-handling city with 272 post offices and 15,000 employees.

A.V.B Menon, Chief Postmaster General, said only 25 post offices were functioning in the western Indian city where 4.4 million letters are handled daily.

No mail was sorted or delivered and no registered letters or money transfer requests were accepted in Bombay and other cities of India on Tuesday but stamps and stationery was being sold at a few centres.

Leaders of postal unions said they were determined to remain on strike until the government accepted their demands, including an end to computerisation which workers fear, could lead to job losses.

"The government is not willing to talk. They want to bulldoze us," said Ganpat Mungekar of the All India Postal employees union.

"We have been raising the demands for the last five years but the government just did not bother."

While the East Asia economies are doubling every ten years or so, pollution, energy use and the number of vehicles on the road are increasing by factors of five, eight and even ten," he said. "We know, therefore, that pollution trends are much greater than the capacity of the environment to absorb it all."

He said Thailand's economy doubled from 1975 to 1988,

PLO advertises for economic executives

TUNIS, Dec 7: Preparing for peace the Palestine Liberation Organisation is advertising for executives to manage foreign aid generated by the PLO-Israeli accord, officials said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Adverts to recruit Palestinian professionals will be placed soon in newspapers in the occupied territories and abroad and are intended to avoid political appointments, the PLO's economic council decided at the weekend.

The council will first seek to recruit five directors, ranging from administration to economic policy formulation.

Asia's pollution problems growing faster than economies

BANGKOK, Dec 7: Pollution in industrialising Asia is growing much faster than the region's economies — which are growing faster than anywhere else in the world, the World Bank says, reports AP.

Degradation of Asia's environment is "growing worse very, very quickly — may be worse than we thought," said Carter Brandon, an environmental economist who co-authored a new ADB study on the subject.

And as pollution worsens, East Asians are stripping their forests at increasingly higher rates.

"In the rest of the world, deforestation is decreasing, in the Amazon, in Africa, in Central America. It is only in Asia that things are getting worse," Brandon said.

"While the East Asia economies are doubling every ten years or so, pollution, energy use and the number of vehicles on the road are increasing by factors of five, eight and even ten," he said. "We know, therefore, that pollution trends are much greater than the capacity of the environment to absorb it all."

He said Thailand's economy doubled from 1975 to 1988,

but industrial emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and total suspended particulates grew eight to twelve times worse as industrial pollution increased five-fold. The Philippines' economy grew little, but its industrial pollution worsened eight-fold.

In sulfur dioxide emissions, Asia could surpass Europe and the United States combined by 2005, says the bank study.

It says toxic pollutants, measured by an index of airborne, waterborne and solid toxic wastes, increased several times from 1975 to 1988.

"If we can merely bring down the pollution to the level of the economic growth, that would be a dramatic change," Brandon recently told reporters in Bangkok.

The pollution affects many in Asia because industry and population is heavily concentrated in the cities.

The study estimated that 500 to 2,000 people die each year due to air pollution in Bangkok as well as in Jakarta, and 10,000 to 100,000 people in each city become sick, illness and lost productivity due to air pollution and traffic congestion costs 3.6 billion dollar

on new investments.

Brandon said protecting Asia's environment will require investment of about 38 billion dollar per year by the year 2000. More than half will have to come from the private sector, so governments must encourage private investment by making it more profitable. This could be done by privatising infrastructure sectors and raising prices for services such as energy, water, and transport.

He said Malaysia has privatised some water treatment plants, Bangkok its mass transit systems and Manila its energy sector.

High economic growth rates provide capital environmentalists hope will be used for anti-pollution investments. Poverty in East Asia has fallen from 30 per cent of the population in 1970 to 10 per cent today. Asian countries have followed sound macroeconomic policies, which generally are also environmentally sound.

The World Bank is doubling its lending for environmental projects in Asia, from about 600 million dollar in 1990-92 to 1.2 billion dollar in 1993-95.

Government of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, (RHD),
Munshigonj Road Division,
Postogola, Dhaka.

Notice Inviting Tender

- Tender Notice No: 101/RD, Munshigonj of 1993-94.
- Name of work: Tender for Flexible Khao Consolidation and Seal coat at 5th KM (P), 6th KM, 7th KM & 8th KM (P) of Sreenagar-Dohar Road during the year of 1993-94 2 (two) Groups.
- Name of offices of availability of tender documents: Offices of the E.E. RHD, Road Division, Dhaka/Manikgonj/ Nar-singdi/Munshigonj, Postogola, Dhaka/Planning & Design Division, Dhaka Zone, Room No. 'KA' 422, Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka/Planning Divn., (Roads & Bridge) Dhaka/SDE, RHD, Road Sub-Division, Sreenagar/Keranigonj/ Munshigonj/ Ist Line Workshop Sub-Division under Munshigonj Road Division, Postogola, Dhaka during office hours.
- Name of offices to received tender bids: Office of the SE, RHD, Dhaka Road Circle, Dhaka/Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation, Dhaka Zone, Dhaka/Monitoring & Evaluation Circle, Dhaka/ EE, RHD, Munshigonj Road Division, Postogola, Dhaka/SDE., RHD, Road Sub-Division, Sreenagar/ Keranigonj/Munshigonj/Ist Line Workshop Sub-Division under Munshigonj Road Division, Postogola, Dhaka.
- Last date of receipt of tender bids: 14-12-93 up to 12.30 PM.
- Date & time of opening of tender bids: 14-12-93 at 12.45 PM.
- Group list of works:

Group/ No.	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Time allowed	Eligibility of contractor
I (One)	Tk. 17,19,600/00	Tk. 34,392/00	60 (Sixty) days from the date of issue of work order.	"A" to "C" class of general category of RHD
II (Two)	Tk. 17,51,500/00	Tk. 35,030/00	-do-	-do-

Shahabuddin
Executive Engineer, (RHD),
Munshigonj Road Division,
Postogola, Dhaka.

DFF (G) 20108-2/12,
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