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Total quality control can help boost export potentials: Experts

KIB hails govt to provide funds for agricultural development

Krisibid Institution of Bangladesh (KIB) Saturday hailed the government decision to provide funds to the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors and incentives for livestock development for three years, reports UNB.

In a press statement, KIB President Dr M Ayubur Rahman and Secretary General Javed Iqbal also thanked the government for its decision to allow private sector import of medicines and inputs for livestock and poultry on soft terms.

They urged the government to grant soft loan of two lakh taka to the jobless agri-graduates against their certificates to set up agricultural, livestock and poultry farms and nursery.

Some 2,000 agri-graduates are now unemployed in the country, they said.

China, S'pore jt venture to build industrial park

BEIJING, Feb 27: China and Singapore have agreed to develop a high-tech industrial park in Suzhou, East China, the People's Daily said today.

Some 2,000 agri-graduates are now unemployed in the country, they said.

The deal was signed on Saturday by Vice-Premier Li Yan-qing and Singapore senior minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Under the agreement, both sides will help Suzhou city government and a Singapore consortium to form a joint venture to develop the industrial park, the newspaper said.

The area for the first phase of development is eight square KM (three square miles) aimed at what the paper called high-tech and service industries. It did not give details.

No sale of gold from Russia this year

MOSCOW, Feb 27: Russia has sold no gold on world markets so far this year and its central bank is not authorised to do so independently without approval from President Boris Yeltsin and government, a senior gold industry official said.

"So far this year, there were no sales of gold from Russia," Yuri Kotlyar, deputy head in charge of gold at the State Precious Metals Committee, told Reuters.

Besides, the central bank has no authority to sell gold independently on external markets."

Central Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko helped to push world gold prices lower this week when he said that Russia might be compelled to sell gold to finance its soaring budget deficit.

But yesterday Russia had no plans to destabilise world markets by selling large amounts of gold, a move he said would weaken its own position as an exporter.

Kotlyar dismissed Gerashchenko's remarks. If the central bank wishes to sell gold, it's necessary that its wish coincides with the wish of the head of the government and the president.

Russia wants to be GATT member this year

KORNBURG, Germany, Feb 27: Russia wants to become a member of the world trade body GATT this year and create a free-trade zone with the European Union by the end of the decade, a senior European official said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

European Commission Vice-President Henning Christoffersen said Russian officials expressed these views at a meeting of Group of Seven Finance Ministers and central bank governors at Kornberg near Frankfurt.

"They would like to participate in GATT," he told journalists. "They would like to join by the end of the year."

Members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) pledge to provide mutual trade benefits to all participants, a condition that kept Moscow out of the Geneva-based group when it was the capital of a communist state with a centrally planned economy.

As part of its drive to create an efficient free market economy, Moscow also plans to expand its trade with the European Union during this decade, Christoffersen said.

Experts at a seminar here yesterday emphasised the need for appropriate human resources development in the area of Total Quality Control (TQC) for rapid industrialisation and boosting export potentials for any country, particularly the developing one, reports BSS.

"For a country like Bangladesh it has no option but to go for TQC to enter the international competitive market for its industrial products," the local and foreign experts told the seminar on "total quality control for small and medium-scale industries" participated in the seminar, held in the IEB auditorium.

They said promotion of industrial quality control was the main factor for continued survival in today's global open market competition.

The one day seminar was organised by the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) in cooperation with the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) of Japan, Bangladesh AOTS Alumni Society (BASS), the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB) and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers & Commerce and Industries (FBCCI).

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Dr M Shahjahan, president of IEB and Vice Chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and

Technology (BUET) as the chief guest. Katsumi Hara, Jetro representative in Bangladesh and Moynul Hasan, President of BAAS also spoke. Dr A K M Moazzam Hussain, AOTS representative in Bangladesh later on behalf of the organisers, presented souvenirs to the chief guest and the Japanese experts.

Sixty persons including managing directors, general managers, production managers and engineers engaged in the production and management of small and medium-scale industries participated in their respective industrial units.

The IEB president also cited some of the problems of the local enterprises including fund constraints and dependence on import-based raw materials.

Moriji Miyata, president of Miyata Hi-Meq Ltd and an expert of TQC conducted the technical session of the seminar.

Katsumi Hara, in his welcome address, said Jetro had been promoting balanced and harmonious foreign trade and investing in multilateral projects for more than thirty years with all the countries, especially the developing ones.

Jetro has also been making strenuous efforts to promote the transfer of technology and investment from Japan, this TQC seminar, he said, could also be cited as one of the activities of Jetro, a non-profit organisation, to transfer the Japanese technology to a developing country like Bangladesh.

Moynul Hasan said Bangladesh was now gradually coming up in the industrial sector, particularly in small and medium-scale industries.

This seminar, he hoped, would be of great interest and generate enthusiasm among the participant in respect of TQC.

Hara said Jetro Dhaka would invite three experts on different fields from Japan and send two trainees from Bangladesh to Japan during the next financial year.

Dr Shahjahan hoped that the conduct of the technical session by the Japanese resource person with vast experience would be beneficial for the participants and they would apply practically the acquired knowledge on TQC in their respective industrial units.

The IEB president also cited some of the problems of the local enterprises including fund constraints and dependence on import-based raw materials.

Hara also mentioned the joint (Jetro overseas investment cooperation) scheme and said, it promotes the industrialisation and economic development of targeted countries through the promotion of direct investment and technology transfer from Japan. Since its establishment in 1986, this scheme also includes Bangladesh, he said.

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The quantities and the varieties of Aus seeds are 4 M Tons of BR-1, 18 M Tons of BR-3, 430 M Tons of BR-14, 8 M Tons BR-21, 7 M tons of BR-24, 23 M Tons of BR-26



SINGAPORE: Visitors walk past a French Mirage 2000 jet fighter (C) recently displayed at the Asian Aerospace '94, the largest aerospace show in Asia, with 935 companies from 37 countries participating.

— AFP photo

BADC to distribute Aus seeds among farmers

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) has undertaken an extensive programme for distribution of Aus seeds among the farmers and dealers throughout the country during Summer season.

Locally produced high yielding varieties of 500 metric tons certified Aus seeds will be distributed under this programme.

The Aus seeds are being sold directly to the farmers at fixed price from the BADC's Thana Sale Centres 'on first come first serve basis' and also to the dealers at a fixed commission from the BADC's Regional Sale Centres.

Taiwan to comply with IMF forex requirements

TAEPEI, Feb 27: Taiwan will comply with foreign exchange requirements of the International Monetary Fund as part of its bid to enter the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, a senior government official said Saturday, reports AP.

Vice Economics Minister Hsu Ke-sheng said Taiwan will agree to comply with IMF's requirements after the United States presents details of a special agreement concerning government control on foreign exchange rates it wants Taiwan to sign.

Land revenue collection falls

State Minister for Land Mohammad Kabir Hossain told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that collection of land revenue from July 1 to December 1993 in the current fiscal year stood at Taka 23.73 crore, reports BSS.

Replies to a question by Khan Tipu Sultan (AL), the minister said collection of land revenue during this period is Taka 3.92 crore less than the revenue collected during the same period of 1992-93 financial year.

He informed the House in reply to a supplementary question that the government had not only exempted land revenue on 25 bighas of holdings but also exempted other local taxes on them. He said the government would take measures if there was any specific case of irregularity in this regard.

The State Minister for Land, replying to a question by Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury (JP) said the government had taken in hand 144 ideal village schemes in 77 thanas of 36 districts in 1993-94 financial year.

Replies to a supplementary question by Khan Tipu Sultan (AL), the minister said collection of land revenue during this period is Taka 3.92 crore less than the revenue collected during the same period of 1992-93 financial year.

The Clinton administration predicts that in fiscal year (FY) 1994, ending September 30, 1994 the government will have a deficit of 165.130 million dollars down from its earlier estimate of 258.748 million dollar.

hammad Kabir Hossain yesterday said that there was 1,05,478.97 acres khas land in Khulna division.

Replies to a question by Khan Tipu Sultan (AL), the minister said collection of land revenue during this period is Taka 3.92 crore less than the revenue collected during the same period of 1992-93 financial year.

He said the schemes were being taken on the basis of availability of khas lands in different parts of the country.

Kabir Hossain, however, said that information regarding illegal occupation of khas land could not be collected.

BPC motels' expenditure higher than income

Expenditures in running the eight motels of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) were Taka 62.29 lakh higher than income during last fiscal year (1992-93).

Replies to a question by Altaf Hossain Golandaz (AL), the State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan said that the income from eight BPC motels was Taka 184.06 lakh against expenditures of Taka 246.35 lakh in 1992-93 financial year.

The state minister said that in 1991-92 the income was Taka 183.43 lakh while expenditures was Taka 246.35 lakh.

The BPC motels were situated at Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Bogra, and Rangpur.

US policy against shipping toxic waste to other states likely

WASHINGTON, Feb 27: A new U.S. policy against shipping toxic waste to other countries will be announced next week, Congressman Bill Richardson said Friday, reports AP.

"I am confident that the Clinton administration will shortly announce a policy consistent with the provisions of the Towns bill," he told a news conference.

Richardson was referring to legislation proposed by fellow Congressman Ed Towns that would ban dangerous waste exports to the Third World in six months and to industrial countries in five years.

Richardson said the new policy should put the administration on record for an immediate ban on shipping waste anywhere except Mexico, Canada or the 24 industrial countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In an interview after the news conference, Richardson said the new policy could come in a speech he expected Tuesday from Carol M. Browner, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). She was due to address a meeting of an international group of legislators on environmental policy.

Beach sand heavy mineral resource of Bangladesh

PARIS, Feb 27: Borrowing on world capital markets soared by one-third to a record 811 billion dollars last year, with a rush of securities issues by Asian and Latin American countries boosting developing nations' market funding to an all-time high of 84 billion dollars, the OECD said today, reports AFP.

Overall borrowing rose by 33 per cent from 619 billion

dollars in 1992, marking the sharpest year-on-year increase since 1986, and activity is likely to remain brisk in the period ahead, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said.

The spectacular expansion stemmed from a 150 billion dollar rise in borrowing by OECD countries and vigorous recourse to the markets by dynamic Asian economies and

Latin American countries led by Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, according to an OECD survey of financial market trends, published three times a year.

Almost all market compartments showed strong growth in 1993, with net new borrowing, after redemption of securities and refinancing of bank loans, reaching an estimated 340 billion dollars

against around 240 billion a year earlier.

Bond markets, which have taken a beating in the past month, led the field with gross issue at an all-time record of 481 billion dollars, an increase of 147 billion over the 1992 level.

The survey reported sharp advances in Floating-Rate Notes (FRN) and equity-linked bonds.

By Dr. Badrul Imam

the heavy minerals exploration along the coastal areas of Bangladesh was later taken up by Atomic Energy Commission. During the period 1972 to 1983, systematic search for the heavy mineral deposits were carried out in the coastal belt of Bangladesh. This led to the discovery of 17 major placer deposits of heavy minerals along the coastal areas of Cox's Bazar, Inani, Silkhali, Sabrang, Badarmokam, Teknaf, Moheshkhali Island, Nijhum Dwip and Kuakata. It appears from above that most of the deposits are found in the Cox's Bazar district in the eastern coastal belt of the country. Discovery of these minerals in the Nijhum Dwip and Kuakata (Patuakhali) testify that similar geological processes had been active in the southern coast as in the eastern coast as in the formation of these heavy mineral deposits.

Considering the large number of small islands along the southern coastal belt of Bangladesh and the remoteness of these islands it may be assumed that further heavy mineral deposits could be found should a rigorous search for the above could be undertaken.

The heavy mineral placer sand bodies range from 500 to 10,000 feet in length, 50 to 1000 feet in width and 3 to 15 feet (back shore area) in thickness occurring mostly on the sur-

face. Average concentration of heavy minerals in the placer sand bodies is 20 per cent. Because of dark colour of the heavy minerals, these deposits tend to stand out in blackish tone within a light grey-yellow background of the normal coastal sand masses.

The grain size of the heavy mineral sand particles are fine to very fine. The total reserve of the eight valuable and economic heavy minerals (Ilmenite, Zircon, Rutile, Garnet, Magnetite, Leucoxene, Kyanite and Monazite) in all the 17 deposits so far discovered has been estimated to be 1.762 million tons. The monetary value of this reserve as per present price is estimated at about 1300 crore taka.

Table

Valuable Heavy Minerals	Quantity (in thousand tons)
Ilmenite	1,025
Garnet	223
Zircon	158
Leucoxene	97
Kyanite	91
Magnetite	81
Rutile	70
Monazite	17
Total valuable minerals	1,762

The four biggest reserves of the heavy minerals are located in Cox's Bazar, Silkhali, Moheshkhali Island (seven individual heavy sand deposits

are located in Moheshkhali Island) and Teknaf coast. The most abundant mineral in the placer sand deposits is Ilmenite - an iron titanium oxide mineral. The total amount of ilmenite present in the discovered deposits is about 1025,000 tons of which 243,000 tons are in Moheshkhali Island, 161,000 tons in Cox's Bazar, 173,000 tons in Silkhali and 163,000 tons in Teknaf. Ilmenite is an important metallic mineral valued as a source of titanium, as raw material in paint industry, leather processing industry, manufacturing, protection shield and manufacturing welding electrodes. The present requirements of ilmenite could be met by the exploitation of the available reserves in the beach sands.

Two other most valuable minerals Zircon and Rutile have reserves of 158,000 tons and 70,000 tons respectively. Zircon is used in ceramic industry, in producing electrical insulators, in foundry facing works and as source of zirconium which is used in nuclear reactor. About 100 tons of zircon is reportedly needed annually in Mirpur Ceramic Industry and Bangladesh Insulator and Sanitary ware factory. Rutile, used in paper mill, in welding rod coating, is also valuable as a source of titanium metal.

Rising as to the commercialisation of the project, the beach sand exploitation programme was declared abandoned by the Ershad government in 1987 for reasons not known to geologists who have already established a

data base on the commercial viability of extraction of the heavy minerals.

The present government, after considering the economic importance of commercialisation of the beach sand heavy mineral, has brought the pilot plant and the project back to life. An initial grant of four crore taka has been sanctioned for upgrading the pilot plant and the process of establishing a commercial plant for the project is being actively considered. Improving the grades of separation of the minerals further is needed before launching a commercial plant and one of the main objectives of the pilot plant is to achieve that goal, explained Dr Barr Biswas, Director of the Beach Sand Exploitation Centre of Atomic Energy Commission at Cox's Bazar. A commercial plant at Moheshkhali Island would be a good beginning of mining the heavy mineral deposits; the island has a reserve that would run the plant for about 10 years, Dr Biswas explained. Subsequently the commercial plant may be established in the mainland coast of Inani and Teknaf area; the total life of the plant for commercial extraction of the discovered heavy mineral deposits could be as much as 30 years, he added.

The author is a professor of the Department of Geology, Dhaka University.