

## BSFIC starts mobile sale of sugar

Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) has made elaborate arrangements to sell sugar at fair price from mobile trucks at a number of important city points from yesterday, says a press release.

The sale has been arranged because of the rising trend of sugar price and the ensuing Eid-ul-Azha.

The drive is in addition to normal monthly allotment of sugar made for sugar traders from cities and other parts of the country.

BSFIC has not raised its sale price and there is ample supply of sugar in the market.

## Shawkat opens paddy procurement at Hathazari

HATHAZARI (Chittagong), May 14: Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali said, the main objective of government food procurement policy is to provide incentive price to the marginal farmers and to maintain the security stock of food-grains in the country, reports BSS.

He was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural function of paddy procurement in Chittagong division at Hathazari yesterday. He explained the reason for Open Market Sale (OMS) for the benefit of low-income group.

The minister directly talked to the farmers and enquired about the production cost of paddy per acre.

## Hanoi negotiates first foreign commercial loan

HANOI, Vietnam, May 14: The State Bank of Vietnam is negotiating to borrow its first commercial loan — a 100 million dollars credit from a group of 10 foreign banks, a State Bank official said Saturday, reports AP.

The group is led by the Export-Import Bank of Thailand and includes a 5 million dollars share offered by the Bank of America, said Dang Anh Mai of the bank's Foreign Department.

"This is the first time that Vietnam goes into the international market to borrow on commercial terms," Mai said.

## India produces bio-pesticides

NEW DELHI, May 14: India has successfully field-tested several bio-pesticides, says the annual report of the Department of Bio-technology for 1993-94, reports Xinhua.

A caterpillar-killing virus, a plant-protecting bacteria, and extracts from the popular margosa tree are among promising bio-pesticides all set to graduate from laboratories into farms.

Two bio-control pilot plants in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu have already produced and sold bio-pesticides to cover 7,000 hectares of land cultivated with groundnut, cotton, sunflower and tobacco.

Encouraged by the commercial viability of the pilot plants, private entrepreneurs are coming forward to invest in bio-pesticides.

The Indian Department of Bio-technology is now helping to identify entrepreneurs for bio-pesticide commercialisation across India, says the report which was released on Wednesday.

## Dhaka, Yangon to start border trade soon

The Myanmar Minister for Trade, Lieutenant General Tun Kyi, yesterday said that border trade between his country and Bangladesh will start soon after signing the border trade agreement between the two countries.

Talking to BSS on his arrival here he said replying to a question, "We will start trade between the two countries soon after we sign the agreement."

The Myanmar trade minister and his Bangladesh counterpart Commerce Minister Shamsul Islam will sign the agreement on Wednesday.

The visiting minister said, in reply to a question, that he was quite determined to make trade between the two countries successful.

He said unless there was good prospect for such trade no such agreement would be necessary.

The Myanmar minister said that in his 37 years career he had never done anything that was not successful.

The border trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh, he said, was meant for the benefit of the two neighbouring countries.

Actually, he said, border trade has been going on between the two countries but

not on legal basis and the volume has not been much.

"We want to legalise it," he added.

The Minister for Commerce M Shamsul Islam, received the trade minister at the Zia International Airport. Also present at the airport were the Commerce Secretary, A H Mufazzal Karim, the Myanmar ambassador to Bangladesh, Hla Myint oo, and the President of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association, Syed Mahmudul Huq.

The Myanmar minister, however, stressed the need for cooperation at the basic level to actually promote trade following the agreement to be signed here three days later.

Agreement alone, he indicated, was not sufficient without cooperation at the basic levels of the customs, police and immigration on both the sides.

The border trade, he said, could help the development of the regions of the two countries across their borders.

Replying to a question, in no way related to trade between the two countries, the Myanmar minister said the Myanmar government welcomes back the Myanmar refugees to back home.

"It is clear we did not force them to leave the country," he said replying to how soon the repatriation could be expected to be completed. He added, "our position is like that of parents who welcome back their children who got out of the home of their own."

Potential items for border trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh include timber, limestone, bamboos, vegetables, shrimps and fish and rice from Myanmar while from Bangladesh jute goods, cosmetics, medicines, readymade garments and construction materials.

Syed Mahmudul Huq, while talking to BSS, suggested that a processing zone should be set up at Teknaf exclusively for joint ventures between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The proposed processing zone based on land, technology and entrepreneurship of Bangladesh and raw materials of Myanmar, he said, could optimise the benefits of border trade between the two countries.

The border trade, he said, could ultimately lead to boost Myanmar's exports and imports from Myanmar's areas close to the border using the port of Chittagong.

## Delhi won't privatise its airlines soon

BOMBAY, May 14: The Indian government will not privatise the two state-owned airlines, Air India and Indian Airlines, until their services improve, Civil Aviation Secretary K Padmanabhaiah said here Friday, reports AFP.

He said the government had delayed plans to sell a part of its 100 per cent stake in both airlines and float a Euro issue to raise funds for ambitious expansion plans.

"The privatisation will be proceed till we improve the quality of our product," Padmanabhaiah, who is also Chairman of both airlines, said.

"Most of the year we are handling labour problems instead of improving the quality of the service. This must end and the employees must see the writing in the skies," he said, referring to increased competition by private airlines on the domestic sector.

Padmanabhaiah revealed that Air India had carried 2.2 million passengers in 1992-93 against 2.1 million in 1987-88.

"There is no appreciable growth as the number of seats and schedules had not gone up," he said, adding that the airlines planned to buy five more aircraft as part of its expansion plans.

The programme called "flying returns" will be launched on June 1

## Arabs looking to Asia for higher oil exports

ABU DHABI, May 14: Arab states, which control over 60 per cent of the world's crude, are looking to Asia, as they fear supplies to industrial states could be hit by proposed energy taxes, reports AFP.

Gulf states and other key Arab oil producers believe they will account for most of the projected growth in oil demand in Japan, China and neighbouring countries as reserves in eastern Asia are projected to steadily decline.

An official Arab report said crude demand in that region, which has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, would surge to 19.7 million barrels per day (BPD) in the year 2000 from 14.1 million BPD in 1992.

"Those countries currently import around 45 per cent of their oil needs and the level will increase to 66 per cent in the year 2000 given their relatively small reserves of around 45 billion barrels," said the report by the Cairo-based Organisation for Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"The rapid economic growth in those countries has made them the main factor in growth in demand in the world oil markets, and pro-

ducers in the Middle-East are their main sources of supply."

The report gave no figures on supplies but Japan already imports nearly two-thirds of its oil needs from the Middle-East. The region also supplies more than half the oil needs of South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

China, which has more than half the proven crude reserves in that region, produces around three million BPD but is expected to become a pure importer of crude in coming years.

Most of the imports will come from the Gulf as it has already agreed to buy oil from Saudi Arabia and other regional producers.

Gulf states control more than 90 per cent of the total Arab crude reserves and they have embarked on projects to raise output capacity to meet demand.

According to the 10-nation OAPEC, such projects will push capacity by around 10 million BPD by the year 2000, more than two-thirds of the total capacity increase in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Assuming the European Union and other members of the Organisation of Economic

Cooperation and Development did not go ahead with the proposed carbon tax, world oil demand would grow by 1.5 per cent annually to 75.3 million BPD in the year 2000 from 66.9 million BPD in 1992, according to OAPEC.

"If the taxes were enforced, demand would fall by 2.9 million BPD from its projected level in the year 2000 and by 3.4 million BPD in 2010," it said.

The tax, which has drawn sharp criticism from Gulf and other oil-producers, will start with three dollars per imported barrel and rise to 10 dollars by the year 2000.

It was proposed by the EU but its full enforcement hinges on approval by the other OECD members, the United States and Japan.

OECD states account for more than 70 per cent of the total world crude oil exports of around 39.7 million BPD. Nearly 41 per cent of OECD imports come from Arab countries, which provide 38 per cent of the world oil exports.

Gulf states argued it was only aimed at securing additional revenues to tackle European budget deficits.



The visiting Commerce Minister of Myanmar Lt General Tun Kyi called on Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam at latter's office in the city yesterday. — PID photo

## Oil stocks gain sharply in NY market

Oil stocks have been one of the few healthy sectors in an otherwise sickly stock market — oil prices have risen dramatically, and pulled the shares of big oil companies with them, reports AP.

Some analysts believe oil stocks could provide a nice cushion against future market losses.

"The earnings for the (oil) companies will continue to rise, and that's why I expect these stocks to remain as overperformers," said Michael Smolinski, energy analyst at First Albany Corp.

Smolinski bases his optimism on supply and demand trends in the oil market.

Oil prices traded at five-year low earlier this year as an international economic slowdown cut into demand at the same time that members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries were overproducing. There was also

a possibility that Iraq would resume exporting.

But oil prices began rising in early April after OPEC decided to maintain production at current levels, even though demand is expected to rise as world economies recover. Non-OPEC production is flat at best, Smolinski said.

The price of spot crude fell one dollar a barrel right after an OPEC meeting ended March 24, but since then has risen from a pre-meeting price of 15 to 18.21 dollars a barrel Friday, their highest levels since last October.

The rise in oil prices has been a boon for oil stocks. Standard & Poor's weekly oil composite index rose from 730 on April 4 to 786 this past Thursday, a gain of 7.6 per cent. The Dow Jones industrial average picked up 1.8 per cent over the same period.

Bob Walberg, senior equity analyst at MMS International

in Chicago, said the recent gains are only the beginning of a nice run for oil stocks, which tend to do better in an improving world economy.

"We should continue to see those stocks overperform," he said. "As the economy gains strength, there's more demand for oil, consequently oil stocks tend to fare better late in the (economic) cycle."

"I would be a select buyer of oil stocks," Walberg continued. "We think the market as a whole is going lower, but oil (stocks) will be last to fall."

Moreover, oil stocks have not been prominent in investors' portfolios for some time. That means fund managers who want to diversify

might be inclined to add them. And yields on oil stocks are relatively high, said Michael Metz, Oppenheimer and Co's market analyst, while the stock prices are not excessive.

The outlook is particularly rosy for large companies that produce the oil they refine and that don't have to buy crude from outsiders. They can get the maximum benefits from a rise in crude prices.

Smolinski likes Chevron, British Petroleum and Phillips Petroleum. Walberg recommends Unocal, Mobil and Texaco. Metz favours the shares of Amerada Hess, Chevron Phillips and Unocal, which he said have large proven oil reserves in North America.

Shares of exploration companies should do better as short supplies prompt them to begin drilling again, Smolinski said. "Drillers include Baker Hughes, Dresser Industries, Global Marine and Halliburton.

On Friday, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 6.84 to 3,659.68, but the Dow posted a loss of 9.82 for the week.

## US, Japan plan to resume trade talks next week

TOKYO, May 14: Pressured by punishing trends in world currency markets, US and Japanese trade officials plan talks next week aimed at breaking a three-month impasse in trade negotiations, reports AP.

The Clinton administration hopes just-inaugurated Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata will be more forthcoming than his predecessor. Morihiro Hosokawa, in working to resolve the deadlock, US Ambassador Walter F. Mondale said Friday.

"Our hope is that we will get enough in those talks next week to begin again," Mondale said. "We don't want to start talks again if we know they can't succeed."

The former vice president has taken an unusually active role in trade talks since his arrival last September. This week, he paid courtesy calls on Foreign Minister Koji Kakizawa

and Trade Minister Eijiro Hata and told them he hoped the two sides could resolve their differences.

Pressures to resume talks have built as the yen has soared as high as 101 to the dollar in world currency markets, weakening the competitive strength of Japanese exporters and posing a threat to economic recovery in both countries.

Japanese officials say they'd like to see progress in easing upward pressure on the yen before the Group of Seven industrial nations' annual summit in July.

Trade Minister Hata said Friday that both sides felt more than before that "utmost efforts" were needed. "As we've been doing from before, we will seek any possible chance and channel" to reach an agreement, he said.

Kakizawa also made a point of placing a get-to-know-you

telephone call to US trade Representative Mickey Kantor Friday night, though Foreign Ministry officials say weighty issues were avoided.

Given security concerns over North Korea's nuclear programme, the rupture over economic issues has come at an awkward time.

and get back to work on trimming Japan's 59.3 billion dollars trade surplus with the United States.

The departure of Hosokawa, who resigned last month over questions surrounding his personal finances, has helped clear the way for a compromise, although no specific proposals have been announced so far.

Trade talks collapsed during a summit between Clinton and Hosokawa in February after the two sides failed to bridge differences over how to measure progress in reducing their chronic trade imbalances.

## No beef for young German

LONDON, May 14: A German company which organises summer language courses for young Germans has asked families putting them up not to serve beef to their guests, a spokesman said Friday, reports AFP.

Europartner said it feared that parents, worried by the German government's campaign against British beef imports, would use to send their children to Britain.

Bonn is concerned because bovine spongiform encephalopathy, so-called "mad cow" disease, can be transmitted to man. The majority of cases in cattle have been detected in Britain.

Several hundred families who regularly welcome students into their homes in the summer holidays have received a letter to that effect.

"There is a lot of media coverage about mad cow disease in Germany at the moment and many people are very nervous about it."

## S Africa tries to attract foreign investment

LONDON, May 14: South Africa offers many enticing opportunities for the foreign investors in the wake of the country's first multi-racial elections, analysts say, despite warnings of a degree of political uncertainty, reports AFP.

"South Africa presents a beguiling mixture of a sophisticated, established market with the growth potential of an emerging market," said Michael Spriggs, a leading specialist with SG Warburg Securities.

"For those investors, who can live with the uncertainty, the investment case for South Africa is very appealing."

He said the country offered a "unique combination" of cyclical economic recovery, growth prospects forecast at between three and four per cent annually, improving liquidity, and stable inflation at around eight per cent.

"After years of sanctions, the global investor is signifi-

cantly underweight in this large and sophisticated stock market."

Compared with other markets of similar size and risk, such as Mexico — where overseas investment totalled 10 billion dollars last year compared to South Africa's 650 million — the country offers "unusual value."

Companies such as Robert Fleming, Bearings and Prudential Life Assurance have already set up offices in Johannesburg, while many banks and financial institutions have opened small one-man offices to keep in on the action.

Multi-nationals such as Grand Metropolitan, Sharaton and Vodaphone are just of the companies interested enough to plan South African excursions in search of joint-venture opportunities.

The South African Chamber of Commerce has identified some 200 overseas groups looking for investments.

## China to raise aid to 100m indigent

BEIJING, May 14: The Chinese government will increase aid to the 100 million poorest people, whose plight has been worsened by the country's economic miracle, according to Civil Affairs Minister Doje Cering, reports AFP.

The living conditions of the poor may be worsening for a time due to inflation, the China Daily quoted the minister as saying on Saturday.

He added that financial and material aid to the poor would be a government priority for the next five years, but emphasised that inflation would "also make the government's social relief more difficult."

Inflation has risen 20 per cent since the start of the year and in some cities the rate is more than 30 per cent. The GAP between poor and rich regions is growing ever wider in a country that officially has only 30 million people living below the poverty level, fixed at 200 yuan (23 dollars) a year.

### DESA Tender Notice

Tender No. HVL/3.115/1613 dt. 21-4-94 is invited from PDB/DESA enlisted A,B Class contractors having valid ABC Electrical Licence for Re-habilitation and Reinforcement of O and M Division at Siddirgonj under H.V Lines Division, DESA, Road No. 135, House No. 47, Gulshan, Dhaka. Detail Schedule/Tender document is obtainable at a cost of Tk. 150/- (one hundred fifty) only each set (Refundable). The City Bank Ltd. Gulshan Branch, Dhaka. Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer (P and D) DESA, Dhaka and Office of the Suptd. Engineer (E & I), GDPDP, DESA, till 25-5-94. E/M will be issued in favour of Addl. Director, RAO, DESA, Dhaka.

Executive Engineer  
H.V Lines Division  
DESA, Dhaka

মিটার টেন্ডারিং; মিটার বাইপাস এবং অবৈধ উপায়ে সরাসরি বিদ্যুৎ ব্যবহার আইনত দণ্ডনীয়

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### Japanese airliner to boost business class seats

TOKYO, May 14: Japan Asia Airways Co Ltd is to get rid of the first class section, as most passengers choose economy or business classes amid the prolonged recession, news reports said Saturday, reports AFP.

The Japanese Airliner, affiliated with Japan Airlines (JAL) Co Ltd, will to boost the number of business class seats, starting July, the Asahi Shimbun newspaper said.

Japan Asia is the first Japanese carrier to do away with the first class section.

The airline suffered a sharp decline in the number of first class passengers, with an average of 37 per cent of its first class seats occupied last year, compared with 47 per cent in 1992.

John Cameron, Vice President and Director of Human Resources of ITT Sheraton Corporation AP Division, during his recent visit, handed over awards to best employees of 1993 of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Picture also shows John L. Eaton, General Manager of the hotel.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান বুরো  
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১১৮, বশির উদ্দিন রোড, কলাবাগান, ঢাকা-১২০৫

### গাড়ি ক্রয়ের জন্য দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ পরিসংখ্যান বুরোর অধীন বাংলাদেশ কৃষি ও মারী প্রকল্পের জন্য ২ (দুই)টি মাইক্রোবাস ও ২ (দুই)টি জীপ ক্রয়ের জন্য স্থানীয় প্রকৃত এজেন্ট/সরকারীকারীদের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে। দরপত্র আশা মী ১৯-৫-৯৪ইং মোতাবেক ৪/২/৯০। বাংলা বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত প্রকল্প পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ কৃষি ও মারী প্রকল্প, ১১৮, বশির উদ্দিন রোড, কলাবাগান, ঢাকা অফিসে বন্ধিত টেন্ডার বাজে দাখিল করিতে হইবে এবং একই দিন বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার দরনামাসের উপস্থিতিতে যেই কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন সেলা হইবে না।

নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র তফসিল প্রকল্প পরিচালক এর অফিস হইতে সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস সময়ে মাল ৭৫০/- (মাত্র সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা মূল্য প্রদান করিয়া (অনুলিপিযোগ্য) সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখে কোন তফসীল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।

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