

## US spending on immigrants amounts to \$45b in '93

WASHINGTON, June 28: Spending on immigrants to the United States, both legal and illegal, cost US taxpayers almost 45 billion dollars in 1993 alone, a study released Monday shows, reports AFP.

Education at the primary and secondary levels topped the list of the US government's largest direct public outlays for immigrants (18.12 billion dollars), followed by Medicaid (9.05 billion dollars), the study found.

Legal and legalised immigrants—15.6 million people—generated 45 per cent (24.83 billion dollars) of the total 1993 immigration cost.

The influx of immigrants to the United States has had a

profound impact on employment in the United States. More than two million US workers were displaced from their jobs by immigrants in 1993, the study said.

The study predicted immigrants to the United States would cost each taxpayer 2,314 dollars over the next ten years, assistance to displaced US workers will comprise 30 per cent on this cost, it said.

The results of the study document an 'impossibility theorem', said Dr Donald Huddle, an economics professor at Rice University in Houston, Texas, who led the study.

Although he declined to make any policy recommendations, Huddle said the current

rate of US population growth through immigration is not sustainable.

Since 1970, more than 20 million people have immigrated to the United States. They include refugees, asylum recipients, legalised immigrants and illegal immigrants from all over the world.

The discrepancy between taxes paid by immigrants and the costs which they incur resulted in a per capita revenue deficit of 2,136 per immigrant in 1993, the study found.

The 1993 per capita revenue deficit for native-born US citizens and pre-1970 immigrants, however, was only a little over one hundred dollars, Huddle said.

## BSB to underwrite Tk 46.16 cr against project loans

Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) has decided to underwrite a total of Taka 46.16 crore against project loans under China suppliers credit, including loans of Taka 29.87 crore for nine projects, reports UNB.

The decision was taken in a meeting of BSB's board of directors on Monday, chaired by its chairman ATM Alamgir MP. The nine projects includes five new industrial projects.

A BSB press release said Tuesday the five new industrial projects along with three others are expected to create job opportunities for 1,327 people and contribute Taka 50 crore to the GDP.



The elected members of the Executive Committee of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) Officers Association taking oath at its installation ceremony in the city on Sunday. The State Minister for Finance Mojibur Rahman (C) is seen sitting in the front row while the Chairman of the bank ATM Alamgir MP (L) and the Managing Director M Akmal Hussain (R) are also seen in the picture.

## Russia proposes tax breaks, guarantees for investors

MOSCOW, June 28: Russia's Prime Minister, in a high-profile bid to attract foreign investment, dazzled an audience of western corporate 'cheque-writers' on Monday with a proposed package of tax breaks and legal guarantees, reports Reuters.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said the government would introduce legislation for a five-year tax holiday for foreign-owned companies, an end to restrictions on their capital movements and other measures.

"I think that all this will lower the risks for foreign investment in the Russian economy by the end of this year," he told a Moscow conference attended by top western businessmen.

Chernomyrdin, just back from a visit to the United States, said political and economic conditions in Russia were just right for a surge in foreign investment and promised stable and profitable laws for them.

"I can state definitely that the macro-economic state of the economy allows us for the

first time to tackle the investment climate," he told top executives of Coca Cola, Citicorp, BASF, United Technologies Corp and other major western firms.

"For any normal economy it is a sign of improvement when it moves towards a realistic investment policy and Russia has made first steps in that direction," he said.

Russia's 150 million educated people are a huge potential market for western firms. But constantly changing legislation, the uncertain legal status of investors and fears of political instability have so far barred any massive influx of cash.

Chernomyrdin argued that the political climate was now stable. President Boris Yeltsin was in full control of reforms, industry was restructuring according to expectations and the basics of a market economy were in place.

"Never since the start of 1992 did we have a political atmosphere in Russia so favourable for a normal course of reforms," he said.

He gave no date for when the legislation would be put to the Russian parliament, where nationalist and communist deputies frequently portray western investors as greedy exploiters.

Chernomyrdin outlined some of the proposals. They included a five-year income tax holiday for foreign-owned companies and an end to restrictions on their capital movements.

Joint venture would have the right to retain all currency earnings from their exports. Imports of materials for production by joint ventures would be free of import taxes or tariffs.

Another confidence-building measure would be to give all foreign-owned companies and joint ventures a three-year exemption from any subsequent changes to tax legislation.

If the foreign partner's investment was more than 100,000 dollar and their share of the joint venture more than 30 per cent, the exemption would be for seven years.

## 250 Bangladeshi trainees leave for ROK today

The first batch of Bangladeshi technical trainees to be employed in South Korea under the supervision of Korea Federation of Small Business will leave Dhaka for Seoul, says a press release.

A total number of about two hundred and fifty unskilled trainees comprising the batch have been selected as per specifications of the KFSB by some local manpower recruiting agents in Dhaka. These unskilled workers will receive job trainings in Korea.

The Korea government announced earlier this year that it would recruit twenty thousand workers from a number of Asian countries including Bangladesh as technical trainees. It is expected that nearly 1,600 Bangladeshi workers will go to Korea under the demand order from KFSB.

The recruitment of workers from Bangladesh will help improve further the existing economic and cooperative ties between the two countries.

## Central Insurance awards its best performers

A prize giving ceremony of the Central Insurance Co. Ltd. was held in its head office of the company in the city Sunday, says a press release.

Bashir Hossain, Executive Vice-president and incharge of Nawabpur Branch and Tasiruddin Ahmed Rumi, Senior Vice-president and incharge of Dilkusha Branch of the company rewarded for achieving the highest branch and personal business target respectively, for the year 1993.

Shah Alam Chowdhury, the Convener of the Executive Committee, distributed the prizes. Among others, company's Directors Haji Md. Amjad Hossain, Alhaj Md. Shafi, MR Ali, Shaukat Alam, Tulu Kalimullah and the Managing Director ZA Khan of the company attended the function.

They expressed sincere thanks and gratitude to the above two development executives for their outstanding performance.

## Jobless rate in Japan remains unchanged in May

TOKYO, June 28: Japan's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate remained unchanged in May from the previous month at 2.8 per cent in May, the Management and Coordination Agency said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The jobless rate among women aged 15-24 rose to a record high of 6.3 per cent, up 0.6 percentage point from April. This reflected sluggish hiring on new graduates, which tends to hit women harder than men. The rate among men aged 15-24 stood at 5.2 per cent, down 1.5 point from April.

Meanwhile, the Labour Ministry said in a separate report the ratio of job offers to job seekers dropped from 0.66 in April to 0.64 in May, or 64 job openings for every 100 job seekers.

The ratio reflects an increase of 3.8 per cent in job seekers against a 0.8 per cent rise in job openings and is the lowest level since March 1987, the ministry said.

However, a ministry official said the ratio is "within the range" of recent movement. "We cannot see that the ratio has turned onto a downward trend again," he said.

The ratio had been moving downward since March 1991 when it peaked at 1.45 after hitting a low of 0.65 in December last year. It rose to 0.67 in January.

## No plans to formally expand G-7

WASHINGTON, June 28: Clinton administration officials say there are no plans to expand the formal Group of Seven structure to include either Russia or economic powerhouse nations in Asia and Latin America, according to a USIS release.

But Russian President Boris Yeltsin will for the first time act as an equal participant in the G-7 meeting scheduled to begin July 8 in Naples, and close involvement with such countries as China, India and Brazil will be pursued through other bilateral and multilateral channels, according to the officials.

They made their comments in briefing international reporters at USIA's Foreign Press Center in advance of the Naples meeting of the leaders of the United States, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany and Japan.

Robert Rubin, assistant to the president for economic policy, first addressed the issue when a reporter asked whether the G-7 might be expanded to include certain countries that have joined the ranks of economic superpowers.

Rubin acknowledged that

some countries in Asia seem primed to have the biggest growth in the coming years, and said the United States is "very focused" on forging strong relationships with them. But that can be done without formal change to the G-7, which is just "one of the international involvements of this nation," he said.

The same point was pursued, with respect to possible Russian inclusion in the G-7, by a second senior administration official who briefed the group.

The official, who declined to be identified, observed that Yeltsin's involvement in this year's G-7 summit will mark a departure from past years when he and his predecessor, Mikhail Gorbachev, were simply "invited to make presentations."

But, he said, despite that expected "full participation" in the sessions by Russia, "the G-7 remains the G-7" and "we're quite satisfied with the G-7 the way it is."

The official lauded Russia, saying the new nation "has defied its critics" in the way it has begun to turn its economy around. "We in the West are quite impressed" with the

pace of privatisation efforts in the Russian economy, he said.

But again, he told reporters that "we don't believe Russia's economic development has been pursued far enough" to merit consideration for full G-7 membership.

The official expressed the administration's view that a number of developments in US-Russian relations in recent days had made for an encouragingly "hopeful week."

He termed signature of the Partnership for Progress agreement with Russia "a very significant development" that can be seen as a step toward achievement of "a unified Europe in the next century."

And he characterized a series of meetings between Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin as "one of the finest" ever held with a top Russian official.

An agreement on jointly developing an international space station "formally ended the space race" that began in the days of President Kennedy and Soviet Premier Khrushchev. The official made clear he did not expect the G-7 participants to announce any massive economic aid to Russia.

## Ansar-VDP rural dev bank to be set up soon

GAZIPUR, June 28: Ansar-VDP Rural Development Bank will be set up soon for the members of Ansar-VDP, reports UNB.

This was disclosed by the Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury while inaugurating yesterday the Tree Plantation and Fish Farming Campaign at Ansar Academy here at noon.

The minister inaugurated the campaign by planting a Bakul tree sapling and releasing ruhi fish fries in the lake of Shafipur Ansar Academy.

Some 50,000 fry of ruhi will be released in the lake and 20,000 saplings will be planted in the Academy premises.

Earlier, Matin Chowdhury distributed certificates among the union leaders of Ansar-VDP at a simple ceremony.

## SIA awards \$16m contract to Canadian firm

SIA has awarded a contract worth about 16 million dollar to CAE Electronics Ltd of Canada for the design and manufacture of an Airbus A340-300 flight simulator, says a press release.

The Airline will also build a 16 million dollar annex behind SIA Training Centre (STC) to house the new simulator as well as other simulators.

CAE Electronics was selected after several months of evaluation. It clinched the contract from other contenders including Flight Safety International of the US, and Thomson CSF Simulation and Training Systems Division of France. The Canadian company had designed and manufactured nine simulators for SIA, four of which are still in operation.

The A340-300 simulator will be delivered late next year and is expected to be ready for use by January 1996. SIA's order of seven A340s are scheduled to be delivered from April 1996 onwards.

The new simulator will be used for training pilots in all normal and emergency flight and ground procedures, as well as testing pilots in their bi-annual checks for licence renewals. The use of this state-of-the-art simulator will reduce the amount of aircraft time required for training and flight checks, and bring down training costs.

The STC annex will have four simulator bays, one of which will be taken up by the A340 simulator. The other bays are for simulators to be purchased in the future by SIA and SilkAir. SIA currently has seven simulators housed in the Simulator Hall at STC. These comprise three B747-400s, a B747-300, two A310s and a Learjet.

## Tree plantation campaign at BIBM

Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) yesterday observed the National Tree Plantation Campaign '94 by planting saplings at its own premises at Mirpur, Section 2, says a press release.

AHM Nurul Islam Choudhury, Director General, BIBM formally inaugurated the programme by planting a sapling at the institute's premises.

Choudhury underscored the need for massive tree plantation to maintain country's ecological balance for our survival. He also called on the officers and employees of the institute to plant saplings in their respective homes. Faculty members, officers and employees of the institute also took part in tree plantation campaign.



Shah Alam Chowdhury, the convener of the Executive Committee of Central Insurance Co Ltd, rewarding Bashir Hossain, Executive Vice-President & Incharge of Nawabpur branch on Sunday for achieving the highest business target among the branches of the company for 1993. Managing Director of the company ZA Khan and other directors are also seen in the picture.

## World oil prices steady

LONDON, June 28: World oil prices held steady in a continuation of a consolidation of the sharp gains posted over the last three months, reports Reuters.

The price of Brent Blend crude futures for August delivery, used as a benchmark for world oil, was trading around 17.40 dollar per barrel late on Monday, little changed on last Friday's close.

Oil prices have rallied some 30 per cent since the start of April in a combination of higher demand, buying interest from influential hedge funds and steady supply from the world's largest oil producers.

But some traders have been expecting a downward correction since the April-June period is usually the lowest in the year for oil demand.

"Fundamentally, we expect to see some downward retraction but I think it may be a little too early to see it plunge just yet," a London oil broker said.

Traders said the civil war in Yemen, a small oil producer, and fears that the political tension in Nigeria has staved off big-volume selling.

Nigeria, a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and one of the world's largest oil exporters, faces a strike of oil workers next week if the military government remains in power.

## Li starts Europe tour to strengthen trade links

BEIJING, June 28: Premier Li Peng left Tuesday for a three-country tour of Europe that will focus on strengthening China's foreign trade links and will help boost his image at home, reports AP.

Li's two-week visit to Austria, Germany and Romania is his first to Europe since 1992. He is traveling with a delegation of business leaders and government trade and industry officials.

The 65-year-old has been premier since 1988, but has seldom traveled abroad because he was unwelcome in many nations for his high-profile role in the crackdown on the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989.

His 1992 visit to Europe was his first to the West since the crackdown, and he was welcomed at nearly every stop by protestors supporting the Tiananmen movement. The last foreign visit he made was to central Asia in April.

Li also suffered a heart ailment last year that forced him to cancel a central Asian tour and kept him from public view for two months. Therefore this European trip is seen as an important boost to his public profile and is expected to receive extensive coverage in China's state-run media.

Speaking before his departure Tuesday, Li said he hoped to have "extensive and in-

depth exchanges of views" with his Austrian, German and Romanian counterparts on relations, economic ties and international development.

"I'm sure that my visit will serve as an impetus to the friendly relations and cooperation between China and these countries," he said at a news conference in the cavernous Great Hall of the people in central Beijing.

"China attaches great importance to its relations with the Western European countries," Li added.

Afterwards, Li bid farewell to colleagues who came to see him off, and left with his wife in a cavalcade of limousines. Li's visit to Germany will be his first as premier. Germany is China's largest European trading partner, and Li's visit returns a visit paid by Chancellor Helmut Kohl to China last year.

Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky also visited China last year, and said closer cooperation with the Chinese could help promote human rights in China.

Romania was a staunch ally of China before the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu, and Li's visit is expected to build up the two nations' post-Cold War relations.

"We seek to establish a favourable international environment for China's economic endeavours," Li said.

## Deregulation spreads to Japanese underwear market

TOKYO, June 28: Deregulation movements spread to the Japanese underwear market Monday as a German-owned manufacturer announced plans to abandon recommended retail prices and allow retailers to set their own prices, reports AFP.

Triumph International Japan Ltd, a unit of the major German underwear maker, will introduce an "open price system" for certain products this autumn, becoming the first underwear maker in Japan to deregulate retail prices.

"The decision is in line with the recent change in the distribution sector, where new types of discount outlets are starting to thrive with consumers becoming more price-sensitive," a company spokeswoman said.

A similar system has already been introduced by some consumer electronics makers and toy manufacturers in Japan.



AHM Nurul Islam Choudhury, Director General, BIBM, seen inaugurating the national tree plantation campaign '94 by planting a sapling at the institute premises on Tuesday.