

Efforts on
to meet fish
demands

MOULVIBAZAR, July 18: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on Sunday said the government was making all-out efforts to meet the increasing demands of fishes in the country, reports UNB.

He said this while releasing fry at the 'Hall haor' in Srimangal thana in the morning.

A total of 40 metric tons of fry, with the help of Asian Development Bank, will be released during the next two weeks in the 'Hall haor', costing Tk 50 lakh.

Some 400 metric tons of fishes of different sizes are expected to be produced in the 'haor' (fishing enclosure) within the next one year, said a PID handout.

Earlier, addressing a public rally at Guru Rai in Sadar thana the Finance Minister urged the people of all walks of life to remain vigilant against any conspiracy to foil the ongoing democratic process.

He said the opposition parties are indulging in bringing back the autocratic regime through their undemocratic and irresponsible practices.

Criticising the role of the main opposition Rahman said "It was Awami League which had first started malpractice and rigging in the 1973 election."

BSC seeks
cooperation
from PJMA

A joint meeting between the visiting delegation of Pakistan Jute Mills Association (PJMA) Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) and the Shippers' Council of Bangladesh (SCB) was held yesterday at the Shippers' Council office here, reports BSS.

Yahya Ahmed Bawany and Hooshang Gholami represented the PJMA while Md. Rezaul Karim and SM Mattur Rahman represented SCB. BSC was represented by its General manager MA Halim.

The representatives of BSC sought the cooperation of PJMA delegation regarding carriage of raw jute and other cargoes through BSC vessel.

In reply the Pakistan delegates requested for ensuring competitive freight rate and maintaining schedules of their vessels. Rezaul Karim, member Executive committee of SCB, stated that Pakistan is the single largest buyer of raw jute from Bangladesh. He also stressed the need for ensuring competitive freight rates and strict adherence to shipping schedule by BSC for promotion of country's exports.

Mattur Rahman, Secretary General of SCB, said that there is great potential for increasing trade between the two countries provided uninterrupted flow of goods can be ensured by the shipping lines of the two countries covering this trade.

In order to promote the trade between the two countries to the optimum level, he urged the national shipping lines of the two countries to maintain their shipping schedule in a coordinated manner.

Forum on business
role of women in
Southeast Asia

SINGAPORE, July 18: A forum on the business role of women in surging Southeast Asian economies was officially launched Sunday by Australian Trade Minister Bob McMullan, reports AFP.

McMullan described the forum as a major private sector initiative which would "send a strong message to the Asia-Pacific region that women are rightfully contributing to the economic dynamism of the region."

He told the meeting that women, whose contributions to business have been too long ignored, would play a more active business role in the region's economies in coming years.

The two-day forum, bringing together some 130 representatives who are owners and senior executives of important business enterprises, aims to correct out-of-date images of women and encourage their role in business.

The forum will feature women speakers from the six-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, as well as prominent businesswomen from Australia.

BKB distributes Tk 100000

Cold storage shortage hits
potato growers in Noakhali

MAIJDEE COURT (Noakhali), July 18: The potato growers in six thanas of the district are facing problems due to lack of cold storage, reports UNB.

Local people said the district produced a bumper crop during the current season. But the only cold storage of the district is not in a position to store the potato as per the demand of the growers.

Finding no other way out, the growers are selling the crop at the local markets at a nominal price which is far below the production cost.

Meanwhile, due to lack of storage facilities a huge quantity of potato have already been damaged causing financial loss to the growers.

Potato growers of the district urged the authorities to look into the matter and take immediate steps to set up more cold storages in the district.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Krishi Bank of the district has distributed Taka one lakh loan among the 50 poor families of Guptanka village in Noakhali Municipal area.

The loan was given to these families to set up poultry

farms, purchase sewing machines, bamboo and canes for cottage industries on 10 per cent interest.

The basic aim of the disbursement of the loan is to make the beneficiaries self-reliant.

The poor families are increasingly being interested to get the soft term loan to start income generating schemes, bank sources said.

Earlier, BKB also disbursed Tk one lakh among 50 poor families of Karimpur village in Noakhali Municipal area. The amount will be realised within 52 weeks, bank sources added.

The bank is considering to expand such loan facilities to other thanas of the district to alleviate poverty, it is learnt.

The number of child
labourers on the rise

Another report says: The number of child labourers in the district is increasing day by day.

In a recent survey conducted by an NGO, it has been found that at least 10,000 child labourers are engaged in different odd jobs in the district. More than 50 per cent of them are engaged in

Begumganj and Sadar thanas.

The child labourers between 12 and 15 age groups are working in hotels, restaurants, brickfields, farm lands and factories, carrying goods in business centres and railway stations and pulling rickshaws to eke out their living.

Poverty is forcing the guardians to send their children to such occupations which are completely in violation of the international law. These children are also being deprived of primary education and losing their health due to hard labour.

These children are working from dawn to dusk for a nominal wage. Most of them pass their nights at railway stations, footpaths and verandah of offices and residential buildings.

Taking advantage of the cheap labour the employers exploit these poor boys by depriving them of proper wages. They also tortures these boys frequently for any minor mistake in their work.

Local elite have urged the concerned authorities to set up vocational training centres for these rootless poor children so that they can grow up as skilled manpower.

Prices of
essentials
shot up in
C'nawabganj

C'NAWABGANJ, July 18: Prices of most of the essential commodities have shot up in the town and other markets of the district over the last one month causing inconvenience to the low income group of people, reports UNB.

With the announcement of new national budget, prices of essentials are gradually going up without any valid reason. Though tax has been reduced on various items, the dishonest businessmen are increasing the prices to hoodwink the ignorant people.

Edibles like palm oil, soyabean oil and mustard oil are being sold at 45, 52 and 50 per kg respectively as against Tk 38, 42 and 45 a month ago. Coconut oil is being sold at Tk 52 as against Tk 46 per kg.

Rice of various kinds are now being sold between Tk 14 and 16 per kg as against Tk 11 and 12. Indian sugar per kg is selling between Tk 28 and 30 as against Tk 24. Bangladeshi sugar is not available at the local market. Indian salt is being sold at Tk 6 per kg.

Local leaders demanded of the authorities to take stringent action against the dishonest traders who are increasing the prices of essentials to earn windfall profit at the cost of common consumers.

Essentials dear
in Maulvibazar

MAULVIBAZAR, July 18: Prices of essential commodities including soyabean oil, sugar, salt, onion, garlic and vegetable have shot up in all the markets of the district during the last few months causing immense sufferings to the consumers, reports UNB.

Middle class and the low income group of the people are the worst sufferers as they cannot afford to buy the daily necessities to maintain their livelihood.

Local people said soyabean and palm oil are being sold between Tk 55 and Tk 42 per kg respectively as against Tk 36.

Prices of onion and garlic have gone up by Tk 4 and Tk 2 per kg respectively, they added.

Besides, the prices of construction materials like rod, flat bar, tin-sheet, bamboo have shot up adversely affecting the middle class people.

A section of dishonest businessmen are demanding higher prices creating artificial scarcity in the market.

Speaker calls for ensuring
quality shrimp production

PAIKGACHA (Khulna), July 18: Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali said yesterday that the main motto of the present government was to ensure welfare of the people and prosperity of the country, reports BSS.

In this backdrop, the government had been taking extensive people-oriented development programmes for ameliorating the economic condition of the masses, he said while addressing as chief guest a meeting of cultivators and exporters of shrimp at the auditorium of Saline Water Centre here.

Jointly organised by Shrimp Cultivators Association and Fisheries Research Institute, the meeting was addressed by Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah-Al Noman as main speaker.

Presided over by President of Paikgacha Thana Shrimp Cultivators Association Azizul Karim, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Vice-President of Thana Shrimp Cultivators Association and President of Paikgacha Press Club Mostafa Kamal Jahangir.

Termining Shrimp as one of the major natural resources for earning foreign currency.

Shaikh Razzak Ali called for ensuring maximum production of quality shrimp by using minimum land through applying

Jakarta may allow
firms to import
fishing vessels

JAKARTA, July 18: The Indonesian government is now considering the proposal to allow companies to import fishing vessels to meet the urgent need for specific ships to maximise the exploitation of Indonesia's marine potentials, reports Xinhua.

The consideration was based on complain about the limited availability of fishing vessels by many businessmen involved in the domestic fishing industry, according to State Minister for Investment Sanyoto Sastrowardoyo at a recent meeting of the Agri-business club.

The minister confirmed that the national shipyards are not meeting increasing demand for fishing vessels.

The minister was in favour of this proposal, saying that it will be better to import vessels to harvest the fish ourselves, rather than letting foreign vessels steal them.

updated techniques.

Turning to country's present menace of environmental imbalance he cautioned that if the environmental pollution was not arrested in time our survival might be at a stake. He implored the shrimp culturists to cultivate shrimp in such a method with mutual cooperation so that nobody was affected by other co-cultivators.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah-Al Noman said that the present government had been trying hard to meet the requirements of the cultivators for the expansion, development and management of shrimp resources in the country.

He said, establishment of hatcheries and nurseries for production of shrimp fries, field level training to provide technical assistance to the farmers and massive research work to evolve high breed species were underway.

In this connection he stressed the need for providing training to those who were engaged in collecting shrimp fries from the natural sources and called upon the cultivators to be self-compelled for tree and green grass plantation around the farming areas.

SIA, Tata to invest in
Indian domestic airline

Singapore Airlines and Tata Industries of India have agreed in principle on a joint venture to launch a domestic airline in India, subject to approval from the Government of India, says a press release.

The parties will now proceed to carry out a joint feasibility study and to seek the necessary government approvals. This process is expected to take up to six months.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, the new airline should be operational by the end of 1995.

Both SIA and Tata are confident that the liberalisation of the Indian economy and its continued growth will be a boom for both domestic travel and tourism into India. The new airline should therefore be a welcome entrant to the Indian aviation scene.

SIA's participation in the new airline is consonant with its broader goal of investing selectively in airline and associated airport services-SIA's core competencies-in the

rapidly-growing economies of the region. SIA believes that its planned investment, apart from deriving synergistic benefits, will yield good returns in the long term.

Tata, the leading industrial corporation in India with a history stretching back a hundred years, is a logical partner for SIA. Tata had pioneered the airline industry in India with Tata Airline, which was later nationalised to become Air India.

The two organisations have similar corporate philosophies, founded on commitment to quality customer service, professional management, financial prudence, and enlightened employee relations. Both have the capacity for long-term strategic investments, characteristic of the capital-intensive airline business.

Tata's wealth of experience in running a spectrum of successful, large businesses in India, combined with SIA's proven competence in aviation, augurs well for the proposed airlines.



Md Rezaul Karim, Member, Executive Committee, Shippers Council of Bangladesh and Vice-Chairman of BJA, speaking at a meeting with the members of the Pakistan jute delegation Sunday at SCB office, Dhaka. SCB Secretary General and BSC representatives were also present. Yahya Ahmed Bowani and Hoshang Golami represented Pakistan jute delegation side.

Dhaka participating in
Tehran trade fair

The 5th Islamic Trade Fair began at Tehran International Trade Fair ground, Iran, on Saturday, a message received in Dhaka said yesterday, reports UNB.

The fair was inaugurated by President of Iran Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

The fair was organised by the government of Iran in co-operation with Trade Promotion Centre of Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

Twenty OIC member countries including Bangladesh participated in the fair and installed pavilions with products from their respective countries.

Ambassadors, heads of the

missions and a large number of delegates from the OIC member countries attended the inauguration function.

Earlier, President Rafsanjani, Commerce Minister of Iran and President of the Export Promotion Centre visited the Bangladesh pavilion.

Bangladesh Embassy officials, EPB, BJMC, BTB officials and entrepreneurs of five private sectors were present during his visit.

President Rafsanjani appreciated the design and quality of the items on display in Bangladesh pavilion specially tea, leather and lather-products, jute, jute-goods.

British women
offer needed
managerial
skills

LONDON, July 18: Women offer the managerial skills needed for businesses to succeed in the next century, a survey released today indicates, reports Reuter.

Britain's Institute of Management said the male boss will have to earn the respect of his employees if he is to avoid becoming extinct.

It surveyed 5,000 managers who said "female" skills such as teamworking, consensus management and negotiating would be more valuable to companies.

They also forecast that electronic communications would mean employees no longer work in the same offices or even the same town, or country.

Tobacco cos looking for new markets in developing world

Kevin J Kelley writes from Washington

Having glamorised cigarette smoking worldwide for half a century the United States tobacco industry now finds itself under unprecedented attack at home.

Partly as a result of an ongoing series of Congressional hearings in Washington, a social taboo against cigarette use is becoming established among all segments of the US public. A few lawmakers, responding to the growing revulsion over cigarette companies' behaviour, are urging that tobacco be declared an addictive, illegal substance.

Although cigarette prohibition is unlikely to take effect in the US anytime soon, further restrictions on tobacco advertising and on smoking in public places will be enacted during the next couple of years.

Following on their domestic successes, anti-smoking activists have begun a campaign to impede US tobacco exports to the developing world. Last January, a coalition of health groups asked the Clinton administration to discourage foreign sale and promotion of US tobacco products. They were reportedly assured by Mickey

Kantor, the top US trade official, that there would be no retaliation against countries that raise tariffs on tobacco imports.

That hands-off posture represents a major change from the tobacco export policy of the Reagan and Bush years. The Republican administrations had threatened to level trade sanctions on developing countries that erected barriers against US cigarette makers. Dan Quayle, Bush's vice-president, explicitly encouraged the overseas sale of US tobacco goods, telling an industry audience in 1990 that "tobacco exports should be expanded aggressively because Americans are smoking less."

Cigarette manufacturers were ardently pursuing that strategy even before Quayle publicly advised it. With smoking steadily declining at an annual rate of about one per cent in the US and Western Europe, the tobacco merchants have relied more and more on the developing world as the basis for their continued profit. In fact, Philip Morris, the maker of some of the most popular cigarette brands, now

sells more tobacco products abroad than it does in the US.

Smoking is becoming so widespread throughout the developing world that up to seven million people a year in poorer countries are expected to die of tobacco-related illnesses by the year 2025.

Intensive advertising campaigns on the part of US-based multinational tobacco companies entice thousands of Africans, Asians and Latin Americans into smoking. These promotion efforts are often welcomed by political and business leaders in developing nations. Many local media outlets, for example, view cigarette advertisements as a rich source of revenue, while some government officials calculate that tobacco processing operations will provide employment and help boost national economies.

The growing anti-smoking movement in some developing countries meanwhile seeks to undercut tobacco's economic appeal by citing the health costs associated with smoking. Treating diseases caused by cigarettes will require massive outlays by governments, warn

the no-smoking advocates.

"The amount of money to compensate for the effects of tobacco use (as a result of illness and death) is some three times more than the amount of revenue and income from tobacco workers," asserts Kenyan physician Paul Wangal in an article in the journal of the United Nations' World Health Organisation.

Anti-smoking campaigners also argue that Western tobacco conglomerates repatriate much of their profits, bequeathing host nations little besides higher medical expenses.

Environmental considerations are cited as well. Because tobacco is cured over wood fires, increased sales of cigarettes result in the felling of ever-greater numbers of trees, leading ultimately to soil erosion and desertification.

These points appear to be making an impact on government policy in at least a few developing countries. Cigarette advertising has recently been banned from radio and television in a couple of countries in East Asia, which is also where the US tobacco companies

have been focusing their own overseas sales drives. Tax increases on tobacco products are being imposed as well, along with laws forbidding smoking in some public places.

Proponents of healthful living have likewise mounted their own advertising campaigns in an effort to dissuade Asians from viewing cigarette use as a symbol of sophistication and prosperity. One such poster shows a semi-skeletal Statue of Liberty with a cigarette but in her raised hand.

In the US, he campaign to discourage smoking is currently pressing Congress to declare cigarettes addictive and thus make them subject to tighter government regulation. Witnesses testifying in recent weeks on Capitol Hill have accused the tobacco industry of suppressing studies that demonstrate nicotine's addictive properties.

Some cigarette companies have also been accused of increasing the nicotine content of their product in order to make it harder for smokers to reduce their intake or to quit entirely. The companies themselves concede that they

been able for some time to produce nicotine-free cigarettes but have refrained from putting them on the market. Consumers prefer the taste of nicotine-laced tobacco, industry officials maintain.

Despite having suffered crushing political setbacks, the US tobacco lobby remains powerful. Cigarette making constitutes a 50 billion dollar-a-year business, that employs some 50,000 individuals, many of whom earn above average manufacturing salaries. Tobacco growers wield considerable influence in a number of Southern states, including Virginia, Kentucky and North and South Carolina.

The industry is thus able to call upon important allies in Washington as it fights to protect its enormous market of 46 million US smokers as well as its even larger number of customers in the developing world. — Gemuri News

Kevin J Kelley was born in New York. Until recently he was Editor of the international affairs journal *Toward Freedom*. He is the author of *The Longest War*, a book on Northern Ireland.



Alastair J. Young Saiful Islam

New Directors
of BTC

Bangladesh Tobacco Company Ltd has recently appointed Saiful Islam and Alastair James Young as Directors of the Company, says a press release.

Islam, a Mechanical Engineer, joined the Company's production Department in 1979 after graduating from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

He held different posts in operations, maintenance, planning and projects rising rapidly through the Management ladder to become branch Manager of Dhaka Factory in 1989. In January this year he took over charge as Head of Production.

Young, 31, is a Scotsman. He graduated in Business Administration from the University of Dundee and received a masters Degree from the University of Scotland.

Following a five year stint with the UK auditing firm Coopers and Lybrand, he joined British-American Tobacco Company Limited in 1989 and served as Regional Finance Manager.

He was appointed Head of Finance in BTC in January this year.

Workshop on Taka
convertibility
opens at BIBM

The Director-General of Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management, A H M Nurul Islam Choudhuri, has said the Taka convertibility is very much sustainable because the country has achieved all the preconditions for convertibility.

He was inaugurating a 3-day workshop on Convertibility of Taka at its seminar hall in Mirpur near Dhaka yesterday. It was organised by BIBM.

Choudhuri explained elaborately the impact and sustainability of Taka convertibility. Unlike other countries, the impact of Taka convertibility in Bangladesh is positive and encouraging.

He said the introduction of Convertibility of Taka would eventually ensure steady economic growth and create scope for transfer of technology into the country by foreign investors.

He also asked the bank executives to equip themselves with the practical knowledge for dealing with the foreign exchange under convertibility region because sustainability of Taka Convertibility depends on efficient operations of overall banking and financial sectors.

Forty-five senior level executives of different banks and financial institutions are attending the workshop.

The coordinators of the workshop are Sk. H Rashid and Md Abu Bakar.

The workshop will conclude on Wednesday.