

Shipping Times launched

Shipping Minister M K Anwar yesterday said necessary flow of information on shipping and transportation could play a vital role in achieving a self-reliant economy, reports UNB.

"Production, marketing and transportation are the most important factors for a production-oriented economy," he said while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the "Bangladesh Shipping Times", a monthly journal, at a local hotel this evening.

Bangladesh is lagging far behind in information technology although the developed countries have advanced much in this field, the Minister told the function.

Exporters and importers face a lot of difficulties in collecting information on shipping and transportation, the Minister said and hoped that the Shipping Times would be able to help save the valuable time and expenses of the business community by providing them necessary information.

BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Shipping Times Editor Abu Yousuf, Managing Director of Trade-Clippers Mustaque Ahmed, Managing Director of APL Roger M Sklar and Country Manager Gulf Air Yahya Bu Ali also spoke on the occasion.

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury hoped that the new journal would focus on the problems and irregularities of the shipping sector and thus help the government to take necessary decisions.

Abu Yousuf assured that Bangladesh Shipping Times would play a vital role in developing shipping, air and inland transportation by providing information and giving professional suggestions.

Shanghai invests more in vegetables

SHANGHAI, Sept 6: Maqiao township, on the outskirts of Shanghai, has invested 35 million yuan in the construction of a large modern vegetable farm, reports Xinhua.

According to the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Agriculture, the farm, covering 38.8 hectare of land, has just finished construction of such facilities as greenhouses and spray irrigation works for growing vegetables.

WB pledges \$ 156 m to Gas Infrastructure Project

World Bank will provide 156 million US dollars to Bangladesh for the implementation of its Gas Infrastructure Development Project (GIDP) and the negotiation for the contract in this regard is expected to be finalised by this month, reports BSS.

This was disclosed at a meeting held here yesterday between Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain and World Bank Mission Chief in Bangladesh Pierre Landell Mills, who has resumed the post recently.

Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary M Faizur Razzak and Arun Banerjee, Chief of Energy and Infra-

structure Unit of World Bank in Dhaka were also present.

During the meeting, the Energy Minister briefed the mission chief of the prospect and possibilities of energy and mineral resources in Bangladesh. He also apprised him of the present and future strategies of the government for the exploration and development of energy and mineral resources in the country.

Outlining the present demand and supply position of electricity Dr Mosharraf said "We have to increase the generation capacity of electricity in the country to cater to the increasing demands of electricity which is the basic infrastructure of production." All future development process

will be seriously hampered if generation capacity cannot be increased, he added.

The Energy Minister also informed the World Bank Mission chief of the government's endeavours to make the power sector viable through reducing system loss and enhancing revenue collection. He said the present system loss in power sector is not up to satisfaction but the trend of system loss is towards the downward.

Proposals for new lending in power sector also came up in the discussion. The minister hoped that the donor agencies including the World Bank would come with fresh move in lending in power sector.

Adamjee Jute Mills produces 219 MT of goods everyday

Adamjee Jute Mills is now producing on an average 219 metric tons of jute goods everyday, reports BSS.

This was disclosed by Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah while he was addressing the CBA leaders of the nationalised jute mills at the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) headquarters here yesterday.

The minister said, the average per day production of Adamjee Jute Mills was only 79 metric tons when BNP came to power.

He said the increase of per day production in Adamjee Jute Mills is the mark of success of the present democratic government in managing its industrial establishment successfully.

Hannan Shah said as a result of good management, the production cost of per metric ton of jute in Adamjee Jute Mills reduced to Tk 44180 from Taka 65691.

He said production cost of per metric ton of jute carpet in BJMC mills also reduced from Tk 194237 to Tk 143599.

Hannan Shah said, all arrears dues of the jute mills workers will be paid by November next.

Bangkok asks Tokyo to redress trade imbalance

TOKYO, Sept 6: Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai asked Japan to import more from his country, especially farm products, to redress a huge bilateral trade imbalance, Japanese foreign ministry officials said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Chuan, in talks with his Japanese counterpart Tomichi Murayama, said the only issue between the two countries was that 80 per cent of Thailand's total trade deficit was with Japan.

"More than 65 per cent of

Thailand's workforce are in farms and we want you to take in more farm goods," Japanese officials quoted Chuan as saying.

Chuan arrived in Japan on Friday for a five-day visit. His trip was first scheduled for April but was postponed because of a rapid succession of governments in Tokyo.

Japanese Foreign Ministry officials quoted Murayama as telling Chuan that this government was ready to take up the issue through regular diplomatic channels.

Murayama also said Japan will extend 82.3 billion yen (823 million dollar) in loans to Thailand this year.

Projects include a 39.4 billion yen (394 million dollar) plan to improve Thailand's power supply and a 16 billion yen (160 million dollar) programme to repair roads in the central and southern parts of the country, ministry officials said.

Chuan also expressed support for Japan's bid to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

"Japan is a major contributor and it is appropriate that Japan be accepted as a permanent member of the council," Japanese officials quoted Chuan as telling Murayama.

ACI Ltd declares 20 pc dividend for shareholders

ACI Ltd has declared a 20 per cent dividend for its shareholders for the year 1993, says a press release.

The company made the declaration at its Annual General Meeting held at the conference room of the head office in the city on Monday.

It also decided to issue one bonus for each shareholder doubling the paid-up capital from 21 million to 42 million.

The Managing Director and Chairman of ACI Ltd M Anis Ud Dowla, told the shareholders that 1993 had been a year of historic significance for the company.

He said its pharmaceutical sales recorded a commendable growth of more than 39 per cent over 1992.

The company is now implementing an 80 million taka expansion plan in the factory.

Dowla reiterated the company's commitment to quality and informed the shareholders that in order to maintain the position as the leader in quality in pharmaceutical industry of Bangladesh, ACI is preparing for certification under ISO 9001. He also stated that ACI's mission is to make it the highest quality company in Bangladesh and its aim is to excel in understanding, accepting, meeting and exceeding customer expectations.

Considering the financial results and prospects, the Company declared a dividend of 20% for the year 1993 and decided to issue one Bonus Share for each share held, thus doubling the paid up capital from 21 million to 42 million.

Indonesia offers power projects to private firms

JAKARTA, Sept 6: The Indonesian State Electricity Company will assign private firms to construct 16 power generation projects with a total capacity of 4,960 megawatts throughout the country during the next five years, reports Xinhua.

Of the 16 offered projects, six will be fired with coal and four with natural gas, while the other six will be generated with geothermal steam, said the State Electricity Company's President Zuhul at a seminar held here over the weekend.

LENDING RISK ANALYSIS WORKSHOP FOR PRIVATE BANKS

ORGANIZED BY: FSRP/AGRANI BANK
13 AUGUST-05 SEPTEMBER 1994
EL PURBANI HOTEL



Mustafa Aminur Rashid, Managing Director of Agrani Bank, speaking at the certificate awarding ceremony of a workshop on "Lending Risk Analysis" for private bank officers organised by the bank and FSRP in the city Monday.

Malaysia plans to supply electricity to Thailand

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 6: Malaysia said Monday a four-member consortium led by listed landmarks BHD would soon be licensed to build a 660-megawatt power plant costing 1.3 billion ringgit (520 million dollars) to supply electricity Thailand, reports APP.

Energy Minister Samy Vellu Sanglimuthu said he would represent Kuala Lumpur at negotiations next Monday in Bangkok on the plan by the Perlis power consortium to transmit and sell electricity to southern Thailand.

He will be accompanied by former Malaysian Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin, who is Chairman of the so-called Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand growth triangle.

Landmarks, controlled by well-connected entrepreneur Samsudin Hassan, is to hold a controlling stake in the plant to be located in northern Perlis state to transmit power via specially dedicated line direct to south Thailand.

"Landmarks would be the first company allowed to undertake power transmission and distribution for export," Samy Vellu told a news conference.

It would be done on specially dedicated transmission line, he said.

The others in the venture are listed time engineering BHD and Yayasan Islam Perlis, a state-run Islamic foundation.

The government has decided that Tenaga Nasional, the national power company, should have a small stake in the plant. The exact equity structure would be worked out when negotiations with Thailand were finalised, Samy Vellu said.

"Although the government has licensed five Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to generate electricity in the country so far, we want to re-assure that transmission and distribution of power to domestic users will still be done solely by Tenaga," Samy Vellu said.

The five IPPS a only licensed to supplement Tenaga's strained capacity," he said, of the private power producers approved to end Tenaga's monopoly on power generation after the nation was hit in 1992 by serious power outages.

Tenaga was partially privatised in 1990 and was finally listed on the local bourse in May 1992.

Samy Vellu said the Landmarks consortium was the first to submit the proposal for the Perlis power venture.

Agrani Bank certificate awarding ceremony

Mustafa Aminur Rashid, Managing Director, Agrani Bank, distributed the certificates among the participants of three week long workshop on "Lending Risk analysis for private Bank officers" on Monday at a local hotel, says a press release.

Agrani Bank and Financial Sector Reforms Project have jointly organised the workshop. Twenty two participants from seven private commercial banks and Bangladesh Bank have participated in the workshop.

Rashid advised the participants to make proper utilization of the certificates they have received after finishing of three weeks training. He also advised them to prove the worthiness of their training after going back to their desk. He also said that he did not get any certificate after successful completion of training at the early stage of his service life. You are lucky enough that now-a-days the situation has changed, he added.

Patric J Vath chief of FSRP stressed the need of these categories of training programme for all bankers and it will increase the professional efficiency of the participants.

Terry J Bradigan, Allan P Beuregard and Md Omar Chowdhury were also present.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission
Atomic Energy Research Establishment
E & GS Unit
Ganakbari, Savar, Dhaka

"গাছ লাগান; গাছের পরিচর্যা করুন এবং পরিবেশ বাঁচান- প্রধানমন্ত্রী"

No. EGS-Admin-10(5)/93 Dated: 23-8-1994

Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the pre-qualified Contractors of AERE for fitting and fixing of ferrocement water tanks in the Institute buildings at Atomic Energy Research Establishment, Ganakbari, Savar, Dhaka. Tender documents containing the detailed specifications & terms & conditions of the work may be had on cash payment of amounting to Tk 50/- (non-refundable) from this office on all working days during office hours up to 13-9-94 on written request and prior permission from the undersigned. Tender should be dropped in the tender box alongwith Earnest Money amounting to Tk 1500/- up to 2.30 PM on 14-9-94 and will be opened the same day at 2.45 PM in presence of tenderers (if any, who may wish to be present). If the dropping & opening of the tender are not possible on the scheduled date due to unavoidable circumstances, the same shall be done in the next working day at the same time. No tender document will be issued on the date fixed for opening the tenders.

The authority reserves to itself the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

BAEC/SID 1(2)/94-147 Director G-1381

Patric J Vath, team leader of FSRP in Bangladesh, seen handing over some books on economics, marketing and management Monday as donation from Asia Foundation and FSRP to E A Chowdhury, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Pubali Bank Ltd, for the bank library.

Trade tariff issue in S Africa Govt-workers confrontation likely

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 6: South Africa's 1.3 million strong labour federation COSATU warned yesterday it was heading for confrontation with President Nelson Mandela's government of national unity on the question of trade tariff, reports AFP.

At a press conference here, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) General Secretary Sams Hilowa accused Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel of treating unions "with contempt" for slashing tariffs on imported cars on Friday, at the height of a bitter auto strike.

COSATU President John Gomomo was even more blunt, "I see it as a confrontation,"

he told the press conference. Manuel last month announced the government planned to cut South African tariffs in the clothing and textile industries 50 per cent lower than General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) binding levels, incurring the wrath of the Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, a COSATU affiliate.

While acknowledging that COSATU had been part of a task force negotiating tariff changes for South Africa's planned entrance to GATT, Hilowa said, Manuel had acted "unilaterally and provocatively" in implementing the changes.

These actions not only ap-

pear oblivious to the destruction of jobs but appear to be calculated at strengthen employers, had in strike-breaking and union bashing," he said, reading from a prepared statement.

The statement represents the fiercest attack yet on the African National Congress (ANC)-led government by COSATU, the country's largest trade union federation.

The unbanning of the ANC in 1950 saw the emergence of a powerful alliance comprising the ANC, COSATU and the South African Communist Party, which won 62.65 per cent of votes in April's historic all race elections.

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ ফরম নং ২৯০৮ (সওজ) সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবানের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-১১/সওজ/৯৪ বিঃ খুলনা/৯৪-৯৫ ইং
২। কাজের নামঃ ১৯৯৪-৯৫ইং অর্ধ বছরে (সওজ) ফেরী বিভাগ, খুলনার অধীন বিল্ডিং ২৯০ ও ১০০ অংশে অলমো-পেন্টা সেলিং ডিজেল ইঞ্জিনে ব্যবহারের জন্য ডিজেল ফিটার সরবরাহের কাজ।

৩। প্রাক্কলিত বায়ঃ টাইঃ ৪,০০,০০০/-
৪। বায়নার টাকঃ টাইঃ ৮,০১৬/-
৫। কাজ সম্পাদনের জন্য অনুমোদিত সমস্ত কার্যসেবা জারির তারিখ ইইতে ৪৫দিনের মধ্যে।

৬। প্রিকারের যোগ্যতাঃ
"সওজ" অধিদপ্তরধীন তালিকাভুক্ত 'এ' ইইতে 'সি' সাধারণ শ্রেণীর প্রিকারসমূহ।
কেন্দ্রী সার্কেল, খুলনার ডি.
কেন্দ্রী বিভাগ, খুলনার ই.

৭। দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী কর্মকর্তাঃ ১। তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ফেরী বিভাগ, বয়রা, খুলনা (সড়ক ভবন)।
২। নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ফেরী বিভাগ, রেলিগেট, খুলনা।

৮। দরপত্র প্রাপ্তির স্থানসমূহঃ ১। নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ফেরী বিভাগ, রেলিগেট, খুলনা এবং উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ফেরী উপ-বিভাগ, রেলিগেট, খুলনার কার্যালয়।

৯। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখঃ ১৯-০৯-৯৪ইং, ০৪-০৬-১৪০১ বাঃ।
১০। দরপত্র গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখঃ ২০-০৯-৯৪ইং, ০৫-০৬-১৪০১ বাঃ, ১২.০০ বিঃ পর্যন্ত।
১১। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখঃ ২০-০৯-৯৪ইং, ০৫-০৬-১৪০১ বাঃ, ১২.৪৫ বিঃ।

মোঃ জহির
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, যন্ত্রক (সওজ)
ফেরী বিভাগ, রেলিগেট, খুলনা।

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Clay resource for brick manufacturing

The teacher's lounge of the Science faculty of Dhaka University, situated in a newly constructed building at a corner of the Curzon Hall Campus, has its wall appearance spoiled by a kind of moist and damp condition and a grayish white deposit. "It is probably a typical example of a phenomenon known as efflorescence which is caused by an excess of salt like sulphate of calcium, potassium or magnesium, in the brick. These soluble salts act like hygroscopic bodies that absorb moisture from the atmosphere and create damp condition. So those bricks which are made of clay with high salt content would create this kind of problem — common in many of the city buildings" — explained Dr. Sifatul Quader Chowdhury, a teacher of Dhaka University who has been carrying out research on clay qualities of various clay deposits used in brick fields around Dhaka.

Clay is the main raw material for brick manufacturing. Brick, being one of the basic materials for construction work, has a major bearing in the development of the infrastructure of the country.

There are more than 2500 brick manufacturing units in the country. These units use local clay as raw material with

no concerns to its quality and effect on the finished product. Also, the brick manufacturers do not always maintain standard or optimum procedures for achieving perfection in the finished product; i.e. poor burning of the brick would give a poor quality brick specially in clays rich in organic matters, using sulphur rich coal for brick burning would produce harmful sulphate salt in the brick.

Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute (BSTI), in its examination of brick samples from cross section of the brick units found the quality of many of the brick units below a recommended standard. This is one of the reasons for low longevity of the constructed buildings in the city and the country. "There is no set standard of quality that is being adopted by the brick manufacturers. There should be set of rules imposed upon the brick manufacturers restricting the use of low quality clay as raw material as well as low standard of manufacturing procedures" — opined a member of BSTI.

Clay is an important resource that is well abundant in our country, Bangladesh, being part of the second largest delta region in the world, has its

surface environment suitable for clay deposits. The Bengal plain is drained by the major river system of the Ganges—Brahmaputra-Meghna with its numerous tributaries and distributaries. The country is thus criss crossed by (i) river channels where sands and silts are being deposited and (ii) low lying intertributary areas where active flow of water is absent and clay deposition could take place. Thus, during the Holocene period, beginning about 45,000 years ago, considerable clay layers have been laid down in the Bengal plain as alluvial. This clay, characteristically plastic, gray to grayish black, forms the raw material for brick manufacturing.

To get the best result in making ordinary bricks, the clay should contain some percentage of fine sand so that when prepared with water, it can be moulded and dried up with no cracking and warping. However, too much sand would make the brick brittle and weak. Harmful constituents in clay include stone particles, soluble salt, pyrite and high organic content. The salts commonly present in bricks are sulphates and chloride. In addition to absorbing moisture

and creating damp condition the salts may, on drying, leave behind a grayish white deposit which not only spoils the appearance of the wall but also reduces resistance to weathering and cause decay in bricks.

Thousands of brick-making units operating in the country use surficial clay of the alluvial plain of the land. Visits to some of the major units around Dhaka and Narayanganj i.e. Pagla, Fatulla, Aliganj, Hazaribagh, Mirpur and Mohammadpur area have shown that these units are radically independent, self contained and with least interest in clay quality or any advice regarding standard of manufactured bricks. While analyses of the clays collected from Fatulla, Pagla, Aliganj area show good quality of the clay, the clay collected from Hazaribagh area have shown to contain too much harmful salt.

Salts in the brick may come from the original clay raw material as a natural component. But salt may also be incorporated artificially either from industrial pollution or from using bad quality coal for brick burning. In the Hazaribagh area, salts are drained down from the leather industry units as industrial waste and mixed with the clay deposits of

the surroundings only to degrade the latter.

A survey of the bricks manufactured from Hazaribagh area clay has pointedly shown the low quality of the bricks because of high salt contents. This is perhaps a classic example of how industrial pollution can damage the quality of indigenous clay resource which subsequently finds its way as low quality brick.

A second way in which sulphate salts may be incorporated in the bricks is by using low quality sulphur rich coal for brick burning. By this process sulphur of the coal is reduced to sulphate and form sulphate salt in the brick. It has been reported recently that coal imported from the Indian state of Meghalaya contains high level of sulphur. While a maximum level of one per cent of sulphur is considered permissible, the Meghalaya coal contain two to four per cent sulphur. These coals are much inferior to the Gondwana coal of West Bengal or the one found beneath the surface of Dinapur and Rangpur districts of Bangladesh.

However, because of the cheaper price of the Meghalaya coal, a huge amount of it is being imported by the traders taking advantage of the absence of specific policy of the government in this regard.

According to a source, over five lakh tons of coal were imported into Bangladesh during 1992-93, of which four lakh tons were from Meghalaya and the rest from West Bengal and Indonesia. Use of these high sulphur coal is not only degrading the finished brick products but also polluting the environment by releasing sulphur dioxide gas into the atmosphere.

Most of the people engaged in the brick making industry have little or no interest in the physical or chemical properties of clay to be used for brick-making. Also the brick burning procedures are not standardized. As a result the brick-manufacturing industry lacks a sound base of standard across the country to be maintained. Thus the ultimate brick products are not always coming out as no. 1, which may give rise to engineering and constructional hazards. There should be more concern on the quality of raw clay material and brick burning procedures to ensure good quality brick, a commodity fundamental to any development work, but receiving less than required attention.

(The writer is a Professor of Geology Department of Dhaka University.)