

Plan to open four special centres including Bangladesh S Korea to compensate illegal workers for industrial hazards

SEOUL, Sept 17: South Korea will open special centres in its overseas missions to compensate foreigners who suffered job-related injuries while working illegally in South Korea, officials said Saturday, reports AP.

The centres will process applications for compensation from former illegal alien workers who were forced to leave South Korea without compensation for injuries from industrial accidents.

Those who have suffered injuries since February 1991 are eligible to file applications before the end of this year, the

Labour Ministry said.

South Korea plans to open the centres in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh. In other countries, its diplomatic missions will handle any applications.

In February, the government, bowing to a court ruling, said that illegal workers will be eligible to receive the same amount of compensation as their South Korean counterparts for work-related injuries.

An increasing number of foreign workers, mostly from China, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal and other Asian countries, have been entering

South Korea, where as manual labourers they can earn several times more than at home.

Some 54,000 who have overstayed their visas are suspected of working illegally, according to the Justice Ministry.

Reports of abuse of illegal workers have also increased, and many foreign workers have complained of long hours and cramped and dangerous conditions at the factories.

So far, some 130 unauthorised foreign workers have received government-sponsored insurance payments totaling dollars 1.35 million, officials

say. But many, some crippled, had to leave the country because of the lengthy legal procedures for getting compensation.

Currently, South Korea sponsors 20,000 foreigners in an apprenticeship programme to ease work shortages in its labour-intensive businesses. This year, the government plans to invite 10,000 additional workers.

As the nation becomes more prosperous, an increasing number of South Koreans have shunned manual labour, forcing many small businesses to shut down.

Charter freighter uplifts garments

A DC8-63F aircraft chartered jointly by Enem Enterprises Ltd and Schenker International Germany landed at Zia International Airport last week and uplifted about 30 tons of export readymade garments from Dhaka, says a press release.

This freighter was routed directly from Dhaka to Europe. The flight was handled at ZIA by Enem Enterprises Ltd, pioneer in the Bangladesh air cargo and freight forwarding industry.

Enem has been the first IATA air cargo, and Biman approved agency in Bangladesh since 1981.

This uplift significantly relieved the huge backlog of garment consignments clogging ZIA during August '94 and permitted several exporters to be able to negotiate their letters of credits which would have otherwise expired causing severe financial distress to exporters and loss of valuable foreign exchange for the country.

The export community in the country recognises this as a worthwhile service rendered by Enem to the trade at a critical time.

26 GATT members ratify Uruguay Round accords

GENEVA, Sept 17: Only 26 members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) had ratified the Uruguay Round agreements as of September 12, out of total of 125 called on to act, sources said at GATT yesterday, reports AFP.

The agreements call, among other things, for creation of the successor agency to GATT, the World Trade Organisation, as of next January 1. They also liberalize world trade.

GATT members that have already ratified are Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Central African Republic, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Germany, Greece, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Surinam, Tanzania, Uganda, UK and Zambia.

US trade weapon brings mixed results, review shows

WASHINGTON, Sept 17: A comprehensive review of two decades of US trade fights with the rest of the world found that America's most feared weapon brought decidedly mixed results in opening overseas markets, reports AP.

The Institute of International Economics issued a 500-page study Friday analysing the 72 cases that have been brought using Section 301 of the 1974 Trade Act — a provision allows the president to impose unilateral trade sanctions against countries found to have erected unfair barriers against US exports.

The head of the institute, a non-profit research organization specializing in trade, meanwhile predicted enough progress in the next two weeks on trade conflicts with Japan to deter the administration from targeting Japan under Section 301.

"I am optimistic. I think there is a good chance they will come to a partial agreement get enough agreement... on enough issues on the table to be able to declare a modest victory," said IIE director C Fred Bergsten, who was an Assistant Treasury Secretary

under former President Carter.

The study found that while successful market-opening agreements resulted from about 50 per cent of the cases brought under 301, the actual impact on America's trade performance was modest.

The institute estimated the gains at no more than four billion to five billion dollars in increased US exports annually a figure equal to about one per cent of total US exports.

The study covered not only the regular 301 but a provision known as Super 301, under which the president publishes an annual target list of the barriers he judges to be the most offensive. This provision was in effect for two years during the Bush administration and was reinstated earlier this year under Clinton.

Clinton's self-imposed deadline for publishing a new priority list is September 30, and Japan was viewed as the chief target country.

"It is a very public and very visible threat that can backfire," said Thomas O Bayard,

one of the authors of the report.

There were some indications Friday of progress on US-Japanese issues. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen praised a limited step taken by the Japanese that will allow large US securities firms to issue bonds backed by such things as residential mortgages, so-called asset-backed securities, for resale in Japan.

"I hope this will lead to broader liberalization of the asset-backed securities market in Japan which would be an important step forward in the development of Japan's capital markets," Bentsen said in a statement.

But Bentsen went on to say that there had been very little progress toward the central US objectives of increasing access for US firms to the huge private and public pension fund market in Japan.

This area of financial services is one of the so-called framework negotiations being undertaken with Japan to open that country's markets as a way of narrowing a \$60 billion trade gap between the two countries.



M Shamsul Islam, Minister for Commerce, seen delivering inaugural address at the seminar on Consumers Interest Protection Act, organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) in cooperation with Ministry of Commerce and Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) at the chamber auditorium in the city yesterday. (From left to right) A Rob Chowdhury, President, DCCI, A H Mofazzal Karim, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Sajjatzat Jumma, Senior Vice-President, DCCI are also seen in the picture.



The 2nd batch of the newly-recruited BCS (Tax) officials consisting of 28 members was received by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka yesterday for practical training. They are seen with, among others, Latifur Rahman, President, MCCI and Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, Chairman, NBR — (Top).

The BCS officials paid a visit to Bangladesh Lamps Limited and Bangladesh Electrical Industries Ltd. (Licensed Manufacturer of Philips Lighting products, Radio & TV sets) in Mohakhali. The visit was organised by the MCCI, Dhaka — (Above).

Seminar on project implementation opens

A week-long seminar on "country project implementation management" under the sponsorship of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in collaboration with the government of Bangladesh has begun at a local hotel here yesterday, reports BSS.

The Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary, Latifullah Majid inaugurated the seminar with a call for speedy aid utilisation and implementation of development projects.

Van Der Linden, chief of Bangladesh resident office of the Asian Development Bank, speaking on the occasion said that the seminar was designed to enhance the efficiency of different project implementations.

P Kulapongse, senior project specialist and M A Ahmad, control officer of the bank's Bangladesh resident office also spoke at the inaugural session.

About 30 officials, mostly project directors and managers, who are connected with ADB assisted projects, are attending the seminar.

Various aspects of project implementation in the context of Bangladesh will be discussed in the week-long seminar.

Australia urges China to widen wool market

BEIJING, Sept 17: Australian Trade Minister Bob McMullan made a fresh appeal on Friday for China to widen access to its wool market in order to gain Australia's backing for Chinese membership of GATT, reports AFP.

McMullan said he remained "optimistic" about bilateral talks on wool trade, but made it clear that resolution of the disputes was the key to gaining Australian support for China's entry into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

"We are seeking significant reductions" in tariffs, McMullan told a press conference after talks with Chinese counterpart Wu Yi, crowning a 10-day Chinese tour.

"I think today we have achieved a step forward in that process, such that the momentum for trade negotiations may be able to be regained," he said.

He added that he believed that "the tone and the content" of Friday's meeting "suggested, there is a prospect for flexibility" by the Chinese side.

China is the biggest single buyer of Australian wool, purchasing 130,000 tonnes last year. Purchases were 60,000 tonnes in the first half of 1994 worth 188 million dollars.

China last year reduced its tariff on wool tops to 15 per cent and temporarily cut it to 10 per cent for raw wool. But Australia is seeking "further significant improvements" in light of China's bid to rejoin GATT.

McMullan said Friday: "I was reassured by madame Wu Yi that future levels of wool imports will not be less than the present level."

"I am confident we will get a sufficient outcome, early enough for us to be able to (maintain our) position" of support of China's GATT application, he said.

China was a founder member of GATT, but quit after the communists came to power in 1949. It re-joined in 1986 and hopes to be readmitted by the end of the year in order to join the GATT successor, the World Trade Organisation, which will be launched on January 1.

Turning to the outlook for trade cooperation, McMullan said his trip, which included stops in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing, could open the way for deals in construction, electronics, telecommunications and insurance.

Australian exports to China rose 28 per cent in value terms in the first half of 1994. China ranks behind Hong Kong as the prime target for Australian investment.

Oli in Qatar Expatriates urged to offer mite in uplift

Communications Minister Oli Ahmad called that the Bangladeshis residing abroad to give their mite in nation building activities, reports UNB.

He said Bangladeshis living in every corner of the world should have one and only identity that they are 'Bangladeshis'.

The minister was addressing a reception accorded to him by the Bangladeshi community in Qatar, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Oli Ahmad called upon Bangladeshis where they are and whatever ideology they belong to, to join hands to work together for their common goal of national development.

The minister apprised the Bangladeshi community of the recent reforms and development activities in Bangladesh which are being carried out, side by side with poverty alleviation programmes.

He urged them to assist the process of mobilisation of resources for investment in the country.

Presided over by Abdul Momin, the meeting was also addressed by Bangladesh Ambassador in Qatar Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

Oli Ahmad said Bangladeshis people are rated very high in Qatar for their honesty, hard work and sincerity.

Seminar on promotion of self-help groups begins

A two-day national seminar on "promotion and linkages of self help groups with financial institutions" began at the Bangladesh Bank headquarters in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Khorshed Alam, Governor of Bangladesh Bank, inaugurated the seminar organised by the bank in collaboration with the Centre for International Cooperation and Training in Agricultural Banking (CICTAB).

A total of 32 participants and 20 observers drawn from the CICTAB, Bangladesh Bank, government-owned banks, NGO bureau, Ministries of Finance, and Youth and Women Affairs, Asian Development Bank, USAID, NGOs and Financial Sector Reform Programme are participating in the seminar.

The seminar is being conducted by twenty-one resource persons.

S Africa's gold output rises

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 17: South Africa's gold output increased by 3.75 per cent in August over July, the Chamber of Mines representing major mining houses said yesterday, reports AFP.

August's production was 49,330 kilograms compared with July's 47,546 kg, the chamber said.

However, August's total was down 3.35 per cent on the 51,042 kg produced in the same month in 1993.

Government of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD,
Road Division, B. Baria
Phone No-3632.

Notice Inviting Tender

1. Tender Notice No. : 17/E. E. RHD, Road Divn. B. Baria of 1994-95.
2. Name of work : Construction of 10'-0" span RCC box culvert on diff. KM of Volta-Arihazar-Banchharampur Road under B. Baria Road Divn. during 1994-95 in 2 (two) Groups.
3. Estimated Cost : As per Group List
4. Earnest money : As per group list in BD/TC Protirakha Chanchaya Patra/5 years BD Sanchaya Patra or Vonuch Sanchaya Patra to be deposited in favour of the undersigned.
5. Name of offices in which tender documents will be available for purchase : The Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Divn. Comilla/Noakhali/Laksmipur/Chandpur/Planning & Design Divn, Comilla/Planning (Road & Bridges) Divn. & all SDE office RHD, and Office of the undersigned.
6. Name of offices in which tender will be received : The Add. Chief Engineer, RHD, Comilla Zone, Comilla/The Superintending Engineer, RHD, Road Circle, Comilla/Superintending Engineer, RHD, Monitoring & Evaluation Circle, Dhaka & office of the undersigned.
7. Time allowed for completion of work : As per Group List.
8. Last date of selling of Tender : Up to 9-10-94 during office hours.
9. Last date and time of receipt of tender : Up to 12-30 PM on 10-10-94.
10. Last date & time of opening of tender : At 12-45 PM on 10-10-94.
11. Eligibility of Contractor : As per Group List.

Gr.No.	Name of the work with Location	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Date of receipt of tender	Time allowed for completion of the work from the date of issue of work order	Eligibility of Contractor
1 (one)	Construction of 10'-0" span RCC box Culvert on different KM of Bulta-Arihazar-Banchharampur road under B. Baria Road Division during 1994-95. —do— —do— at 4th KM of Bulta-Arihazar-Banchharampur road.	Tk. 4,86,064/-	Tk. 9,722/-	10-10-94	45 (Forty five) days	'A' to 'D' Special Category Contractor under RHD only.
2 (Two)	—do— —do— 5th KM of Bulta-Arihazar road.	Tk. 4,86,874/-	Tk. 9,638	10-10-94.	—do—	—do—

Md. Kamal Uddin
Executive Engineer, (RHD),
Road Divn. B. Baria

Sony-Panasonic entry to shake up Indian TV market

NEW DELHI, Sept 17: India's television market, growing on the back of a middle-class consumer boom, is all set for a shake-out following the proposed entry of Sony and Panasonic, reports AFP.

Local manufacturers, who sold 1.4 million colour and three million black and white sets last year, are busy devising strategies for the survival of their products in a market expected to be transformed by Japanese brand power.

Quality improvement and innovation have become the buzzwords as the industry, whose sales are projected to grow at an annual rate of 20-25 per cent, readies for the competition.

Gulu Mirchandani, manufacturer of the popular Onida brand which has built up an 18-per cent market share with a horned devil as its mascot, asked the industry at a weekend seminar to "wake up" and tackle the coming challenges.

While the entry of the Japanese will expand the market and benefit the consumer by improving quality, the industry has to face up to the question "what will happen to Indian brands?" he said.

"The Indian consumer will not discard a brand simply because it is an Indian brand", he said, citing the example of the Bajaj scooter, which has retained its leadership position against competition from Japan's Honda and Italy's Piaggio.

But, he added: "If we are to fight Sony and Panasonic, we will have to upgrade quality tremendously."

Roy Paul, a senior official in the department of electronics, told industry representatives a 'shakeout' was inevitable although the market was large enough for the fit to survive.

"When Sony and Panasonic are here a lot of industries will die just as Onida killed many local companies," he said.

Sony proposes to set up a wholly-owned subsidiary to manufacture and market a range of electronic products including colour television sets.

Matsushita, manufacturer of the Panasonic range of electronics, is trying up with Salora International to make television sets and audio equipment.

Akai of Japan, Grundig of Germany, and Samsung and Gold Star of South Korea are also stated to enter the 1.5-billion-dollar consumer electronics market.

The Indian television industry is experiencing a boom after shrugging off a two-year recession, profiting from the growing middle-class buying power and duty concessions offered by the government.

Series of colour sets, spurred on by the increasing reach of cable and satellite television, a reset to hit three million by 1997 and five million 2000, according to industry projections.

Sales of black and white sets are expected to taper off at about seven million units by 1997.

The industry's potential to grow is immense, according to an industry estimate, there are just 3.3 television sets for every 100 Indians against 13 for every 100 Chinese.

Manufacturers such as BPL, Onida and Videocon have built up enviable market shares and marketing networks in a short period of time while several established brands — Weston, Crown and Murphy — withered away.

Product quality, technology, economies of scale and strong brand pull is where the foreign majors score over Indian counterparts, analysts say.

Mirchandani, whose Onida has sold on a catchy slogan billing its 'neighbour's envy, owner's pride', said the quality of components such as picture tubes, tuners, resistors and capacitors would have to improve drastically.

"Product innovation would have to be the main plank of our strategy," he said, urging manufacturers to allocate more money to research and development "we need a strong base in production of materials and components."

Azerbaijan, foreign consortium to sign oil deal

LONDON, Sept 17: The Azerbaijan state oil company and a Western consortium on Tuesday are to sign a contract worth 7.4 billion dollars covering the exploitation of three offshore oil fields in the Caspian Sea, the Itar-Tass news agency reported yesterday, says AFP.

The agency, in a report monitored here by the BBC, quoted Azerbaijan President Geidar Aliyev as telling a news conference in Baku the deal would require ratification by the national parliament.