

'Credit for export to CIS inadequate'

By Sohel Manzur

The amount of credit for export to CIS member countries is too inadequate to meet the requirements, according to official sources.

The government arranged the 35 billion US dollar credit for the exporters concerned as an alternative to the Letter of Credit (LC) system due to lack of modern banking system in the former Soviet republics.

The Commerce Ministry had proposed 50 million dollars of credit for export to the entire region. Some officials of the ministry, however, said the proposed amount was needed for export to the Russian Federation only, one of the 11 members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The Finance Ministry, however, reduced the amount to 20 million dollars. Commerce ministry officials said.

With the credit, goods were being exported only to the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, although there is a high demand for some Bangladesh goods in the whole region, the officials said.

Despite limitations, Bangladesh exporters have managed to get a considerable market for the local goods in the region, which enabled the country to enjoy a favourable balance of trade with it, the officials said. But they will fall far behind exporters of other countries if the amount of credit is not increased immediately, the officials noted.

Due to lack of modern banking system in the CIS member countries, some Bangladeshi firms have even opened their offices in some of the countries to take advantage of the huge potential markets there, sources in the business circle said.

A top official of the Commerce Ministry, talking to The Daily Star, stressed the need for setting up Bangladesh missions in all the CIS member countries to help promote exports to those countries.

Presently, there is a Bangladesh mission only in the Russian Federation.

The goods exported to the CIS countries include jute, jute goods, carpet, tea, hides and skin, textile fabric and ready-made garments. Bangladeshi toiletries and cosmetics have also good demand in those countries.

The imports from the region include machinery, chemicals and manufactured goods.

The export earnings from the region in 1992-93 was Tk 86.92 crore as against the import bill of Tk 43.42 crore. The earnings were Tk 84.86 crore and Tk 120.03 crore in 1991-92 and 1990-91 as against the import bills of Tk 44.96 crore and Tk 87.40 crore respectively.

AL: Caretaker govt

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of the AL met yesterday evening at the official residence of Sheikh Hasina to discuss the strategy for the proposed dialogue. Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim, who attended the meeting, told this correspondent that the Opposition would press for discussing the caretaker government issue at first at the dialogue. The meeting also decided that Samad Azad would be leading the Opposition delegation at the first round of the dialogue. The other members of the delegation were yet to be named, Nasim said.

The leaders of the opposition parties and in parliament are scheduled to meet this afternoon to have detailed discussion on issues relating to the talks.

On the other hand, the BNP negotiating team comprising Prof Badruddin Chowdhury, party Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder and Khan-daker Delwar Hossain also had a brief meeting on the issue yesterday evening. According to meeting sources, the BNP would try to have strengthening of the Election Commission as the first item on the agenda for the talks.

Salam Talukder felt that the Election Commission issue was the first item on the agenda fixed by the Commonwealth Secretary General and agreed to by the Opposition. "There should now be no controversy on the order of the subjects for discussion," Talukder told a press conference Monday.

But Nasim told this correspondent last night that the

Rabin, Arafat

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crecy prior to the formal announcement of the most coveted of the Nobel Prizes, which are worth 7 million Swedish kronor (dhs 93,000) this year.

Arafat and Rabin gave a historic impetus to Middle East peace with a handshake on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993, that ended the taboo on formal recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. They signed a declaration of principles on limited Palestinian self-rule as a first step toward an overall peace settlement between the two sides.

Afternoon, quoting unidentified sources, said the five-member Nobel committee struggled with its decision at a meeting last Friday over who should be honoured for achieving last year's historic Middle East peace breakthrough during secret talks in Norway.

S M Sultan

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The general Officer Commanding of Jessore, Major General Mohammad Mostafizur Rahman Bir Bikram, Deputy Commissioner of Jessore and elite of the town were present.

Earlier, the body of the late master painter was kept at the Jessore Institute from 7am allowing people to pay their respect.

Thousands of people lined up to have a last glimpse of the late legend.

Sultan passed away at the Jessore combined military hospital Monday afternoon.

He was suffering from various respiratory complications.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Teachers Association in a message yesterday condoled the death of Sultan.

The Bangla Academy in a statement said the void created by the death of Sultan would never be filled.

Director General of the Shilpakala Academy, Mobarak Hossain Khan in a message said Sultan's works created a new wave in our conscience.

The Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies also condoled the death of Sultan and prayed for the eternal peace and salvation of the departed soul.

The National Museum yesterday held meeting to condole the death of S M Sultan.

The meeting, presided over by Director General of the museum Md Moslem Ali, observed one minutes silence to pay homage to the late artist.

The meeting recalled the contribution of Sultan in the field of art. His works had immortalised the soil, the people and their dreams. The artist, till his last days, had shared his life with the common man, the meeting said.

Kumari Puja

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destroyed the emblem of evil — Mahishasur — and established peace on earth.

The adjacent areas of puja mandaps took a fair-like look with hundreds of small shops of handicraft, balloons, different types of traditional sweets and foods, posters, wood and clay works, dolls and toys.

More than 100 puja mandaps have been set up at different parts of Old Dhaka, particularly at Shakhari Bazar, Tanti Bazar, Bangla Bazar, Sarpur, Rathkhola and Sarpur.

State Minister for Environment and Forests Keswar Roy yesterday visited different puja mandaps, including Dhakeswari Mandir, main puja mandap of the city.

Addressing a gathering at the Dhakeswari Mandir, he said this country is a wonderful example of communal harmony and hoped that the festival would help the people maintain peace and progress.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia speaking with His Majesty the Yang Di Pertuan Agong Taanku Jaafar Abdul Rahman yesterday, during an audience with the King at Istana Negara (the National Palace). In the middle is the High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP photo

Private sector cooperation

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Minister expressed his confidence that the existing trade imbalance would improve towards Bangladesh's favour given the present favourable trade and investment climate in Bangladesh.

Begum Zia sought special and differential market access in Malaysia for Bangladeshi goods and said the present trade imbalance would be reduced through a more innovative policy response from the Malaysian government.

Referring to the significant structural reforms in Bangladesh leading to macro-economic stability, she described Bangladesh as ideally suited for foreign investment.

Begum Zia welcomed Malaysian investors to take this advantage and requested Malaysian government to encourage their entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh.

She also expressed her happiness that a good number of Bangladeshi nationals were working in Malaysia and their employment there was mutually beneficial for both the countries.

Begum Zia said that Bangladesh would continue to positively respond to the Malaysian requirement for more competitive and disciplined work force.

The Prime Minister said that the people of Bangladesh treasured the ties with the brotherly people of Malaysia and the two Asian countries had traditional links of shared history, culture and faith.

Describing the plight of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina and elsewhere as a cause of concern, she said that both Bangladesh and Malaysia had strongly protested against the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

She said Bangladesh and Malaysia were united by their common aspirations for development and progress and the

'Port Net' project for Ctg Port

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Oct 11: Government is likely to implement a 2.5m computerisation project for handling container cargo at the Chittagong port here by early 1995.

The project named 'Port Net' has been planned by the authorities in the backdrop of rapid growth of container cargo, sources said.

On implementation of the project, Customs, port users and port authority will come under the most modern and sophisticated system as in Singapore Port.

Besides, it will ensure better coordination among them, the source said. The huge volume of paper works needed under the existing port and

Computerised container cargo handling by '95

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Pakistan urged to run special trains

KARACHI, Oct 11: India has asked Pakistan to run special trains to repatriate people stranded on both sides of the border since Islamabad closed air, sea and land links after an outbreak of plague in India. A statement from the Indian consulate in Karachi also urged Pakistan to clear goods held up at the Attari-Wagah border crossing, reports Reuter.

'Poorest still to benefit from NGO activities'

By Staff Correspondent

The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has so far reportedly distributed loans of about Tk 1,000 crore among the poor people in some 40 thousand villages in the country.

But the poorest of the poor who comprise about 10 per cent of the people, has not yet benefited by the activities of the NGOs, officials of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) told a group of journalists at a dialogue yesterday. Some 35 lakh families were being benefited by the NGOs presently, said an estimate given at the dialogue held at the ADAB office in the city.

If you include the loans provided by the Grameen Bank in those given by the other NGOs the total would stand at around Tk 3,000 crore, said Executive Director of ADAB Rashed K Chowdhury.

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed of BRAC while discussing how much the poor had benefited from various activities of the NGOs, said that in terms of self-sufficiency of the poor there had not been any big achievement.

But there is definitely a number of changes in the rural areas where poor people are now involved in income generating activities. NGO programmes such as livestock, fisheries, agriculture and other sectors have created a strong impact. Education programmes by the BRAC, is also very successful, Dr Salehuddin said.

The dialogue was participated by ADAB President Khushi Kabir, Abdullah Elahi, Omar Faruk, Prof Shakhawat Ali Khan and scientist Abdullah al Muti Sharfuddin.

10 get life term for murder in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Oct 11: A court here today sentenced 10 people to life term in prison for murdering a co-villager over a minor dispute, reports UNB.

The District and Sessions Judge of Jhenidah Md Rafiuddin in his verdict sentenced life imprisonment to Rezaul, Surat Ali, Nur Ali, Olur Rahman, Izzat Ali, Monirul, Iran Ali, Asadul Islam, Shahidul Islam and Shaifuddin.

Of the ten, Izzat Ali was tried in absentia as he was absconding.

The convicts, all hailing from village Chandba in Kalganj Thana, were also fined Tk 2,000 each or in default another two years of rigorous imprisonment.

According to the prosecution, the convicts had dragged one Daud of the same village out of his house on the night of December 8, 1993 and slaughtered him.

A murder case was filed with the Kalganj police the next day, on December 9.

Some 13 witnesses were examined in the case.

APP S M Moshirur Rahman appeared for the prosecution while advocates Tofazzul Hossain and Saad Ahmed defended the accused.

The Midnight File

Chinese HR activist sentenced

BEIJING, Oct 11: A longtime human rights activist in Shanghai has been given a three-year labour camp sentence, his wife said Tuesday. Yang Zhou, 50, who had tried to form a human rights study group and had spoken on behalf of detained dissidents, was taken from his home on May 12. His wife, Li Guoping, had no word from his and had not been told of his whereabouts or the charges against him until Tuesday, reports AP.

Protest against killing of Hindu leader in Madras

NEW DELHI, Oct 11: Shops, schools and offices were closed in much of the southern Indian city of Madras today following the murder of a Hindu fundamentalist leader, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported. Tension gripped pockets of Tamil Nadu state, of which Madras is the capital, after K. Rajagopalan, head of the Hindu Munnani, the Hindu Front, was hacked to death by unidentified assailants outside his home on Monday, PTI said, reports AFP.

US lawmakers want Pakistan on 'terrorism list'

WASHINGTON, Oct 11: Nineteen US lawmakers have urged the State Department to put Pakistan on its "terrorism watch list".

In an October 7 letter to President Clinton obtained by Reuters, the lawmakers said in recent months there had been "several ominous reports" that required an immediate review.

"These developments strongly suggest that the State Department's decision not to include Pakistan on the 'watch list' of countries supporting terrorism is in need of immediate review," they said, urging Clinton to direct Secretary of State Warren Christopher to reevaluate the 1993 decision.

"We firmly believe that our country cannot mount a credible campaign to stop terrorism and narcotics trafficking so long as the recent events regarding Pakistan are disregarded by the State Department."

No comment was immediately available from the State Department.

The letter listed several issues of concern, including a September 12 report in the Washington Post newspaper that a chief of staff to former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had developed a blueprint for financing covert operations in other countries through large-scale narcotics deals.

It also expressed concern about recent reports that the prime suspect in the March 12, 1993 bombing of the Bombay stock exchange told investigators the Pakistani intelligence services (ISI) had planned and financed the attack.

The lawmakers also said Indian security forces had confiscated large amounts of weapons which could be traced to arms markets in Pakistan and that numerous Pakistani nationals captured had confessed to being trained, supported and directed by ISI personnel from camps in Pakistan.

Pakistan

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Hussain said in a statement police had fired tear gas at his house and later sprayed it with unprovoked gunfire, killing one PML worker, Saeed Anwar, and wounding five others.

The authorities, who have banned marches and detained more than 1,000 opposition activists in the past few days, mounted a heavy security presence in many cities.

Witnesses said police used tear gas to disperse about 25 PML militants disrupting traffic in the Lohari district of Lahore. Many, but not all, of the city's traders kept their shutters down.

Many people stayed at home in Karachi, Pakistan's commercial capital, fearing violence. Most markets were closed and scarce public transport reduced activity at factories, businesses and the country's principal port.

Police said they had detained several people for trying to enforce the strike, including six women who sat on railway tracks blocking trains. Youths riding a motorcycle fired on a bus in the eastern part of the city, wounding one person. The attackers escaped.

Opposition militants stoned a bus in a western district, wounding two passengers. Several arrests were made.

The Karachi Stock Exchange suspended business for about an hour, but resumed later. Dealers said trading was very thin.

No plague in Ctg

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cal board examined the boy and found no plague symptom.

As such, the police press release said, legal action was being taken against those responsible for publishing a false, misleading and motivated report. The police administration urged the people not to be misled by false press reports.

Meanwhile, the Daily Azadi this afternoon brought out a special telegram expressing its regret for publishing such a report. The daily admitted that the patient mentioned in its report was not of plague but a general patient, the telegram copy said.

Yunus

From Page 1 Col 5

lifetime achievements of an economist who created a bank loan system that has given millions of people access to adequate food and nutrition for the first time in their lives."

The Grameen Bank has inspired the formation of similar banks in other countries.

ঢাকা ওয়াসা জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

(পানির অপচয় বন্ধ করুন। ম্যানহোলের ঢাকনা চুরি রোধ করুন।)

পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিকরের বকেয়া আদায়ের লক্ষ্যে ঢাকা ওয়াসা ১লা অক্টোবর '৯৪ হতে এক বিশেষ কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করেছে।

সরকারী, আধা-সরকারী, স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ সহ সকল জোনের আওতাভুক্ত এলাকাসমূহের গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে ১৫ই নভেম্বরের মধ্যে সারচার্জ ব্যতীত বকেয়া পরিশোধ করার সুযোগ প্রদান করা হয়েছে।

বকেয়া পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ গ্রাহকবৃন্দের বিরুদ্ধে ম্যাজিস্ট্রেটের নেতৃত্বে সকল জোনের আওতাভুক্ত এলাকাসমূহে ১৫ই নভেম্বর '৯৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নকারী দল প্রয়োজনীয় সংখ্যক পুলিশসহ ডামামাগ আদালত পরিচালনার মাধ্যমে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করবে।

সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন ও আইনের কঠোর ব্যবস্থা এড়াবার জন্য সারচার্জ ব্যতীত উল্লিখিত সময়সীমার মধ্যে বিল পরিশোধের সুযোগ গ্রহণ করতে আজই বকেয়াসহ হালনাগাদ পানি ও পয়ঃ অভিকর পরিশোধ করুন।

বিল না পেয়ে থাকলে আজই নারায়ণগঞ্জ অফিসসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট আঞ্চলিক অফিস অথবা ওয়াসা ভবনে প্রধান রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা (ফোনঃ ৩২৫২৪০), বাণিজ্যিক ব্যবস্থাপক (ফোনঃ ৩২৫২৪৫) এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

সেবাই আমাদের লক্ষ্য
ঢাকা ওয়াসা



Devotees offering puja to the Hindu deity Durga in the city yesterday on the second day of the five-day Durga puja festival. — Star photo