

Thai Int'l regrets error in Sawasdee

Sawasdee, the inflight magazine of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited, is published by a company named Travel & Trade Publishing (Asia) Limited from Hong Kong under an arrangement with Thai International. The views and opinions expressed therein are exclusively those of the authors and do not reflect the views of Thai International, says a press release.

Thai International deeply regrets that the October issue of Sawasdee contains a map of Bangladesh which mistakenly and incorrectly describes it as Pakistan which has hurt the feeling of the people of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a sovereign independent state. Thai International respects the independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh and holds the country and the people of Bangladesh in high esteem.

When the mistake made by the publisher came to the knowledge of Thai International, it immediately removed the offending page from its magazine. We can only assure the people of Bangladesh, for whom we have the highest regard and respect, that such a mistake could not have been published in the magazine if we had any prior knowledge of it. The mistake is unintentional and through inadvertence. Thai International offers unconditional apology to the people of Bangladesh and expresses its deep regrets for such a mistake in the magazine by its publisher which has offended the sentiment of the people of Bangladesh and it takes this opportunity to assure the government and the people of Bangladesh that it will ensure that such a mistake is not repeated.

Japan rejects Russia's plan to set up free economic zone in Kuril

TOKYO, Oct 15: The Japanese government yesterday rejected a Russian invitation to establish a free economic zone in the disputed Kuril islands, which Moscow seized from Tokyo at the close of World War II, reports AFP.

We cannot accept any proposal based on the assumption that the four northern islands are under Russian jurisdiction," Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono said at a parliament session.

Australia to help boost Bangladesh's uplift

The visiting Director General of the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau yesterday assured all possible cooperation from the Australian government in Bangladesh's socio-economic uplift, specially in rural development and poverty alleviation programmes, reports UNB.

Philip Flood gave the assurance when he called on State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan.

They discussed how in future the economic ties between Australia and Bangla-

desh can be cemented. The development projects assisted by Australia in Bangladesh were reviewed.

Focusing on various steps of the present democratic government for development, the State Minister said the government laid more emphasis on socio-economic infrastructure than on physical infrastructure to ensure overall welfare of the poor.

Citing the success in education, healthcare and population control sectors, Khan said the government had identified

women and children as a special underprivileged class and introduced special programmes for their wellbeing.

Elaborating on the administrative decentralisation and transfer of financial powers to the local government down to union and village level, the State Minister for Planning apprised the AIDAB chief of the endeavours towards formulating participatory development plans.

Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Kenneth Aspinall was present during the meeting.

Newsman of Radio France extend strike to demand parity in pay

PARIS, Oct 15: Journalists at state-owned Radio France yesterday decided to extend until Monday night a three-day-old strike to demand parity in pay with colleagues at the France 2 State Television Station, reports Reuter.

The strike affects nearly 450 journalists and has curtailed domestic and international news broadcasts at Radio France, Radio France International (RFI) and other stations.

It has reduced the round-the-clock all-news station France - info to broadcasting mostly pop music.

The management of Radio France remaining deaf and lax, is entirely responsible for the worsening of the conflict," the Journalists' Association said after a staff meeting unanimously voted to extend the stoppage.

The management has brought forward to Monday pay talks scheduled a week later.

RFI journalists were voting on whether to also extend the stoppage and union officials said they were likely to do so as the mood was growing more radical.

In an unrelated action, journalists on the Spanish-language service of the French news agency Agency France-Presse extended until Monday a five-day old strike to fight the transfer of most of their jobs from Paris to Washington under a decentralisation plan.

A spokesman for the strikers said they would hold a meeting with the rest of the staff on Monday to discuss extending the action to other services.

Kashem vows to set up advisory cell for entrepreneurs

M A Kashem, presidential candidate in Monday's FBCCI polls, yesterday renewed his pledge to turn the apex trade body into a modern and well-equipped institution that could best serve the business community, reports UNB.

He told a press conference that he, if elected, would establish an "Advisory Cell" as in developed countries, to advise new entrepreneurs.

A separate cell will be established to facilitate preparation, planning and analysis of projects, said Kashem.

Also he committed to setting up a computerised data bank to pass on the up-to-date need-based information to the entrepreneurs.

A former President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Kashem said he would take special interest in rehabilitating country's several hundred sick industrial units. A special cell will be opened in the FBCCI to resolve the crisis of sick industries.

Kashem told a questioner that if he re-elected, he would sincerely consider bringing necessary amendments to the FBCCI constitution so that ethical and moral backgrounds could be a determining factor in getting nominations in future elections.

He claimed that he had been free from scandals and vices of loan default throughout 30 years of career as a businessman and industrialist.

Gulf study says

GATT accord to open up markets for petrochemical exports

ABU DHABI, Oct 15: The new GATT trade agreement will open up world markets for petrochemical exports by Gulf Arab states and encourage them to press ahead with new projects, according to an official Gulf study, reports AFP.

The accord reached under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, signed by more than 120 countries in Morocco early this year, will also allow Gulf nations to boost industrial exports as most customs barriers will gradually come down, said the study by

the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretariat.

Although crude oil is not included, the GATT deal will have an indirect positive effect on demand as it will accelerate economic growth in industrial countries and other key oil importers, it said.

The study, published this week in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Finance and Industry Ministry's bulletin, said European custom tariffs on petrochemicals would be gradually cut to between 5.5 and 6.5 per cent as from next

year. "There is no doubt this reduction in tariffs will give a strong boost to gulf petrochemical exports," the Riyadh-based secretariat said.

The United States will be the most attractive market for those exports as tariffs will be cut to around four per cent. The GCC states - Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE - are the main petrochemical producers in the Middle East, accounting for the bulk of the region's output of nearly 14 million tonnes per year.



Redwan Ahmed MP, a candidate for the post of FBCCI president, seen speaking at a press conference in the city yesterday. — Star photo

FBCCI polls

Redwan for balanced expansion of economic activities

Redwan Ahmed, a candidate for the post of FBCCI President, reiterated his pledge that he, if elected, would insist on the government allowing investment of shy investable surplus, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, he said a supportive policy for paving the way of investing the shy investable surplus and small savings would be formulated for flourishing small and medium-scale industrial units.

"This will generate more than 10 lakh jobs in next few years in the country," he said, adding that they would rec-

ommend the government for allowing investment of the money in the labour-intensive industries.

Redwan also focused his panel's 24-point programme which, he said, had been designed to resolve the problems in commerce and industry and for rapid and balanced expansion of the country's economic activities.

The president candidate pledged that they would turn the Federation into a "businessmen's parliament", an accountable body which will assist the government in formulating strong and supportive policies for trade and industry. He vowed that a strong, ac-

tive and modern secretariat for the FBCCI would be created to implement the programme announced by his panel.

Observing that the present duty and tax policies failed to reap desired results for both business community and government, he said they would ensure the way for formulating easy and rational duty and tax policies.

Redwan, President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the Exporters Association of Bangladesh (EAB), said he would quit both the positions, if elected.

Diplomatic ties severed in '72

Official talks between Tokyo, Taipei soon

TOKYO, Oct 15: Trade ministers from Japan and Taiwan will hold the first official cabinet-level talks since Tokyo cut diplomatic ties with Taipei in 1972, the daily Sankai Shimbun reported today, says Reuter.

The talks between Japanese Minister for International Trade and Industry (MITI) Ryutaro Hashimoto and Taiwanese Economic Affairs Minister Chiang Ping-Kung could re-ignite a heated row between China and Japan, the daily added.

Sankai said Chiang and Hashimoto would discuss Taiwan's possible return to the

global trade forum General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

MITI officials were not available for comment.

Sankai said the meeting would take place during the October 22-23 gathering of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economic officials in Osaka, in western Japan.

China has repeatedly warned Japan not to have contacts with Taiwanese leaders, because it would violate the 1972 normalization agreement between Beijing and Tokyo stipulating Japan recognised only "one China."

Aman cultivation on 1.10 lakh hectares planned in Moulvibazar

MOULVIBAZAR, Oct 15: A total of 1.10 lakh hectares of land of the district will be brought under Aman cultivation programme during the current season, reports UNB.

According to official source, of the total 70,780 hectares of land will be brought under High Yielding Variety (HYV) while the rest 39,000 hectares of land under local variety.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) has allotted HYV seeds to the farmer at subsidized rates. Meanwhile, BADC has distributed fertilizers and other necessary agri-inputs among the growers to make the scheme a success.

A total of 2.35 lakh metric tons of aman paddy is expected to be produced after successful implementation of the scheme, the source added.

Saifur critical of North bid to tag country's exports with child labour

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman lashed at the developed countries for their "mischievous" attempts to prevent entry of Bangladesh exports to their markets on flimsy excuse of using child labour, reports UNB.

"It seems to me that with the continuous recession and unemployment, the industrialised economies are getting frightened," he was quoted in an article of a Madrid daily.

The article, written by well-known journalist Kevin Rafferty, was published recently in the World Bank edition of the newspaper, 'The Emerging Market'.

Saifur, the immediate-past chairman of the Governing Board of World Bank and IMF, was in the Spanish capital to attend and preside over the annual meeting and 50th founding anniversary of the two Bretton Woods Institutions. He returned home on

Friday. The daily further quoted him as saying: "Already they have seen the East Asian countries (economic miracles) and they see the 'South Asian economies beginning to come up and they are afraid that they may not be able to sell their goods and say 'we have to stop them.'"

"And how do they do this?," the Finance Minister questioned.

The Emerging Market wrote that Rahman pleaded for understanding the plight of children in his country who are forced to work.

He presented a stark choice facing a poor girl of 10 or 11 - starving to death because she has no money or food, becoming a prostitute, working as a maid in a house and earning Tk-250 (US dollar 6.25) a month or working in a factory for Tk 1,200 to 1,500.

Rahman asked whether

there is an ulterior motive in the demands from the West for an end to child labour. "They say products that are coming are made by labourers who are not fulfilling the standard as set by the International Labour Organisation. But one should judge the question of child labour in the context of society of the country concerned," the minister said.

Rafferty further quoted Saifur as saying "I am not supporting child labour. I am only saying that in my country's situation, with overwhelming numbers of unemployed, the choices are starkly limited."

He made it clear that Bangladesh did not want perpetuation of the situation. "Let us establish a day care system, a social safety-net programme which we are trying to do asking the factories to have day care facilities so that children can be looked after."

Saifur went on "what is

happening is that mothers go to the factory. It is dangerous to leave young children at home. These are not Western-style homes or houses. These are bustees (slums) with safety and security problems. So, the mother takes the girl to the factory and there she (the girl) does some work - what is for the best?"

US commerce secy to visit India in January

WASHINGTON, Oct 15: Commerce Secretary Ron Brown will head a delegation of business leaders on a week-long visit to India in January, the commerce department said yesterday, reports AFP.

During the visit, business leaders will conclude agreements as well as lay the foundation for large projects.



M A Kashem, a presidential candidate in the election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, addressing the members of the press at a city hotel yesterday.

Indonesian trade union presses govt for doubling minimum wage

JAKARTA, Oct 15: Indonesia's official trade union called for the government to more than double the minimum wage, the source of growing unrest among the country's workforce, the official Antara news agency said yesterday, reports Reuter.

The All-Indonesia Workers Union (SPSI), Indonesia's only officially recognised labour union, has come under fire from both labour activists and the military, who have accused it of failing to represent an increasingly restless workforce.

The news agency quoted SPSI Chairman Imam Sudarwo as saying the union had decided at a special congress to call on the government to pass new laws ensuring the mini-

mum wage covers 190 per cent of worker's physical needs.

"The current minimum wage covers only 90 per cent of workers' basic needs, he said. If passed, a new minimum wage would cover basic needs and 90 per cent more, depending on local prices.

"The existing workers' wage system is incompatible with one of the government's own guiding principles, namely the equitable distribution of the fruits of development, Sudarwo told reporters on Thursday after a conference of SPSI leaders.

Sudarwo was quoted as saying the SPSI also called for formalising industrial relations laws and for the government to allow every citizen the free-

dom to form a labour union. Indonesia faces growing unrest among its workforce, mainly over wages which average under three dollars a day.

An official of the Independent Indonesia Welfare Labour Union, or SBSI, said during the conference last week that so far this year there had been 367 recorded work stoppages, against 185 during the whole of last year. Sixty per cent of which were over employers' failure to pay the minimum wage.

The government has put on trial more than 50 labour activists, including the SBSI's leader on charges of inciting workers during riots that swept the Sumatran city of Medan in April.



FBCCI presidential candidate Salman F Rahman (extreme right), with his panel for the Executive Committee, addressing a press conference at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. The elections are scheduled to be held tomorrow. — Star photo

নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়
শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা।
নং- নিকস/জসস/প্রস্বাঃ ১/৯৪/২৬ তারিখঃ ১২-১০-৯৪ইং
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়ের প্রস্বাপারে ১৯৯৪-৯৫ অর্থ বছরের জন্য দেশী/বিদেশী/পুস্তক/সাময়িকী সপ্তাহের জন্য পুস্তক সরবরাহকারী নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে প্রকৃত পুস্তক ব্যবসায়ী/আমদানিকারকদের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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