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# The Daily Star BUSINESS

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Mexico's Salinas  
wins partial  
Indian backing  
On WTO

NEW DELHI, Dec 10:  
Former Mexican president  
Carlos Salinas de Gortari has  
brought his whirlwind cam-  
paign to become head of the  
new World Trade Organisation  
(WTO) to India, but New Delhi  
with held its full support, re-  
ports Reuter.

Salinas, whose six-year  
term as Mexican president  
ended on December 1, met  
Prime Minister PV Narasimha  
Rao, Finance Minister Man-  
mohan Singh and Commerce  
Minister Pranab Mukherjee  
during a one-day visit to the  
Indian capital on Friday.

The former Mexican presi-  
dent said the Indian govern-  
ment had committed itself to  
supporting a developing coun-  
try candidate, but New Delhi  
did not say which one.

"They (Indian government)  
concluded that it is important  
that someone from the south  
may head the WTO," he said.  
"That is the main element that  
we established in our conver-  
sation."

Diplomats say Salinas trails  
former Italian trade minister  
Renato Ruggiero, considered  
the front-runner, and South  
Korean Trade Minister Kim  
Chul-Su in the race to take  
over the WTO. Ruggiero has  
the backing of the European  
union while Kim has strong  
Asian support. Washington  
backs Salinas.

Asked if New Delhi was  
supporting the other candidate  
of the south, Kim, Salinas said:  
this is a consensus decision.  
No one has reached a consen-  
sus yet."

## BIBM training course ends

A two-month long advanced  
course on bank management  
for the senior level executives  
of different banks and financial  
institutions concluded here  
yesterday at Bangladesh  
Institute of Bank Management  
(BIBM), says a press release.

This training programme  
was designed to equip the  
participants with the latest  
modern skills and expertise in  
banking field. The course  
aimed at familiarising the  
bank executives with a rapid changing  
financial environment and  
to create greater awareness of  
the potentials of modern global  
financial market.

The programme also in-  
cluded a week-long study tour  
in Sri Lanka to have practical  
and theoretical knowledge of  
their banking system, stock  
exchange market and institutional  
training methods for  
banking sector.

The concluding function  
was chaired by the Director  
General of BIBM, A H M Nurul  
Islam Chowdhury, who also  
gave away the certificates to  
the participants.

## Major calls for reducing restrictions on Asian goods

ESSEN, Germany, Dec 10:  
British Prime Minister John  
Major yesterday called on his  
European Union partners to  
reduce restrictions on imports  
from the booming economies  
of Southeast Asia, reports AFP.

Speaking in a discussion on  
improving the competitiveness  
of European economies at a  
summit of EU leaders, Major  
warned that, ultimately protec-  
tionism only protects our own  
inefficiency.

Major said the EU should  
reject any attempt to insert  
social clauses into world trade  
agreements, arguing that such  
a move would be "immoral and  
contrary to logic."

"It is by buying their goods  
that we will raise their living  
standards," he argued.

Major added: "Rapid eco-  
nomic growth in Asia does not  
represent a threat to Europe.  
In fact, the opposite is the  
case, as purchasing power in  
Asia grows so does the market  
for our goods."

Major's remarks came as he  
endorsed an action plan for  
growth and job creation drawn  
up by EU Finance Ministers  
which stresses the need for  
extensive deregulation in the  
labour market if Europe was to  
maintain its competitiveness  
against the US, Japan and the  
developing world.

Improving competitiveness  
is the "key" to turning growth  
into jobs," Major said.

Major also backed a pro-  
posal to set up an advisory  
board to continually monitor  
the competitiveness of the  
European economy. This body  
should be headed by a business  
figure with experience of  
managing a major multina-  
tional company, Major said.

## Luxury coaches make Dhaka-Ctg trip pleasant

By Rafiq Hasan

Travelling by luxurious  
buses between Dhaka and  
Chittagong is the most com-  
fortable journey nowadays in  
the country, as a number of  
these air conditioned buses  
with high quality service are  
playing on this route everyday.

According to the Dhaka-  
Chittagong Luxurious and Chair  
Coach Bus Owners Association,  
about 175 luxury buses and  
chair coaches are engaged in  
carrying passengers on this  
route.

The leaders of the association  
said that due to lack of



Comfortable seats inside a Dhaka-Chittagong luxury coaches.

high quality and timely train  
service in this route the private  
bus sector is booming day  
by day.

According to them the high  
fare of interdistrict train service  
between Dhaka-Chittagong has  
also created a great opportunity  
for the private bus service.

"Long and wide body of the  
buses, soft, comfortable and  
well decorated sleeping chair  
seats, neat and clean atmosphere  
with a good smell inside the bus and well-dressed  
educated attendants are the  
main attraction for which the  
passengers prefer to travel by  
these buses," Alhaj Alauddin.

However, there is no control  
of the government in the  
fixation of fare in buses plying  
on this route.

"We decide therefore acc-  
ording to the value of the car  
and what amenities it provides  
to the passengers," Alhaj

with only two buses, but now  
they have six luxurious buses  
on this route," he informed.

Among the main services,  
they provide to the passengers,  
during the four and a half  
hour journey are, one bottle  
mango juice, one piece cake,  
one bottle mineral water, one  
stick of rose, different  
magazines and multi-channel  
music head phones for each  
passenger.

During last three years  
about Taka 2 hundred crore  
have been invested in this sector,  
he mentioned. About their  
future plan the leader of the  
owners association said, we are  
trying to expand this service to  
other routes of the country. So,  
there is a possibility of starting  
luxurious bus service between  
Dhaka-Khulna, Dhaka-Jessore,  
Dhaka-Rangpur, and Dhaka-  
Sylhet from next year, he further  
said.

Meanwhile in the luxurious  
airconditioned buses we  
charge Tk 230 the price of  
which is between Taka 45 to  
55 lakhs, Alauddin added.

Stress was given on the  
need for compliance with ISO  
9000 standards in order to fa-  
cilitate exports to Europe and  
USA.

Its importance to Bangladesh  
in the present competitive  
global economy was also  
emphasized.

Anisuddhowna, Managing  
Director of ACI, told the gathering  
that his company was currently  
implementing ISO 9000 and it has brought quality  
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Two branches of Islami  
Bank functioning at  
Natore, Gaibandha

Two branches of Islami  
Bank Bangladesh Ltd have  
started functioning in the

country's northern region, says  
a press release.

These branches were opened  
at Natore and Gaibandha.

The Natore branch started  
functioning on the 7th and the  
Gaibandha branch on the 8th  
of December 1994.

On both the occasions, a  
seminar on "Islami banking"  
was held at their respective  
branch premises.

These are in addition to  
Emirates' four weekly flights  
between Dubai and Bangkok,  
which depart Dubai every  
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday  
and Sunday and Bangkok every  
Sunday, Monday, Wednesday  
and Friday.

Peter Hill, Emirates' Senior  
General Manager Commercial  
Operations (West Asia &  
Pacific Rim), said: "Emirates  
has been facing very high  
demand for our flights between  
Dubai and Bangkok. We are

grateful to the Department of  
Civil Aviation in Thailand for  
granting us permission to op-  
erate the additional eight  
flights on an ad hoc basis,  
which will help us to cope  
with the high demand over the  
holiday season."

Emirates commenced opera-  
tions into Bangkok in June  
1990, starting with three  
flights a week. In November  
1992, Emirates increased fre-  
quency to four flights per  
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The 34 leaders were meet-  
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Vizcaya, an example of  
Mediterranean Revival archi-  
tecture that was the site of  
President Reagan's 1987  
meeting with Pope John Paul II.

By the time the summit ends  
Sunday, organisers hope to  
have all the leaders attending  
commit their countries to  
completing negotiations for a  
free trade zone by 2005, with  
implementation following as  
soon as possible.

The grand design of a  
hemisphere without trade bar-  
riers comes nearly a year after  
the North American Free  
Trade Agreement with Mexico  
and Canada took effect and al-  
most 30 years since the last  
summit of North and South  
American leaders.

Clinton convened the  
Summit of the Americas on  
Friday night, telling his fellow  
heads of government they had  
a chance to make history.

A partnership for prosper-  
ity, stronger democracies, im-  
proving our people's quality of

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anonymity, said the wording of  
the final statement would call  
for considerable progress on  
the free-trade issue by 2000.

## Iraq, Sudan set up joint oil exploration company

KHARTOUM, Dec 10:  
Sudan and Iraq have agreed to set up  
a joint company for oil explo-  
ration, investment and refin-  
ing, the two countries' oil min-  
isters said, reports AFP.

Sudanese Energy Minister  
Salah Ed-Deen Karar told a  
press conference late yester-  
day after meeting his Iraqi  
counterpart that the venture  
would allow Khartoum quickly  
to begin exploiting its un-  
tapped oil reserves.

Sudan is believed to have  
major oil reserves which it is  
currently unable to exploit, in  
part because of the 11-year-old  
civil war in the south of the  
country. It imports 400 million  
dollars worth of oil per year to  
meet its requirements.

Iraqi Oil Minister Saifa Hadi  
Jawad said that under the  
agreement, Baghdad would  
provide training for about 100  
Sudanese oil executives at col-  
leges and institutes in Iraq.

Sudan was among the few  
nations which opposed the  
US-led operation desert storm  
which forced Iraqi troops out  
of Kuwait in the January-  
February 1991 Gulf War.

A UN embargo on Iraqi oil  
sales imposed on Baghdad  
after it invaded Kuwait in  
August 1990 has crippled the  
Iraqi economy.

But Iraq, whose oil reserves  
rank second in the world after  
Saudi Arabia, has rejected UN  
resolutions allowing Baghdad  
to sell part of its oil stocks to  
pay for humanitarian supplies  
as a violation of its sovereignty.

## Seminar on ISO 9000

A seminar on "ISO 9000  
Quality Management Systems"  
organized by Business Advisory  
Services Center (BASC) was  
held at its training hall in the  
city yesterday, says a press re-  
lease.

Presided over by the  
Chairman of BASC, A Hafiz  
Choudhury, the seminar was  
conducted by Wali Alam, a  
Bangladeshi American consultant  
of Tetrahedron, Inc, USA.  
It was attended by leading  
personalities from both the public  
and private sectors.

The seminar discussed the  
different aspects of ISO 9000  
and its implications in design-  
ing a quality based system in  
any organization.

Stress was given on the  
need for compliance with ISO  
9000 standards in order to fa-  
cilitate exports to Europe and  
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the final statement would call  
for considerable progress on  
the free-trade issue by 2000.

"We have not yet paid  
enough attention to our neigh-  
bours to the south," he said.

The only nation in the  
hemisphere shunned by the  
summit was Cuba. Clinton didn't  
invite Fidel Castro because only  
democratically elected leaders were wanted,  
and US officials hoped the  
meeting would not be side-  
tracked by discussions of Cuba.

"We have promised to bring up  
Cuba's human rights violations  
and lack of freedom during the  
summit," he said.

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