

Industry yet to be set up at Natore BSCIC estate

NATORE, Jan 29: Even a single industry has not yet been set up at the industrial estate of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) in the district after passing over 13 years of the approval of the project, reports UNB.

According to official sources, government acquired about 15.18 acres of land at Dattapara area near the town in 1987 after taking a plan to set up the industrial estate here in 1980.

An amount of Tk 1.48 crore was sanctioned for the purpose. Of the total amount, Tk 84.24 lakh was spent for the acquisition of land, earth filling, construction of the administrative building of BSCIC, water tank construction and for the electrification work during the 1988-89 fiscal, the sources said.

The sources further said, construction of roads in the industrial estate, sinking of

deep tubewells, construction of staff quarters and installation of water pipelines have been completed during the year 1993 at a cost of Taka 24.85 lakh.

Six years ago the BSCIC authority invited the entrepreneurs of this region to submit applications for sanctioning of plots in the area. But the response was meagre from the entrepreneurs and those who have responded have not set up their industries yet.

There are 94 plots in the industrial estate in which 60 small industries can be set up. It is learnt that only 15 applications have so far been filed for sanctioning the plots at the industrial estate.

Of them, one application for setting up of an engineering workshop, one for cosmetics, one for medicine production laboratory, one for tractor equipment, one for coal industry, one for dairy farm, one for producing spare parts of bicycles, three for chemical

fertilizer shops, four for rice husking mills and the rest one for a saw mill.

But none of them have established their industries due to various problems including fund crisis, it is learnt.

When contacted District Manager, BSCIC, Natore, Md Ali Ashraf Khan told UNB that setting up an industry is more risky than other businesses.

He said there are so many problems such as difficulties in getting loans from the banks, inconvenient marketing system, unbridled influx of Indian goods in local markets, frequent hartal, siege etc.

For these reasons, he added, local entrepreneurs are not being interested to set up an industry at the industrial estate here.

The enthusiast entrepreneurs urged the concerned authority to take immediate steps to remove the bottlenecks in making the industrial estate a success.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited a sericulture exhibition at Bhulbarhat in Nawabgonj district on Saturday.

Dhaka elected member of IFAD's Executive Board

Bangladesh has reiterated strong commitment to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in its 18th governing council session in Rome, reports UNB.

Agriculture Secretary M Akhter Ali, leading a four-member delegation, renewed the Bangladesh Commitment at the three-day IFAD session which began Thursday in the Italian capital, according to a delayed message received in Dhaka on Saturday.

Ali also mentioned Bangladesh's decision to increase the country's contributions to the fourth replenishment of IFAD by 20 per cent over its contribution to the third replenishment.

The current session of the governing council will take a number of important decisions on the organisational structure and future governance of IFAD as well as the fourth replenishment of IFAD's resource.

Addressing the meet, the Bangladesh delegation leader lauded the vital role of IFAD has been playing in alleviating rural poverty in the developing

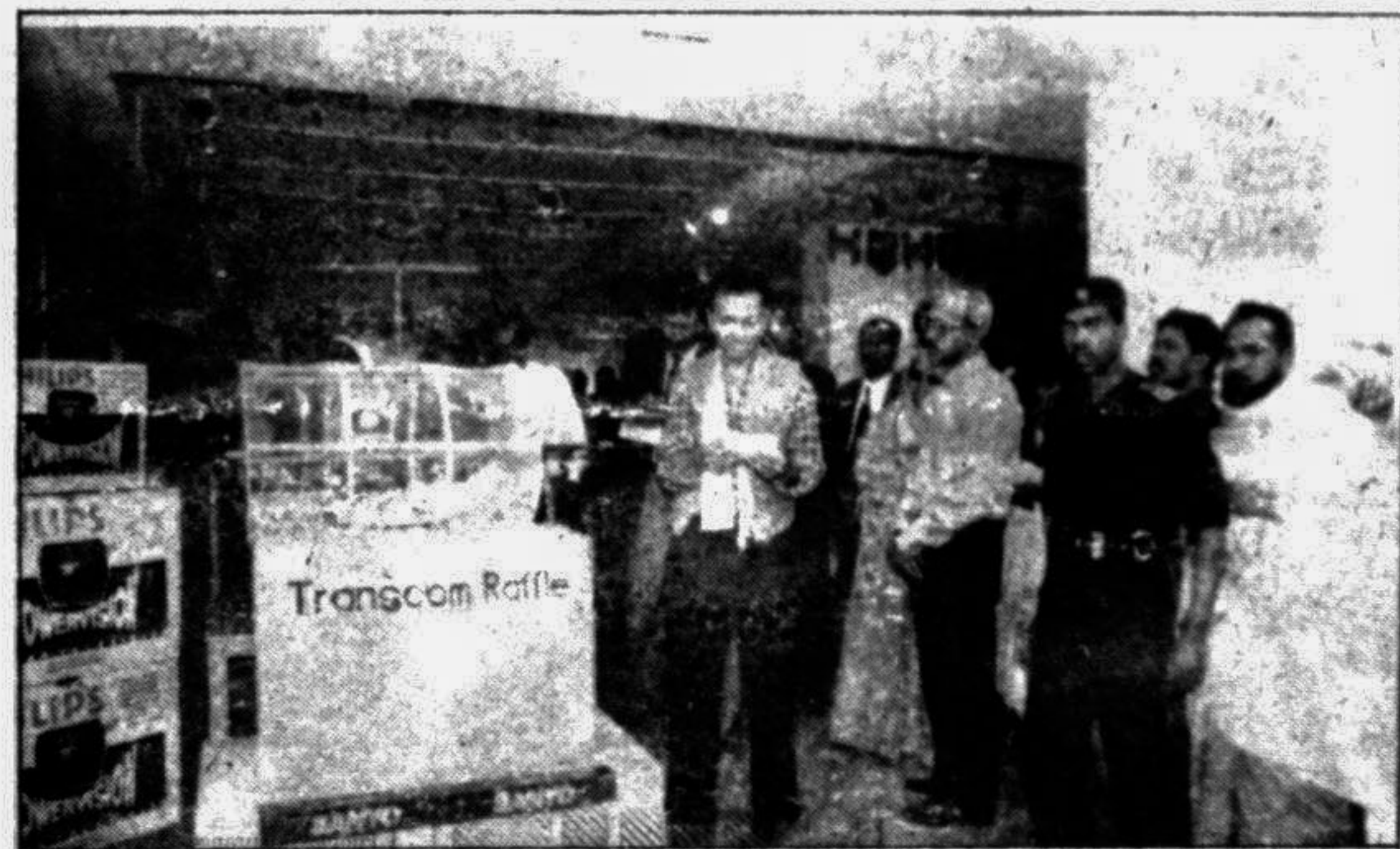
world. The Agriculture Secretary also appreciated the significant supports made by IFAD to Bangladesh in implementing projects focused on poverty-alleviation.

He lauded the efforts of the IFAD president in reorganizing its structure and redeployment of staffing resource to bring increased efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Ali praised the work of the rapid external assessment team which has recommended some important measures to strengthen and improve operational efficiency of IFAD.

Bangladesh, a founder member of IFAD, has been elected a member of the world body's executive board for the next two years (January 1995-December 1996).

Later, IFAD's Asia Division Director Samir Asmar met the agriculture secretary and members of the Bangladesh delegation and discussed the ongoing IFAD projects in Bangladesh.



The draw of the raffles for those who made purchases at the Transcom pavilion at the just-concluded International Trade Fair in the city was held yesterday. Saifur Rahman (in glasses), a director of Transcom, is seen among others.

Anwar inaugurates digital phone exchange, Ctg Port Authority asked to increase efficiency

CHITTAGONG, Jan 29: Shipping Minister MK Anwar today asked the officials of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) to increase level of efficiency in handling imported and exported cargo and container for boosting our economy, reports BSS.

Presiding over a meeting of port officials here the minister directed the concerned offi-

cials to take immediate measures for filling the vacant posts of port authority with a view to ensuring its smooth functioning.

He also directed them to dispose of all the abandoned goods quickly.

The meeting had a threadbare discussion to find out ways and means to further gear up the activities of the port.

It was informed in the meeting that the port has handled 40 lakh 87 thousand metric tons of cargo and one lakh 12 thousand tons of container during the first six months of the current fiscal year showing an increase of 25 per cent than the corresponding period of last fiscal year.

Later, the Shipping Minister formally inaugurated the new digital telephone exchange of Chittagong Port Trust.

The first phase of the telephone exchange comprising 50 direct lines and 500 public lines has already been set up while the second phase of the exchange comprising same number of lines will be set up by the end of the year. The total cost being involved in setting up the exchange is Taka three crore.

Anwar also presided over the board meeting of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation where formulation of new organisational set-up of BSC was discussed.

Shipping Secretary Waliul Islam and Chairman of CPA Omar Hadi were among others present at the meeting.

Transcom raffle draw results

The Transcom raffle '95 draw at the International Trade Fair was held yesterday evening. On the concluding day of the trade fair, says a press release.

The following are the winning numbers of the raffle. The winners have been requested to collect their prizes from the Transcom Electronics office at 100 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka, during business hours.

The winning numbers are: 1st prize-17099, 2nd prize-14498, 3rd prize-14559, and the 4th prizes: 6177, 6868, 1742, 17106, 1530, 2473, 1198, 2309, 14829, 1281, 1942, 14168, 6743, 1770, 6490, 14054, 14549, 1232, 17306, 1321, 14517, 14943, 14071, 14541, 1735, 17092, 14892, 6143, 6385, 6228, 6318, 1260, 14872, 17154, 6974, 17307, 6399, 2243, 1172, 14888, 1387, 2024, 14775, 17033, 6837, 6541, 2167, 6302, 6493, 1526.

BSRS earns Tk 2 cr profit in '93-94

Bangladesh Shipila Rin Sangstha (BSRS) has earned a net profit of Taka two crore during 1993-94 financial year, a Sangstha press release said on Sunday, reports BSS.

This was revealed while presenting the audited accounts of BSRS for FY 1993-94 at the meeting of the Board of Directors of BSRS held at the head office of BSRS with Dr Abdullah Farouk, Chairman, Board of Directors, BSRS in the chair.

The board reviewed the activities of BSRS during FY 1993-94 and approved the audited accounts of BSRS for FY 1993-94.

Women's workshop opens

A five-day workshop on "Group programme for poor women and children by NGOs" organised by Mahila O Shishu Shikkha Shastha Parishad Kendro began in the capital on Saturday.

Hasina Matin, Project Director of Women Directorate, in her speech as chief guest, said that about 200 NGOs would be registered and they would be given loan for poverty alleviation.

She urged the poor women to come forward, take this opportunity and make them self-reliant.

Commitment of top management to productivity pre-condition for dev

Productivity improvement enables enterprises to acquire competitive edge and generate surpluses to make contribution to social development and economic self-sufficiency, reports UNB.

This was viewed in a conference-cum-workshop on "Productivity Consultancy" at a local hotel yesterday, organised by Productivity Services Wing (PSW) of Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA).

Speakers said productivity drive at the national, sectoral and enterprise levels, and genuine commitment of the top management toward productivity growth are prerequisites for rapid economic development of a country.

Speaking on productivity in Bangladesh, Dr Hafiz GA Siddiqui said the average productivity is low which is partly reflected in the growth rates of both GDP and per capita GDP.

Dr Siddiqui, Professor and Academic dean of North South University, said the GDP growth rate during 1985-93 had averaged at hardly more than four per cent which is less than that of Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bhutan and many other developing countries.

"It is true that labour cost is relatively low in Bangladesh. But it is equally true that labour productivity is also low. To say productivity is low is to admit that cost of production is high," Dr Siddiqui said.

He said there are many factors that contribute to the productivity growth. A major source of productivity is technological innovation complemented by improved human capital embodied in skilled labour.

The capacity utilization, man-machine-technology ratios, the level of education and training of the supervisors, managers and entrepreneurs, employer-employee relations, and exogenous factors like efficiency of transport system, power supply, government bureaucracy, etc may directly or indirectly affect productivity, he added.

Dr Siddiqui said mismatch between wage and productivity adversely affected Bangladesh's external competitiveness and its ability to implement its export-oriented growth strategy.

Referring to a survey on seven public sector units, Dr Siddiqui said in many cases wages had been rising at a much faster rate than productivity since 1985.

According to the World Bank, the low labour productivity in public sector could be traced in three reasons. First, past hiring policies have led to excessive increase in the size of the labour force, and hence a decline in output per worker.

Secondly, poor management practices have often resulted in an inefficient use of human resources. Thirdly, ageing capital stock, outdated

technology and shortage of raw material and spare parts lower productivity, the World Bank said.

National Project Director of PSW of BEA Habibullah Khan, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Richard Dictus, BEA Member SA Azim, ILO Director Johannes Lokollo and Professor of Economics of North South University Dr Salahuddin Ahmed were among others who also spoke at the conference.

ILO Director Johannes Lokollo said productivity improvement is not only an important long-term action for the success of organisations and individuals but is also a vital programme for national development.

Productivity is not only an

economic or technical issue but also an individual's state of mind. Improving public awareness among managers and small entrepreneurs is a must to enhance productivity, Lokollo added.

Quoting from a report of the Rome Conference, Dr Salahuddin Ahmed said productivity is, above all, an attitude of mind. It seeks to continually improve what already exists.

Productivity is based on conviction that one can do things better today than yesterday, and better tomorrow than today. Further, it requires never-ending efforts to adapt economic activities to changing conditions, and apply new theories and methods. It is a firm belief in the progress of human beings, he added.



Productivity Consultancy: "Conference-cum-Workshop" was organised by Productivity Services Wing (PSW) of Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA) at Hotel Sonargaon in the city yesterday.

Pre-shipment jute inspection to be done on buyer's choice

Authorities yesterday decided that from now pre-shipment inspection of jute and jute-goods would be done according to the buyer's choice, reports UNB.

The exporter should deposit Taka five against export of each bale of jute.

The decisions were taken in a meeting of the Consultative Committee on Jute, held with Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah in the chair at Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) headquarters, said an official announcement.

Attended by representatives of jute traders, exporters, banks and mills, and concerned officials, the meeting advocated ban on polythene bags in the country.

11 BJMC units in Khulna earn Tk 6.89cr in three months

KHULNA, Jan 29: Eleven jute mills under Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) of Khulna region have earned Tk 6.89 crore as profit during October to December last year, reports UNB.

This was possible due to new arrangement and proper supervision of the Jute Ministry under the initiative of the Jute Minister, mill sources said.

Before-hand, all the mills under BJMC were incurring loss due to poor management and malpractice.

The mills are Star Jute Mills, People's Jute Mills, Platinum Jute Mills, Kamini Jute Mills, Jessore Jute Industries, Carpeting Jute Mills, Rajshahi Jute Mills, Daulatpur Jute Mills, Alim Jute Mills, Crescent Jute Mills and Eastern Jute Mills.



M. Mokammel Haque, Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors, speaking at the annual dealers conference '95 of Khan Electronics Industries Limited at a local hotel on Friday. Managing Director of the company Sadeur Rahman Khan presided over the conference.

Kuwait to sell over 1400 tonnes of seized Iraqi oil

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 29: Kuwait will sell more than 1,400 tonnes of Iraqi oil seized aboard two embargo-busting tankers and transfer the proceeds to the UN Gulf War Compensation Fund, a foreign ministry official said Saturday, reports AFP.

The US navy seized the two

ships on November 30 in the Northern Gulf for breaking the embargo imposed by United Nations on Iraq, a US navy spokesman said in Bahrain Friday.

The Tasmeen Bay, carrying 500 tonnes of crude oil, and the CE Stephanos, carrying more than 930 tonnes, were

handed over to Kuwait Wednesday, the foreign ministry official said, without naming their countries of registration.

The official, who asked not to be named, said the ministry had asked the state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Company to sell the shipment and transfer the proceeds to the UN Compensation Fund.

The fund was set up in 1991 to pay compensation to victims of Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It includes Iraqi assets frozen in various countries as a result of the UN embargo imposed on Baghdad after the invasion.

On November 6 Kuwait decided to sell the cargo of the Mahroussa, a Honduran-registered oil tanker intercepted on October 21, and the proceeds went into the UN Compensation Fund.

The Captain of the Mahroussa, Izzat Abdel Hadi Khalifa, said his tanker had unloaded 3,162 tonnes of fuel in Al-Zubari port in Southeastern Iraq between October 16 and 19.

On December 26, the US navy said it had seized a ship flying the Honduran flag "suspected" of transporting a cargo of Iraqi dates.

And on December 3, the navy intercepted an Iraqi tug and tanker in the Gulf on suspicion of breaking the embargo, and questioned the crews before letting them go.

The western naval vessels enforcing the embargo in the Gulf are from countries which ousted Iraqi troops from Kuwait in February 1991 in the US-led operation Desert Storm.

DCCI to set up business advisory service project

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) is going to set up a project known as "Business advisory service for export oriented small and medium sized enterprises" with the financial and technical assistance of the GTZ, an Organisation of the Federal Republic of Germany, says a press release.

With a view to provide advisory services in the growth, development and expansion of country's trade, commerce and industry, especially the export oriented small and medium sized enterprises, DCCI has undertaken this project.

The major objectives of the project are: Increase exports from Bangladesh, particularly to the Federal Republic of Germany. Earn foreign currency to support import of capital goods along with new technology. Encourage establish-

ment of export oriented small and medium sized enterprises. Provide supportive and advisory services for promotion and development of small and medium sized entrepreneurs on different aspects. Supply information to the users and create a DATA Bank. Increase employment opportunity. Play effective role and establish linkage between buyers and sellers. Help in exploration of markets, furnish information on product, price, production etc. Ensure effective collaboration, co-operation and establishment of linkages among different organisations working for export promotion. Develop knowledge and skill of the entrepreneurs by imparting training, holding seminars/workshops; providing consultancy services etc which, in turn, improve boosting up exports and thus earning foreign exchange.



Dhaka Sheraton, which played host to Indian filmstar Dilip Kumar during his recent visit, was accorded a reception last week by the hotel. General Manager Ross Larsen and other hotel executives are also seen.