

## DCCI chief hints at new law to protect consumers' right

By Staff Correspondent

Political unrest, red tapism, losses in the public sector industries, increase of production cost and disparities in the tax and tariff system are the main causes which affect the process of industrialisation seriously in the country.

A Rab Choudhury, the outgoing President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) said yesterday at a press conference at the auditorium of the chamber.

"We appealed repeatedly to the political leaders of the country to find out an alternative programme to hartals and road barricade, but we are set to receive any response from them," Rob lamented.

The next president of the DCCI is scheduled to be elected today (Tuesday).

Giving a brief account on

the various activities of the DCCI in the last year, he said, a number of recommendations made by the chamber were accepted by the government during the period.

In this context, he mentioned tax exemption for the 100 per cent export oriented industries outside the export processing zone, 50 per cent share quota for the local investors and withdrawal of the ban on the small plastic industries.

Referring to a survey made by the DCCI, A Rab Choudhury said country incurred an annual loss to the tune of Tk 1556 cr due to frequent power failure.

Replying to a question, he said, the overall prices of the essential commodities remained stable even before

starting the holy month of Ramadan.

In this regard, he also mentioned the government is considering to promulgate a law called 'Consumer Protection Act' to safeguard the rights of the consumers.

A Rab Choudhury said, during his tenure, a total of 24 workshops were conducted by the DCCI. Among these, 14 by its own fund and 10 with the assistance of the German Federation of Small Business.

The DCCI is considering to set up a Business Advisory Service for export-oriented small and medium size enterprise with the help of German government, he mentioned.

The total cost for this programme was estimated at about Tk 3 crore 66 lakh, he added.

## Govt urged to stabilise fertilizer market

Bangladesh Fertilizer Association yesterday called upon the government to stabilise the current fertilizer market through increasing the volume of supply, reports BSS.

Addressing a press briefing here, the Chairman of the Association A Samad appreciated the government's policy of introducing fixed price of fertilizer at the field level and its distribution through district administration in tackling the current crisis of fertilizer particularly urea. But for long term arrangement, the government should evolve a sound supply and distribution system, he said.

Replying to a question, Samad said that though Bangladesh was surplus in urea production, the country had a crisis of the urea fertilizer during the current season due to excessive irrational exports.

He further said that the fertilizer market had been stable for a long period following privatization. "Some recent changes in the policies have destabilized the supply channel, and diversion of a large quantities to export in the peak season had created the current crisis, he added.

## Masterplan for Ctg Port soon

CHITTAGONG, Jan 30: Shipping Minister M K Anwar said preparation of a master plan for the overall development of Chittagong Port is underway, reports BSS.

The plan would be implemented with local resources and expertise, the minister said while addressing the installation ceremony of Society of Master Mariners here yesterday.

The minister said, the present government has undertaken pragmatic policy to increase country's both private and government shipping fleet to help supplement our economy. With pursuance of effective programme the activities of Chittagong Port have improved to a great extent, he added.

## New GM of Janata Bank

The government has appointed Mohammad Hossain, General Manager of Janata Bank, says a press release.

Prior to his present position, he held different assignments at Janata Bank. He attended various seminars at home and abroad.



A stall at the meena bazar organised by the Women Entrepreneurs Association (WEA) at Dhaka Ladies Club yesterday. — Star photo

## ZIA runway overlay project regains momentum

By Reaz Ahmad

The Runway Overlay Project (ROP) at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) has regained momentum after an interim setback over the procurement and shipment of necessary equipment and other related logistic supports and ingredients, authoritative sources in the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) said.

CAAB officials while admitting delay in implementing the project said they were hopeful that the 10,500 feet ZIA runway recarpeting work would be completed before the advent of the next rainy season. The recarpeting work would give an eight-inch new layer to the existing runway.

Two firms — Hanjin Engineering and Construction Company Limited of Korea and Neptune Commercial Limited of Bangladesh, under a 70 per cent-30 per cent joint venture is undertaking the recarpeting work. CAAB is financing the project at an estimated cost of Tk 31 crore 23 lakh from its own fund.

CAAB insisted that the firms bring in one more asphalt plant so that work is not interrupted due to unforeseen mechanical failure.

Only last week, after repeated reminders, the firms informed CAAB they would

bring in another asphalt plant from Philippines in mid February.

Talking to this correspondent, CAAB Chairman Shamsheer Ali hoped that if things run smoothly, the first ever recarpeting of ZIA runway would begin in late February or early March and it would take some 40 days to complete the work.

"Our all out efforts will be there to complete the recarpeting task before the end of the current dry season that ends on March 28, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is providing us with their valued consultancy," Ali added.

However, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), which was supposed to supply some 4,500 tons of bitumen for ROP, at one stage expressed their inability to do so as the grade of bitumen that Eastern Refinery Ltd usually produced did not match the grade, which the project actually required. But, after testing the 60/70 grade bitumen of Eastern Refinery in their country, the Korean firm confirmed that it would be good enough for this work to use this grade of bitumen.

MD Ataur Rahman Executive Engineer for CAAB told The Daily Star that they sent a letter to BPC on Saturday asking

BPC to supply by bitumen.

Out of the total requirement of some 1.3 million cubic feet boulders 70 per cent have already been procured and brought to Dhaka from Sylhet and the rest were coming, Rahman added.

CAAB sources said that a paver machine was now on its way to Dhaka from Jeddah and as soon as the machine reached, boulder crushing work would begin and then carpeting works would be able to start off.

Meanwhile, Hanjin Engineering and Construction Co Ltd and Neptune Commercial Ltd JV has constructed a six-storey building with a storey foundation near the project site, adjacent to civil aviation headquarters. A complete laboratory for this work will be housed in that building.

The carpeting works would be done at night time only and flight landing and take off between 10 pm to 8 am, except Fridays, has already been suspended for the time being.

The runway at ZIA, which was constructed in late 60s, has been opened for regular flight operation on December 28 in 1979. Since then it was never carpeted, but now the recarpeting has become very urgent for protecting the runway from inundation.

## WEA meenabazar

By Staff Correspondent

The Women Entrepreneurs Association (WEA), established just six months ago and already comprising 60-70 members, held its first exhibition cum Meenabazar yesterday. Fifty or so members participated in the exhibition, at Dhaka Ladies Club, selling goods directly produced by the women members.

Among the products being sold were block-printed, tie-dyed or embroidered saris and women's/men's garments, handicrafts, food products, herbal remedies, soaps and jewellery. Other businesses not represented at the exhibition include several poultry farming enterprises.

Out of the 60-70 members, approximately ten per cent are potential entrepreneurs, not yet fully developed as independent businesses. Of the remaining members, many have their own outlets for selling their own products, such as Gift Craft, Fathia, Brotee and Karaka. Others sell their products direct to shops or to exporters for sale in the UK and States.

Many of the small businesses represented were able to establish themselves through a special credit programme funded by MIDAS (Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services), who provide loans of up to Tk 200000 without collateral providing a personal guarantee is available by a sponsor.

President of WEA, Rokia A Rahman, said "we are very encouraged to have gained so many members in such a short time. We decided to hold this bazaar to promote the interests of our entrepreneurs, but it was somewhat on the spur of the moment. In another six months' time, to mark the first year of our organisation, we plan to hold a workshop and seminar for our members and members of the public who may be interested in setting up their own small businesses."

## KLM praised for not flying any deportees

The Airline Liaison Office of the United Kingdom Immigration Service has commended KLM for not flying any deportees since the inception of its flights 10 weeks ago from Dhaka, says a press release.

The performance of KLM's airport staff "in this difficult area while working under extreme pressure is very commendable", said P.E. Feeny, Airline Liaison Officer of the UK Immigration Service.

Cees Uresem, General Manager, Bangladesh, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines handed over the memento of the Airline Liaison Office of the UK Immigration Service to Ajay Dhawan, Station Manager, Bangladesh, KLM at a simple ceremony on Saturday. They deserve it for the hardwork they have put in under his leadership," he said.

This special award is in recognition of the efforts put in by all of us at KLM here for being very alert and not carrying any deportees. Ajay Dhawan said.

We are working hard to achieve the targets set under the guidance of Cees Uresem, General Manager, Bangladesh and Karel Bram F. Steller, Vice President and Area Manager Middle East and South Asia, Dhawan said.



A Rab Chowdhury (2nd-R), the out-going President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, addressing a press conference at the DCCI auditorium yesterday. — Star photo

## China to invest \$ 18.8b in real estate

BELJING, Jan 30: China is to invest 160 billion yuan (18.8 billion dollars) in real estate in 1995, with 80 per cent of the funds targeted on constructing affordable residential housing, Xinhua said Sunday, reports AFP.

The investment, double that of 1994, is aimed at ensuring that the country achieves its target of providing urban citizens with at least three square metres (32.3 square feet) of living space per capita by the end of the year, the reports said.

The urban figure is to rise to six square metres by 2000, when the national area per capita is targeted at eight

square metres and every household is to have a relatively inexpensive and comfortable house.

Last year, the national per capita area 7.7 square metres, up from 3.6 square metres in 1978, the agency said, but added that there were still more than four million households whose per capita living space did not exceed 2.5 square metres.

The government needs to ensure the construction of at least 165 million square metres of housing each year in order to achieve its target by 2000. Last year, 2000 million square metres were built.

Xinhua said the authorities

would also strengthen macro-controls on the housing market, where prices have in recent years "soared to an unbelievable high," making apartment unaffordable for ordinary people.

Rampant speculation in recent years has pushed up prices, with cost of a 55-square-metre apartment in 1993 equal to 35 times the annual income of an average worker.

China is trying to reform its socialist housing system, which provided citizens with homes at negligible rents, creating a huge subsidy burden on the state.

Under the reforms, rents are being gradually raised and individuals encouraged to buy their own homes.

## MOU to expand output capacity of TSP plant

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) and Tri Cap International of the United States at BCIC Bhaban in the capital on Sunday, says a press release.

Under the accord, the annual production capacity of TSP complex will be enhanced from 1.75 lakh MT to 3.0 lakh MT at a cost of eight million US dollars.

It will be a joint venture enterprise of the two organisations.

The MOU was signed by Dr. Shafiqur Rahman, Secretary of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation and Ms. Runa N. Alam, President of Tri Cap International, USA.

As per agreed terms, Tri Cap International will act as investment banker to find foreign joint venture partner and to raise equity capital for its expansion.

BCIC will provide financial information and projections to Tri Cap.

## Most Asian currencies weaken over the week

HONG KONG, Jan 30: Most Asian currencies weakened moderately under a variety of influences including continuing concerns over the effects of the January 17 earthquake in Japan and sluggish trading ahead of lunar new year holidays this week, says AFP.

**JAPANESE YEN:** The Japanese currency lost strength moderately in Tokyo with investors concerned about damage to industrial facilities from the January 17 earthquake in western Japan.

The currency was quoted at 99.35 yen to the dollar at 3:30 pm (0630 GMT) on the Tokyo Foreign Exchange market Friday, down 0.19 yen from 99.16 yen a week earlier. Investors were also concerned about the situation of Mexico hit by currency crisis, dealers said.

Most dealers speculated that there would be no big fluctuation in the yen-dollar rate before the release of US gross domestic product (GDP) figures for the final quarter.

**AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR:** Dashed hopes for an imminent

interest rate rise forced the Australian dollar to close the week Friday around three quarters of a US cent lower, dealers said.

The local dollar finished here at 76.06 US cents, down from 76.87 US cents a week earlier, following an end-of-week slide fuelled by continuing poor sentiment.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics announced Wednesday lower-than-expected inflation of 2.5 per cent in 1994, easing expectations of an imminent rise in the official 7.5 per cent interest rate to stave off price increase.

Higher interest rates traditionally benefit the currency by raising the returns on Australian investments and increasing the demand for local dollars to buy them.

The Australian dollar held firm on Wednesday but jitters entered the market when traders returned after a public holiday Thursday to celebrate Australia day, dealers said.

"It has been trashed," said Shane Spurway, foreign exchange dealer with industrial



Dr Khondakar Mosharraf Hossain, Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources, seen presiding over a meeting on the progress of the on-going projects at the Board Room of Petrobangla in the city yesterday.

bank of Japan.

**SINGAPORE DOLLAR:** The Singapore dollar ended the week lower against the US dollar to 1.4520 from 1.4483 previously.

Forex dealers said the Singapore dollar could regain lost ground by testing the 1.4475 level during the Chinese new year holiday-shortened week ahead.

**HONG KONG DOLLAR:** The Hong Kong dollar, pegged at 7.80 to the US currency, closed at 7.733-7.735 to the US unit this week. The government said that as a result of a decline in the value of the US dollar, and consequent decline in the Hong Kong currency, the cost of imports rose faster than returns on exports.

**INDONESIAN DOLLAR:** The Indonesian currency continued to weaken slightly closing trading this week on Friday at 2,206 rupiah to the dollar, or two rupiah weaker than the closing rate at the same time the previous week.

**MALAYSIAN RINGGIT:** The ringgit lost 45 points to close at 2.5575 this week from

2.5530 a week earlier in quiet trading ahead of the approaching lunar new year holidays, dealers said.

The Malaysian currency was also weaker against the yen at 2.5742 from 2.5734 and against the mark at 1.6885 from 1.6845.

The foreign exchange market will be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday for lunar new year holidays and on Thursday for federal territory day.

**NEW ZEALAND DOLLAR:** The New Zealand dollar closed Friday at 64.02 US cents compared with its close last Friday at 64.18 dealers said it came off sharply to allow of 63.95 Friday on selling out of Singapore, but bounced back to the 64 cent mark.

"We expect a range up to 64.30 next week," one dealer said. "The weaker Aussie (Australian dollar) is helping."

**PHILIPPINE PESO:** The Philippine peso appreciated to 24.625 pesos to the dollar on Friday from 24.758 pesos to the dollar on January 20.

This occurred despite calls from the finance department

to the central bank for increased dollar purchases to stem the appreciation of the peso which has become a major gripe of Philippine exporters.

**KOREAN WON:** The US dollar weakened against the South Korean won, closing the week at 786.70 won per dollar from the previous week's 792.50 won.

**TAIWAN DOLLAR:** The US dollar advanced slightly to close Friday at 26.3 Taiwan dollars, up 2.7 Taiwan cents from the previous week's finish of 26.273.

**THAI BAHT:** The Bank of Thailand Exchange Equalisation Fund on Friday fixed the official mid rate at 25.06 baht to one US dollar, compared with the previous week's close of 25.05. The greenback was slightly down as the investors and traders sat on the sidelines awaiting a federal board meeting next week and release of fourth quarter figures for US gross domestic product Friday.

Suthee Lospophonkul of Nakorn ton Bank said.

**Directorate General Defence Purchase**  
Ministry of Defence  
New Airport Road, Tejgaon  
Dhaka-1215

### Re-Tender Notice

- Sealed Re-tenders in Foreign Currency are invited from bonafide Producers/ Dealers/ Suppliers/ Indentors (Not necessarily enlisted with this Directorate General) for supply of 100 Metric Tons Skimmed Milk Powder for Defence Services.
- Tender schedule with detailed specifications will be available on payment of Tk 100.00 (Not refundable) from 31-1-95 to 20-2-95 on any working day between 0800 hours to 12-00 hours. The tender will be opened on 22-2-95 at 1000 hours in presence of tenderers (if any).

ISPR/Misc/95/135  
DFP-1879-241  
G-160

**Dy Director Purchase (Army)**  
for Director General

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়  
ময়মনসিংহ গণপুত্র বিভাগ  
ময়মনসিংহ

### দরপত্রের ২য় সংশোধনী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অত্র দরপত্রের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির স্বাক্ষর নং টি/৭৬৯ এবং টি/৭৭০, তাং ২০-১২-৯৪ইং-এর মাধ্যমে আহবানকৃত নিম্নে বর্ণিত কাজের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নিম্নে বর্ণিত ভাবে ২য় সংশোধনী দেওয়া হইল। উক্ত সংশোধনী ব্যতীত দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকিবে।

কাজের নাম	ঃ ময়মনসিংহ জেলা সদরের কোতোয়ালী থানা বিধি-এর আভ্যন্তরীণ বৈদ্যুতিক করণ কাজ। অর্থ বৎসর ১৯৯৪-৯৫ইং।
১। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ ২য় সংশোধিত তারিখ ৫-২-৯৫ইং/ ২০-১০-১৪০১বাং।
২। দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ ৬-২-৯৫ইং/ ২৪-১০-১৪০১বাং।
৩। লটারীর তারিখ	ঃ ১২-২-৯৫ইং/ ৩০-১০-১৪০১বাং রোজক রবিবার।

প্রকৌঃ গোলাম মোহাম্মদ  
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী  
ময়মনসিংহ গণপুত্র বিভাগ  
ময়মনসিংহ, ফোন ৪২৭৬

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জি-১৬৪