

The Baily Star

Best with the views

Pvt traders import over 8 lakh maunds

of Indian rice Some 8.11.174 maunds of

rice were imported from India through private traders in last two months, according to an official handout issued on Thursday, says UNB.

The rice had been imported into the country by road through the borders at Sona Majid in Chapainawabganj. Burimari in Lalmanirhat and Hili in Dinajpur.

Besides, some 16,000 maunds of rice had been imported through Jessore border during the same period.

The handout said huge quantity of rice was being imported through these border everyday.

Some 49,02,570 maunds of rice had so far been imported through LC in private sector and a huge quantity is still in the pipeline.

Japanese grant worth \$1.54 lakh for 3 projects

Japanese government will extend financial assistance worth over 1.54 lakh US dollars for purchasing necessary equipment for three social welfare projects in Bangladesh. reports UNB.

Japanese Charge de Affaires Yoshihisa Kuroda signed the grant contracts under Small-Scale Grant Assistance programme of Japanese government with three Non-Governmental Organisations here on Thursday.

The contracts were signed by Nick Langton, Representative of the Asia Foundation in Bangladesh, Alaudding Ahmed, Chairman of Bangladesh OISCA Ex-Trainees' Welfare Association, and Brig (Rtd) Prof Abdul Malik of National Heart Foundation of Bangladesh on behalf of their respective organisa-

The projects receiving the grants are Urban Based Comprehensive Reproductive Health Clinics (UBCRHC) project of the Asia Foundation. OISCA-Ex-Trainees' Follow-up project and National Heart Foundation Hospital (NHFH)

Under the contracts. 46,487 US dollars will be granted for purchasing basic medical equipment for UBCRHC project, 44,172 dollars to procure a cardiovascular ultrasound scanner and two defibrillators for NHFH project and 64,012 dollars to purchase shallow tubewells for small farmers of OISCA Follow-up project.

The Small Scale Grant Assistance (SSGA) programme was initiated in 1989 under the Japanese Grant Assistance Scheme to extend grant to NGOs directly. In Bangladesh, 14 NGOs have already received SSGA grants, said a Japanese Embassy press release.

Oli urges engineers

Formulate plans conforming to future needs

Communications Minister Col (Reid) Oli Ahmed has called upon engineers to formulate perspective plan in consideration of future needs of the people, reports BSS.

The minister was inaugurating the annual convention-94. organised by Engineers Association of Roads and Highways department at the Institute of Engineers here on Thursday.

Praising the performance of the engineers of the department in recent years, he stressed the need for upholding the image. He said there was the need to learn from the drawbacks and shortcomings of the past.

Presided over by President of the Association Mohammad

Ishaque, the function was also addressed by Chief Engineer of the Department Fazlul Karim and General Secretary of the Association Nurul Huda. The minister underlined

the need for proper supervision of works of the department through monitoring the performance of consultants. He said there was also a need for maintaining uptodate records of all sorts of works under the department including construction of culverts, repair and carpeting works for ready reference.

The Communications Minister expressed the hope that the engineers of the department would be able to come out with ideas for improve-

ment of their performances through discussions at the convention. He suggested identification of problems in their professional duties with suggestions for their remedies and circulation of the same among themselves.

In this connection, Col (Retd) Oli said that the engineers could inform newspapers from time to time of the progress of their work to keep the people abreast of their activities.

He pointed out some of the drawbacks in the construction works on some roads and culverts. He hoped that the engineers would learn from their experience and remove such lapses in future.



Mohammad Nasiruddin, Bangladesh ambassador designate to Saudi Arabia, delivering speech at a reception organised in his honour by Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited at a city hotel recently. Abdullah Omar Barry, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Commodore (Retd) Mohammad Ataur Rahman, Chairman of the bank, and Dr A T M Shamsul Huda, Secretary, Banking Division, Ministry of Finance, are also seen in the picture.

Chinese cuisine flourishes in Mexican border town

MEXICALL Mexico, Mar 17:, When you think of "Mexico" and "food" together, tacos, salsa and tortilla chips are likely to come to mind, reports AP.

Mexico is not known for its culinary diversity. Finding a Thai or Greek restaurant in a typical town is about as likely as finding a restaurant special izing in low-cal food.

But in this desert border city, where summer temperatures climb to a painful 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees C), kung pao chicken, shrimp in galic sauce and Peking duck are as prevalent and popular - as any Mexican

Conspicuous on wide boulevards and tucked down side streets, a sprawling Chinatown signals its presence with big stone lions guarding red gates. roofs upturned like miniature Imperial Palaces and Chinese Calligraphy.

Strollers looking for a place to eat are beckoned by signs proclaiming "Comida China," as some restaurants in Mexicali call Chinese food.

"Our éuisine is not carne asada or tortillas," said Henrique Priego Mendoza, who teaches at the University of Baja California. "It's Chinese

Chinese have been in Mexicali for nearly 100 years, coming first in the late 1800s to work on the railroad and in the fields that sprang up as irrigation transformed the region from in hospitable desert to fertile valley.

Subsequent generations joined relatives, and others came early this century to escape anti-Chinese movements in some parts of Mexico, such as Sonora, and also in the United States.

outnumbered Mexicans 6-1. but today there are about 2,000 pure Chinese and 1,500 mixed Chinese out of a population of about 1 million.

Speaking in fluent, but choppy, guttural Spanish, Fernando Lee. owner of the Alley 19 Restaurant, stands proudly beneath a black and white photograph of his grandfather and four business partners posing outside the restaurant in 1928. Alley 19 has served Cantonese food without interruption ever

Lee, 58, who immigrated to Mexicali when he was a child. says his fried noodles and other dishes draw Mexicans from all over the region and customers from San Diego. 120 miles (195 kilometres) to the west, and Yuma, Arizona, 60 miles (100 kilometres) to the east.

There are about 100 Chinese restaurants in this industrial city and government seat of Baja California.

Karma-Sahayak Foundation engaged in 46 districts

The Bangladesh Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation is engaged in 46 districts of the country in the task of poverty alleviation, foundation's Chairman Nazrul Islam has said, reports BSS.

Islam and Managing director of the foundation MAM Ziauddin visited the vast landless and poor people in the "Ramgati" and "Char Alexandar" thanas of Luxmipur district recently at the invitation of the local member of parliament Abdur Rob Chowdhury.

More than 13,000 people were present at different gath-

Abdur Rob Chowdhury said that nearly 70,000 landless poor people are struggling for life in abject poverty in the area following river erosion. He urged the foundation to provide soft-term loans to these needy people.

Nazrul Islam said since its inception in 1990, the foundation has provided loans of about Taka 47, crore to the poor people for economic and social uplift.

Ziauddin said the founda tion is working in close cooperation with 107 associate organisations in 46 districts.

Abdus Samad Mallick, Di-

SEBL will open principal branch by June 30

The South East Bank Ltd (SEBL) has decided to open its principal branch by June 30 this year, says a press release.

The decision was taken at the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the bank at a city hotel Thursday. The meeting was attended

by all members of the board. The board unanimously elected Muhammad Abul Kashem chairman and Ragib Ali vice chairman.

It discussed different agenda including selection of premises for housing the principal office and head office of the

The appointment of the ,chief executive and some preincorporation contracts made by the bank were approved.

The board exchanged views on the future policy guide-lines for the bank.

It was decided that avenues will be explored as to how the bank credit could be brought to the doorsteps of the poorer section of the people.

House Budget Panel okays Republican spending cuts

billion dollars in spending cuts through the House and 100 billion dollars more through its budget committee Thursday as furious Democrats accused

them of reneging on a deal and using phony, double-counted savings, savs AP. The House voted 227-200 for a Republican plan slicing 17 billion dollars out of already enacted programmes, including public housing, summer jobs for youths and aid for the arts and public broadcasting. The cuts were the first the

erings in two thanas.

rector of the foundation, who also accompanied them during the visit, explained to the people the working procedures of the foundation and called upon the dedicated persons and the non-government organisations to come forward to assist the foundation in its daunting task of poverty alleviation.

Wolfensohn to head WB WASHINGTON, Mar 17:

Representatives of the 178 countries that owe the World Bank, the world's biggest source of loans to the Third World, confirmed private investment banker James D Wolfensohn as the bank's president Thursday, reports AP.

"My wife Elaine and I look forward to dedicating the rest of our working lives to advancing and developing (the bank's) effectiveness for the betterment of all peoples, Wolfensohn, 61, said in a statement.

On June 1 he will take over from Lewis T. Preston, who recently announced his retirement due to cancer. Preston was formerly a top executive of J P Morgan. Wolfensohn, owner of New York's James D. Wolfensohn Inc., formerly headed the investment banking department at Solomon Brothers.

Wolfensohn was born in Australia but is a US citizen, as all heads of the World Bank have been since its founding more than 50 years ago. He was chosen by President Clin-

The United States is the largest stockholder in the bank's profit-making sections and the largest contributor to the International Development Association, the World Bank arm that supplies soft loans to the poorest countries.

The bank lends more than 20 billion dollars a year to un developed countries with the basic mission of fighting poverty and raising living standards. Its loans now go to state of the former Soviet bloc as well as those in former colonial areas. In addition to lending for schools, hospitals farming and industry, it makes loans to whole sectors of a country's economy in return for changes in government policies toward a free-market

Its International Finance Corp. arm lends to private business.

Wolfensohn served as a flying officer in the Royal Australian Air force and competed on Australia's fencing team in the 1956 Olympics.

for the Republican tax-cut package. The vote was 24-11. and like the House roll call, it

was nearly party-line. The votes were almost drowned out by a raucous, finger-pointing row between the parties over whether Republicans had attracted conservative Democratic support for their spending cuts with a

promise they later abandoned.

The dispute concerned the 17 billion dollars in House-approved savings and an arcane question of budget calculations.

· To get some Democratic votes for the 17 billion dollars in cuts, Republicans said they agreed they would use the immediate savings for deficit reduction.

ECO should become vehicle for global economic integration' ration issued by the group said

occasion by vowing to veto it.

the bill is in its present form.

said President Clinton's chief

of staff, Leon Panetta. He called

the reductions "irresponsible

the bill would provide 5.4 bil-

lion dollars to help 40 states

recover from recent natural

disasters. About 5 billion dol-

fars would go to California to

aid its recovery from last year's

publicans muscled a plan

through the budget panel that

would make another 100 bil-

lion dollars in reductions over

the next five years to help pay

Shortly afterward, the Re-

Northridge earthquake.

Besides its spending cuts.

and mean spirited."

the president would veto it."

There is no question that if

ISLAMABAD, Mar 17: Facing political and ethnic turbulence in several member states. leaders of 10 Muslim countries in Asia concluded a two-day summit Wednesday by saying peace was necessary for the region's development, says

House has cleared in the Re-

publican campaign to balance

The White House noted the

the budget.

WASHINGTON, Mar 17: Ma-

perity Republicans pushed 17

But the leaders of Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) nations also expressed "satisfaction" at a variety of accords, including agreements on transit trade, a regional development bank and liberalised visa procedures. Affirming an "intrinsic link-

age between peace and economic development," a declathat normality and prosperity in the ECO region would foster" greater solidarity and cooperation" among its 300 million people. ECO should become a vehi-

cle for the economic integration of the economies of member states with the rest of the world," the declaration obtained by AFP here said. The group, whose main goal

is regional economic cooperation, approved the establish-Development Bank, the ECO shipping company, ECO Air. a reinsurance company, a science foundation and agricul tural institute, the islamabad

Declaration said.

Formalities for implement-

ing the ECO protocol on preferential tariff arrangements were also completed, while a regional treaty on the protection and promotion of investment is under consideration by member countries, said the declaration.

The leaders expressed the belief that integration would contribute "positively" to the emergence of a stable and peaceful environment, regionally as well as globally, it

There is also a "regional

consensus" on the free market approach, it added.

Nikes' quarterly profits up 51 pc BEAVERTON, Oregon, Mar

17: Nike Inc. reported a 51 per cent increase in profits for the fiscal third-quarter, citing soaring global sales of its athletic footwear and apparel, reports AP

Net income for the quarter ended February 28 was 95.3 million dollars or 1.29 dollars per share, compared with 63.2 million dollars, or 85 cents per share, during the same period last year.

to 1.12 billion dollars from 871 million dollars in the third quarter of 1994. Worldwide orders sched-

Revenues rose 29 per cent

uled for delivery between March and July 1995 rose 37 per cent from the same period a year ago to 2.4 billion dollars. Nike Chairman Phil Knight

International revenues rose 33 per cent as the company recorded double-digit sales increases in several markets: 42 per cent in Italy. 40 per cent in Canada. 28 per cent in Australia and 16 per cent in Korea and Argentina.



The first board meeting of South East Bank Ltd was held under the chairmanship of M A Kashem at a city hotel on Thursday.

Austerity plan meets unusually stiff resistance in Mexico's Congress Thursday.

MEXICO CITY. Mar 17: Congress opened a raucous debate Thursday on raising the national sales tax, a flashpoint in President Ernesto Zedillo's austerity plan, reports AP. tion that Zedillo might be

The president and other proponents of the plan to boost the sales tax from 10 per cent to 15 per cent have said such bitter medicine was needed to avert a worse economic collapse.

He called for support by Congress, which his Institutional Revolutionary Party has dominated for 66 years, but which has offered only a tepid response to his proposed tax increase.

"A moderate and fleeting recession is preferable to a prolonged stagnation of the economy, which would be even more pernicious for society, particularly for the poorest." Zediilo said in a speech

Congress normally follows the president's lead with little questioning. Lawmakers' resistance Thursday raised specula-

scale down the tax hike at least slightly. Supporters of the increase said it would hurt now but would ultimately benefit the economy by providing government funds to combat a crisis

touched off by the peso's steep

forced to compromise and

devaluation. "Raising the sales tax could have a recessionary effect on the economy in the short run. But in the long run it will only bring us benefits," said Deputy Antonio Sanchez Gochicoa, a

supporter of Zedillo's plan. But critics were flerce, including the influential business tubby, COPYRMEX, a grouping

of powerful executives normally allied with the ruling

Carlos Abascal president of COPARMEX, was quoted as telling the government news agency Notimex that a 15 per cent tax increase would only bring about widespread price increases and a dramatic decline in sales.

He exhorted lawmakers to act independently to represent the best interest of the nation. Meanwhile, the peso weakened again Thursday as the crisis continued.

The peso has lost about half of its value against the dollar since December 20. The dollar was worth 6.95 pesos in the morning but closed at 7.10 pesos on Thursday. The stock market fell 1.4 per cent to 1.589.58 on Thursday as inyestors took stock of soaring testageast rates an leigh, an 108

Scores of members of El Barzon, a national group demanding relief from debt and high interest rates, protested Thursday outside the central bank in downtown Mexico City. They unfurled banners reading "Bankers to Almoloya," a refer-

ence to the country's main

maximum-security prison, and

called on Mexicans not to pay

off debts to the banks.

Critics argue that Zedillo's austerity plan is asking Mexicans to sacrifice too much. The plan calls for holding minimum wage increases to 17 per cent this year, far lagging inflation forecast to top 42 per cent in 1995.

The president exhorted his compatriots to fall in line. "The road is hard and demanding. But because it is harder now the sooner we will see our first branks he superage as the weigh

বাংলাদেশ বিমান বাহিনী শাহীন অডিটোরিয়াম, তেজগাঁও

দরপত্র আহবান বাংলাদেশ বিমান বাহিনী ঘাঁটি বাশার তেজগাঁও এ অবস্থিত বি এ এফ অডিটোরিয়াম ৩ (তিন) বৎসরের জন্য চলচ্চিত্র প্রদর্শনের নিমিত্তে নিম্নে বর্ণিত শর্ত্ত সাপেক্ষে ইজারা প্রদান করা হইবে বিধায় ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে। দরপত্র আগামী ০৩-৪-৯৫ইং বেলা ১২০০

ঘঃ পর্যন্ত গ্রহণ করা হইবে এবং ঐদিনই বেলা ১২১৫ ঘঃ উপস্থিত

চলচ্চিত্র প্রদর্শনের নিমিত্তে

দর্পত্রদাতাদের সমূথে (যদি কেহ থাকেন) খোলা হইবে। শর্তসমূহঃ

ক। দরপত্র প্রদানের নির্ধারিত ফরম অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে মোট ৫০০.০০ টাকা (পাঁচশত টাকা) মাত্র বিনিময়ে (অফেরতযোগ্য) পিএসআই বিমান বাহিনী ঘাঁটি বাশার হইতে সংগ্রহ করিতে হইবে।

খ। দরপত্র প্রদানকারীকে আর্নেষ্টমানি হিসাবে মোট ৫০,০০০.০০ টাকা (পঞ্চাশ হাজার টাকা) মাত্র নগদ অথবা ব্যাংক ডাফট এর মাধ্যমে দরপত্রের সহিত প্রদান করিতে হইবে।

দরপত্র খোলার পর প্রথম ও দ্বিতীয় দরদাতার আর্নেষ্টমানি ব্যতিরেকে অন্যান্য দরদাতার আর্নেষ্টমানি ঐ দিনই ফেরং প্রদান করা হইবে। প্রথম ও দ্বিতীয় দরদাতার আর্নেষ্টমানি ইজারার বিষয়াদি চূড়ান্তভাবে নিম্পত্তি

না হওয়া পর্যন্ত জমা রাখা হইবে। । দরপত্র প্রদানের পর দরদাতা পরবতীতে লীজ গ্রহণে অনীহা প্রকাশ

করিলে প্রদত্ত আর্নেষ্টমানি বাতিল বলিয়া গণ্য হইবে অডিটোরিয়াম ইজারা সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় শর্তাবলী সম্পর্কে যথাযথভাবে জ্ঞাত হওয়ার জন্য প্রকৃত দরদাতাগণকে ২৮-৩-৯৫ইং অফিস্ চলাকালীন সময়ে এডজুটেন্ট, প্রশাসনিক শাখা, বিমান বাহিনী ঘাঁটি বাশার এর সহিত যোগাযোগ করিতে হইবে।

চ। দরপত্র প্রদানের নির্ধারিত ফরমের সহিত সংযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষের শর্তাবলীর বাহিরে কোনক্রমেই অতিরিক্ত প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন করা যাইবে না। ২। বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে পিএসআই বিমান

বাহিনী ঘাঁটি বাশার, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস, দ্রালাপনী ৮৮৮০১১/৫০৮৯ এই ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল। ৩। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

আইএসপিআর/বিমান/২৫/৪০২

FEWERY- 4004-38/6

At one point, the Chinese Indian inflation

may fall NEW DELHI, Mar 17: The double-digit inflation that has made many Indians oppose the country's free-market reforms will soon fall sharply, the government said Thursday, re-

ports AP. Finance Secretary Montek Singh Ahluwalia told a news conference that the inflation rate would drop from 11.4 per cent to 7 per cent or 8 per

cent in the next six months. That will happen because the new budget that the government presented to Parliament on Wednesday cuts import tariffs and imposes no new taxes on essential items. Ahluwalia said.

He defended the govern-

ment's decision to include new welfare programmes in the budget for the poorest of India's 900 million people to reduce criticism of the economic reforms. Critics said these steps are aimed at winning votes in next year's general election, espe-

cially since the governing

Congress Party has lost five

state legislative elections since November. Ahluwalia also said that India will not find itself in a debt trap because of a cap on commercial foreign borrowing at a maximum of 3.5 billion

dollars.

India will follow a two-track strategy of continuing its economic reforms and introducing anti-poverty programmes, he said. "We cannot remove the poverty without giving stimulus to economic growth." Ahluwalia said.

When Finance Minister

Manmohan Singh introduced the budget Wednesday, he announced a sharp rise in food and fertiliser subsidies to help the poor and the strong farm

"A key element of our strategy was to give top priority to strengthening anti-poverty programmes." Singh told

Parliament. Stockpiles of food staples. such as rice, would be released from warehouses to lower

prices.

Dohar weavers facing problem to market

products DOHAR, Mar 17: Thousands of weavers of Dohar thana are facing serious problem to market their product due to forceful toll collection by local mastans, reports UNB. The cloth merchants of the

area have abandoned the

weekly Palamganj hat for last

several weeks after the mas-

tans unleashed a reign of terror at the market. Insecurity has forced the local weavers to travel to other distant markets to sell their products.

In some cases the merchants have been tortured and harassed by the mastans led by a local influencial leaders, they lamented.

Local people complained

that despite complains lodged

with the police, atrocities of

the toll collectors had contin-