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The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 1995

**HYUNDAI**

CARS THAT MAKE SENSE

Concerted efforts must to enhance productivity in industries : Lutfor

By Staff Correspondent

State Minister for Industries Lutfor Rahman Khan, yesterday underscored the need for coordinated efforts to increase the overall productivity in the industrial sector.

"A combined endeavour of the labours-employees and owners is a must to bring enormous changes in the field of productivity in both private and public sector industries," the minister said while inaugurating a day-long workshop on "Productivity Improvement in the Jute Spinning Sector" at the Jute Spinners Association auditorium.

Jointly organised by Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSA) and National Productivity Organisation (NPO) of the government, the inaugural function was also addressed by Sabbir Yusuf, Chairman Jute Spinners Association,

Fazlur Rab Mia, Director, National Productivity Organisation (NPO) and Moinul Islam Khan, Vice-Chairman, BJSA.

Termining the jute sector as the second largest foreign exchange earner of the country, the industries minister said, "We have to regain our lost heritage of golden fibre by raising efficiency and productivity in jute mills and factories."

"In free market economy, the whole world has become a market and without increasing productivity and skill of the labours we would not be able to survive at all", he observed.

Suggesting to create a homely atmosphere in each and every factory or unit, the minister said, "If everyone belonging to an institution does not see that it is his own organisation, substantial in-

crease in productivity will never be possible." In this context he emphasised on possessing good health by the employees and congenial environment in workplace.

Blaming the previous government for making the public sector jute mills, over-staffed, particularly Adamjee Jute Mills, Lutfor Rahman Khan said, before independence there were only 16 thousand labourers in Adamjee whereas now there are about 40 thousand. So how it can be profitable one and how the productivity will be increased, the minister put a question before the attending representatives of the different jute mills.

The minister called upon the private sector entrepreneurs to come out with new thoughts and ideas to raise the overall productivity in every sector.

To enhance productivity

in private and public sector industries, the BJSA Chairman Sabbir Yusuf, placed a number of proposals to the government.

Of the proposals, declaration of National Productivity Award, considerations of the period 1995-2005 as National Productivity Decade, arranging productivity week in every three months, inclusion of productivity related articles in school and college curriculum and campaign in mass media to create awareness for raising productivity are main.

Two keynote papers were presented in the working session of the workshop by Nazrul Islam, Joint Director, NPO, on basic concept of productivity and Sazzadul Karim Senior Research Officer, NPO, on methods of productivity improvement in jute spinning industry.

Jute cultivation decreases in southern region

PATUAKHALI, Aug 16: The target of jute cultivation in the southern region of the country could not be achieved in the current season, reports UNB.

According to official sources, jute was cultivated on 57,468 hectares of land against the target 1,14,150 hectares in 10 southern districts.

Some 49.7 per cent of targeted land could not be brought under jute cultivation this year due to various adverse situation. The growers said they failed to sow the seeds in due time because of drought prevailing in the jute cultivating areas of southern districts.



Lutfor Rahman Khan (M), State Minister for Industries, giving his inaugural address at the workshop on "Productivity Improvement In The Jute Spinning Sector" jointly organised by Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association and National Productivity Organisation at BJSA conference hall in the city yesterday. Shabbir Yusuf (4th L), Chairman, Moinul Islam Khan (2nd L), Vice-Chairman, and Shahidul Karim (L), Secretary of the association, are also seen in the picture.

Country's fabrics output 165m metres against requirement of 1,646m: Survey

CHITTAGONG, Aug 16: Existing production of domestic fabrics including woven and knit by local textile industries, suitable for the export-oriented readymade garments sector (RMG), is only 165 million metres against a requirement of 1,646 million metres, said a recent survey report, according to UNB.

A Bangladesh Shilpa Bank report on the present status of textile industries in the country and its potential development upto the year 2000 revealed that the production meets only four per cent requirement of the woven and 41 per cent of knit garments.

The survey, based on statistics and information collected from all banks, reflected this depressive picture, however, experts ex-

pressed critical need for developing backward linkage industries as an indispensable instrument to confront the challenge of the final phasing-out of the multifibre arrangement (MFA) by the year 2005.

The report observed that the total potential supply of fabrics stand both woven and knit to 472 million metres by the year 2000.

The industries that are in pipeline will add another 168 million metres to the existing production capacity and the loan proposals presently lying with the banks if approved, may produce another 139 million metres.

Even is a modest annual growth rate of only five per cent is visualised, the total requirement of the fabrics will stand at 2,057 million

metres by the end of the century, it added.

The report also forecast that this will meet requirement of the woven fabrics to the extent only 12 per cent and that of knit fabrics 77 per cent indicating that local garments industries may depend heavily on imported fabrics for woven garment beyond 2005. Besides, a relatively comfortable position in respect to knit fabric.

In the area of accessories, in zipper and elastic tape, the report found that the industry has made a considerable headway but the position of labels and bakrams is precarious.

The zipper and elastic tape producing industries can supply 55 per cent and 69 per cent respectively of the requirements of RMG industry that may be increased

to 64 per cent and 70 per cent respectively by the year 2000. On the other hand, the existing supply of labels is nine per cent and that of bakrams is almost non-existent.

It is also observed that RMG industry is in a comfortable position in outer packaging and packing materials. About 199 million pieces of cartons are being produced representing 80 per cent of the requirement and this industry will be in a position to meet the entire packing requirement of RMG. The present requirement of the cartons is 249 million pieces.

The experts of this sector suggest that a serious investment efforts are required to effectively meet the challenge arising out of the integration of FMA into GATT.

Women Entrepreneurs

Sara Zaker: Managing Director, MRC Mode

Human resources most vital factor

By Rashda Khan

Sara Zaker is a well-known face in the theater and drama world. However, unknown to many, she is also very active in the business world. Zaker is the managing director of MRC Mode, a research organisation which carries out market and social research.

The business was started by her husband, Aly Zaker, but has been run by her since 1985, which was when she joined. "He has his own advertising firm to take care of. I don't feel bad that I didn't start it on my own. If I didn't look after it, it wouldn't have done this well because it is physically impossible for my husband to be in two places at one time," she says.

When she first started, Zaker had to face a lot of stereotypical attitudes. Many people thought that since she was Aly Zaker's wife she was doing it out of "shok" (fancy) and had no serious involvement. Another thing that was held against her was Zaker's involvement in the theater world. "They thought I would be inconsistent, a typical theater person," she says. "But I proved myself. Professionalism is very important in our job. And I always work keeping that in mind."

She says the research field is very challenging and requires a lot of skill. "You can't run an organization like this without knowing enough about its workings. I had to learn a lot. I learned the ropes through practical experience," says Zaker, who holds a degree in English Literature from Dhaka University.

MRC Mode is the first organization to offer a service of this kind, according to Zaker. To increase efficiency, she has entered MRC Mode into joint collaboration with an established Indian firm. MRC Mode performs many func-

tions, such as retail auditing for multinational companies, finding out marketing data from different income households. Each project that we take requires a lot of

hours per day at MRC Mode. After work, even if it is as late as 11:30 pm, Zaker goes down to the rehearsal room, which is right below her office. There rehearsal goes on

of stopping. They let my sister go abroad for studies way back in 1979. She was just 18 then and it was a big thing for that time. I couldn't have come this far without my parents support," she added.

She joined the theater world in 1973. Cultural practice at that time represented the progressive forces, says Zaker. "The cultural aspect was more emphasised and cinema and drama were very separate. But now they are more mingled," she adds.

She thinks that the stage represents national conscience. Many dramas of today reflect the changing society and its problems. For example, *Meraj Fakirer Maa*. Also, her own directional debut was made with *Mukhosh* or *Death of the Maiden*, which deals with questions about male-female relationships.

"It's about a woman raped in '71, and the later friendship between the rapist and the women's husband. Its very interesting from a woman's perspective," she says. Her second project is most likely going to Chekov's *Seagull*, about the relationship between a mother and son. "I don't consciously choose women oriented subjects all the time, but they usually end up dealing with women's experiences," she adds.

Zaker is a firm believer in that women should have something of their own. According to her, though a woman does a tremendous amount of work in the house, it all goes unvalued. Thus, she maintains that it is very necessary to have some other thing besides the house to enhance a woman's self worth. However, given our society's attitude we still have difficulty in giving women their rights. "You have to define and create your own place," she concludes.



Sara Zaker

attention and support from my staff. Human resources is the most important factor in this industry," she says.

According to Zaker, the reason why she is successful in the business world is because she has an excellent team to work with. "Usually human labour and effort go unrecognised in our society. But I really appreciate my staff and I let them know it. That has helped build good working relations in the company."

Besides her job, Zaker is also involved in a theater group called *Nagorik*. "I volunteer my time here because drama is my life blood. Its my chosen way of venting my creative energy," she says. She spends 11 to 12

for a few hours. "This is my way of relaxing," she says.

She says that good understanding is very important in a husband-wife relationship. "My busy schedule has never become an issue because luckily both me and my husband share the same work and theater worlds," she says. However, she adds that her children have been very accommodating. In fact, Zaker's mother often comes over and stays with the children whenever it was required.

She has had the freedom to do whatever she wanted since childhood. Her family was very liberal and did not feel bound by cultural or social norms. "My parents had a very broad outlook. They didn't believe in the 'culture

Tea sale marked by strong demand

CHITTAGONG, Aug 16: The weekly tea sale held here on Tuesday was marked by strong demand for bold and larger broken at higher rates as Polish and Russian buyers competed for the same, market sources said, reports BSS.

Buyers for Jordan and Sudan also operated in strength resulting in firmer prices for plainer broken.

Internal buyers lend a fair support for fannings but mostly at reduced prices.

Bold broken were initially firm but with the progress of sale prices were dealer of ten up to Tk. 1/- per kg. Following competition, large broken were also firm to slightly dearer. Mediums were firm while small broken were about firm. Popular types sold well between Tk 47/- and Tk 53/40 per kg.

Primary fannings met with a fair demand but prices were generally easier, particularly for medium and plainer varieties which shed by 50 poisha to Tk 1/- . Popular types were also easier selling between Tk 44/50 and Tk.51/80.

Asia Foundation presents books to Islami Bank

The Asia Foundation, through Financial Sector Reform Project, has handed over books on economics, marketing, financial analysis and computers to Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited, says a press release.

In this connection, a presentation ceremony was held on Tuesday at the Board Room of the bank.

Patrick J Vath, team leader of Financial Sector Reform Project, and Kim McQuay, Assistant Representative of The Asia Foundation formally handed over the books.

The function was attended by Commodore (ret'd) M A Rahman, Chairman of the bank, Mohammad Yunus, Vice Chairman, Prof Mohammad Sharif Hussain, Director, A S M Fakhruddin, Director, M Kamaluddin Chowdhury, Executive President and top executives of the bank.



Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Tang Ziakuan and Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan leading their respective sides in the bilateral talks between the two countries held at the state guest house Meghna in the city yesterday.

— PID photo

Asia's rice supply crunch may end by early '96

SINGAPORE, Aug 16: Asia's rice supply crunch is likely to end by early 1996 on expectations of good harvests in Thailand, Vietnam and other major producer countries, traders said yesterday, reports Reuter.

Crop woes have forced China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal and North Korea to turn to imports, pushing international prices higher, they added.

But traders polled by Reuters said Asia's rice situation, worsened by tight supplies in top exporting countries such as Thailand and Vietnam, was likely to turn around by early 1996 when the new crops are harvested.

"All crops in Asia are expected to be good," one senior Singapore rice trader said. "Farmers are encouraged by the high prices. The monsoon is also reasonably good."

Traders said good harvests are expected in Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam starting in November.

"We may see some bearish effect on the market from November onwards," another trader said. Thai benchmark rice prices are hovering around 365 US dollar a tonne freight on board from Bangkok, up

by 15 US dollar from 10 days ago. The benchmark price stood at 255-266 US dollar a tonne a year earlier on the back of strong international demand.

Traders said they felt prices could stay firm at least until the new crop season.

"Until then, the supply situation is very tight with two large buyers, Indonesia and China, in the market," a trader at a large international house said. "I certainly see more upside potential for the market for the rest of the year."

Floods in China and drought in the Philippines and other producer countries have cut Asian rice supplies sharply.

China has so far taken at least one million tonnes of rice from Vietnam and another

Call money rate

Money rates in the call money market during the week ending yesterday ranged from 2.90 per cent to 5.00 per cent, reports BSS.

During the same week interest rates offered by the bank on certificate of deposits varied from 2.00 per cent to 7.50 per cent.

The bank rate, however, remained unchanged at 5.50 per cent, Bangladesh Bank said.

other 800,000 tonnes from Thailand. Industry experts said Beijing could import at least two million tonnes for the whole of 1995.

Indonesia, until now self-sufficient in rice, has contracted nearly one million tonnes of mainly Indian rice up to November.

But congestion at Indian ports and other problems have threatened to delay or even cancel some of the outstanding shipments, traders said.

Some regional traders said China, Indonesia and Bangladesh have not completed their buying requirements.

"I see them in the market up to the first quarter of next year," a Bangkok trader said.

Vietnam, a major exporter, has imposed a ban on exports to get over current shortages. Traders said the ban was not expected to be lifted until the new crop arrives.

The Philippines has ordered 250,000 tonnes of rice from Thailand, China, Vietnam, India and Japan, but only some 35,000 tonnes have arrived.

Traders in the Philippines said the shipment delay had sent local prices soaring and sparked demand for Agriculture Secretary Roberto Sebastain to resign.

BIBM course on Islamic banking concludes

A 12-day course on "Islamic banking" conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) ended yesterday, says a press release.

The concluding session of the course was chaired by AHM Nurul Islam Choudhuri, Director General of the Institute. He distributed certificates among the participants. Participants were drawn from different banks.

While speaking at the function Choudhuri said that Islamic banking is an outcome of Islamic faith. But when Islamic banking competes with interest-based banks, then Islamic faith alone can not be the factor for its success. In such case, better customer service, higher rate of profit to the depositors etc. are needed for overall success of Islamic banking system. Participants trained in the course are now well equipped to compete with the non-Islamic ideology for which they are committed and thus make the Islamic banking system a success, he added. He emphasized on increased professional skills of the bankers, so that prompt and quality services are rendered to the customers and thus cope with the present global economic situation.



The management of the Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel has taken step towards maintaining health of its employees by vaccinating them against the Hepatitis B virus. The hotel in collaboration with Eskayef Bangladesh Limited started the vaccination programme with Engerix-B Tuesday.