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Wall-Mounted Split Air Conditioner
Tk. 90,000
Sole Distributor in Bangladesh
Transfin Trading Limited

The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1995

HYUNDAI
CARS THAT MAKE SENSE

BR West Zone loses Tk 75 cr in FY '94-95

RAJSHAHI, Sept 6: Bangladesh Railway West Zone incurred a loss of Tk 75 crore during the last fiscal year (FY) although it experienced some increase in its income, reports UNB. Official sources said Railway West Zone earned Tk 107 crore during the last fiscal year which was 16 per cent higher than that of the previous fiscal year. On the other hand the West Zone spent Tk 182 crore during the same period. Of the total income, Tk 29.23 crore came from carrying 1.77 crore passengers, Tk 5.41 crore from parcel, Tk 54.24 crore by transporting goods and about Tk 16 crore from miscellaneous sector.

OAPEC production declines

ABU DHABI, Sept 6: Oil production by six Gulf Arab states declined slightly in the first five months of 1995 although Oman has boosted output by more than five per cent, an official report showed yesterday, reports AFP. Production by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) averaged around 13.58 million barrels per day (BPD) compared with 13.61 million BPD during 1994, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) said.

Oman boosted production to 845,000 BPD in April from 800,000 BPD after it completed expansion and maintenance at its main fields. But output by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) dropped to average 2.18 million BPD in the first five months compared with 2.25 million BPD in 1994, the Kuwaiti-based OAPEC said in its monthly bulletin, obtained here.

Qatar's production averaged 418,000 BPD, slightly lower than its 1994 output of 420,000 BPD. But the level is higher than its 378,000 BPD quota assigned by the 12-nations Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude producer and exporter, maintained output at its OPEC quota level to eight million BPD. Kuwait's production of two million BPD set by the cartel also remained unchanged.

The report showed Bahrain's output averaged 140,000 BPD in the first five months of 1995, of which around 100,000 came from the Saudi Al-Saafa oilfield. The GCC, a loose political, economic and defence alliance created in 1981, is the biggest oil bloc in the world. Its production accounts for nearly one fifth of the global output and crude reserves of 460 billion barrels for more than 45 per cent of the world's proven reserves.

PICC pays \$ 40m compensation to flood victims

BEIJING, Sept 6: The People's Insurance Company of China (PICC) has paid more than 330 million yuan (40 million dollars) in compensation to flood victims in three provinces, with a host of new claims yet to be processed, reports AFP. In the worst-hit provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi alone, PICC has paid out 250 million yuan, although the figure is expected to increase dramatically following renewed flooding last week, the China Daily said Sunday. Some 82.7 million yuan has been paid on claims in south-western Sichuan province, following June flooding that decimated farmland, destroyed homes and shut down factories. The newspaper quoted analysts as pointing out that coverage against flooding was still very thin in China, with most people hit by the floods having no insurance protection whatsoever.

Jamdani exhibition begins in Delhi Sept 27

NEW DELHI, Sept 6: Jamdani saree fabrics exporters forum of Bangladesh will hold a four-day Jamdani exhibition from September 27 at Lodhi Hotel here, reports BSS. This is the third such exhibition being held in India to promote and popularise famous Bangladeshi Jamdani saree, kameez, dopatta and Jamdani fabrics which have recently been exempted from payment of customs tariff by the Indian government. The exemption decision was taken by the Indian government on July 17 last to help reduce the existing huge trade imbalance between the two countries. The first Jamdani exhibition

was held here in November, 1993 while the second exhibition was held in Calcutta jointly with the Iran to build gas pipeline from Turkmenistan. Nicosia, Sept 6: Iran has agreed to build a 140 kilometre (87.5 miles) pipeline to connect cross-border gas fields in Turkmenistan to a village in northern Iran. Iranian radio reported, says AP. The pipeline, to be designed and built by Iranian experts, would connect gas deposits in Korpedzhe in southwestern Turkmenistan.

peerless group in 1994. The Jamdani exhibitions have been creating a favourable market for Jamdani products here. With the exemption of customs tariff, import of Jamdani saree, kameez and fabrics is expected to increase quickly. Jamdani, though a minor non-traditional export item of Bangladesh, has the potential of gaining the Indian market to the tune of fifteen million taka annually. The import of Jamdani was worth about Tk seven million last year. Chairperson of Jamdani forum Maleka Khan is expected to lead a 12-member participants to the exhibition.

Iran to build gas pipeline from Turkmenistan

NICOSIA, Sept 6: Iran has agreed to build a 140 kilometre (87.5 miles) pipeline to connect cross-border gas fields in Turkmenistan to a village in northern Iran. Iranian radio reported, says AP.

US plans to monitor auto pact with Japan

WASHINGTON, Sept 6: The Clinton administration is hoping a plan for monitoring its auto pact with Japan will answer critics who call the deal a charade that will do little to narrow the huge trade gap between the United States and Japan, reports AP. Administration and industry officials said the detailed package would provide a variety of ways to measure success in increasing sales to Japan of American-made autos and auto parts. These officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said three Cabinet agencies — State, Treasury and Commerce — would join forces to collect sales information, aided by internal sales data supplied by US companies. The program was to be unveiled Wednesday at a news briefing conducted by the administration's top

trade officials. US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown. But even before the formal announcement, the plan was coming under attack from republican presidential candidates. Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole and conservative commentator Pat Buchanan have been highly critical of the fact that the administration settled for an agreement that contains no specific numerical targets. The administration has countered that even though the deal itself contains no specific numbers for sales increases, the US government will be closely watching to see whether Japanese auto companies live up to business plans that were announced in conjunction with the agreement. The monitoring package is designed to set benchmarks for measuring those in-

creases. Under its interpretation of the business plans, the administration has said it believes the Japanese car makers will be building 2.6 million cars a year in the United States by 1998, up from 2.1 million now. This gain, under the administration projections, will mean that purchases of American-made auto parts going into the cars assembled in the United States will rise by 6.7 billion dollar during the next three years. In addition, the administration is projecting that Japanese automakers will import 2 billion dollar more in US-made parts for use in their factories in Japan. The administration also expects increased sales of US-made repair parts through loosening of stiff Japanese regulations of repair shops.

Stock market hits new high in New York

NEW YORK, Sept 6: The stock market hit new high Tuesday as renewed fervour for technology issues led a broad advance, reports AP. After posting modest gains all morning, the Dow Jones average of 30 industrial stocks rose 22.54 points to 4,670.08, adding to Friday's 36.98-point surge. US financial markets were closed Monday for Labour Day. Market measures comprising a broader assortment of stocks also climbed, while Standard and Poor's 500 reached a record close as did the Nasdaq Stock Market's composite index. Stocks broke out of a narrow trading range in afternoon trading as buyers flocked back to the technology sector. The group, which has been at the forefront of Wall Street's advance this year, recovered ground lost last week. Strength in shares of economically sensitive companies also buoyed the market. With little in the way of potentially market-moving data due this week, investors reviewed reports released late last week that had helped lift the market out of its late summer lethargy. Technology stocks were the stars, enabling the Nasdaq, which lists numerous semiconductor, software, computer and related issues, to outshine the Big Board. Banking stocks also got attention as investors bet on continuing consolidation in the industry. News that

NationsBank intends to take over Bank South for about 1.6 billion dollar in stock, or 27 dollar a share, renewed the merger speculation. NationsBank slipped 5-8 to 60 7-8 on the NYSE while Bank South rose 2 3-16 to 25 7-16 and led the Nasdaq volume list. Another impressive session for bonds Tuesday was a plus for equities. Bonds started out neutrally but by mid-afternoon prices were decidedly higher with the main 30-year US Treasury issue up 6.25 dollar per 1,000 dollars face value, which reduced its yield to 6.56 per cent. Investors have chosen to interpret recent economic news in the most favourable light possible. A batch of statistics released late last week enhanced hopes that the Federal Reserve will lower interest rates in the near future. Generally positive performances overseas provided a favourable background for Wall Street. In Tokyo, stocks were mixed, steadying after a steep slide a day earlier. The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average, a key index, gained 45.52 points, or 0.26 per cent, closing at 17,794.04. On Monday, the benchmark index had shed 372.21 points, or 2.05 per cent. Advancing issues outnumbered declines by about 15 to 8 on the New York Stock Exchange, with 1,509 up, 801 down and 722 unchanged.

WWB financial institution with a difference

BEIJING, Sept 6: The New York-based "Women's World Banking" (WWB) is a financial institution with a difference: it makes loans to the poorest women in the world, and it came to the fourth UN conference on women here to publicize their plight, reports AFP. "This conference is a tremendous opportunity to focus on simple ways to help thousands of women in misery," said Nancy Barry, who worked for the World Bank for 15 years before becoming president of the WWB. The platform to be adopted by the UN conference "underlines the importance of access to economic resources and economic independence," she said. But the traditional banking system neglects women, especially poor women, she said. Women received only 10 per cent of bank loans allocated worldwide. And for poor women, especially in regions where custom keeps them from owning property. They can't even get in the door. It is for these women that the WWB exists. Over the past 20 years, it has made about 200,000 loans of around 300 dollars each to women in 40 countries. These small loans allow the recipients to create "micro-enterprises" in fields such as agriculture, handicrafts or trade, Barry said. The WWB was created during the first UN conference on women in Mexico in 1976.

Clinton admn seeks clarification of computer copyright protections

WASHINGTON, Sept 6: In the United States, making an electronic copy of a magazine article or your favourite Beatles record won't get you thrown in jail. But make several hundred copies and you'll be breaking the law, even if the material is on a computer network, reports AP. The Clinton administration said Tuesday that existing copyright law protections apply to materials flowing through computer networks, but it wants changes in the law to clarify those protections for electronic communications. Under the changes proposed in a report, the law would specify that electronic transmissions — just like printed books, records and home videos — would "fall within the exclusive distribution right of the copyright owner." The recommendation would require congressional approval. The report's primary author, Bruce Lehman, commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, said the recommendation, if implemented, would not affect how home computer users and others now legally make electronic copies of data provided by computer services or the global computer network Internet, as long as the copies are for their private use. The Software Publishers Association agreed, but

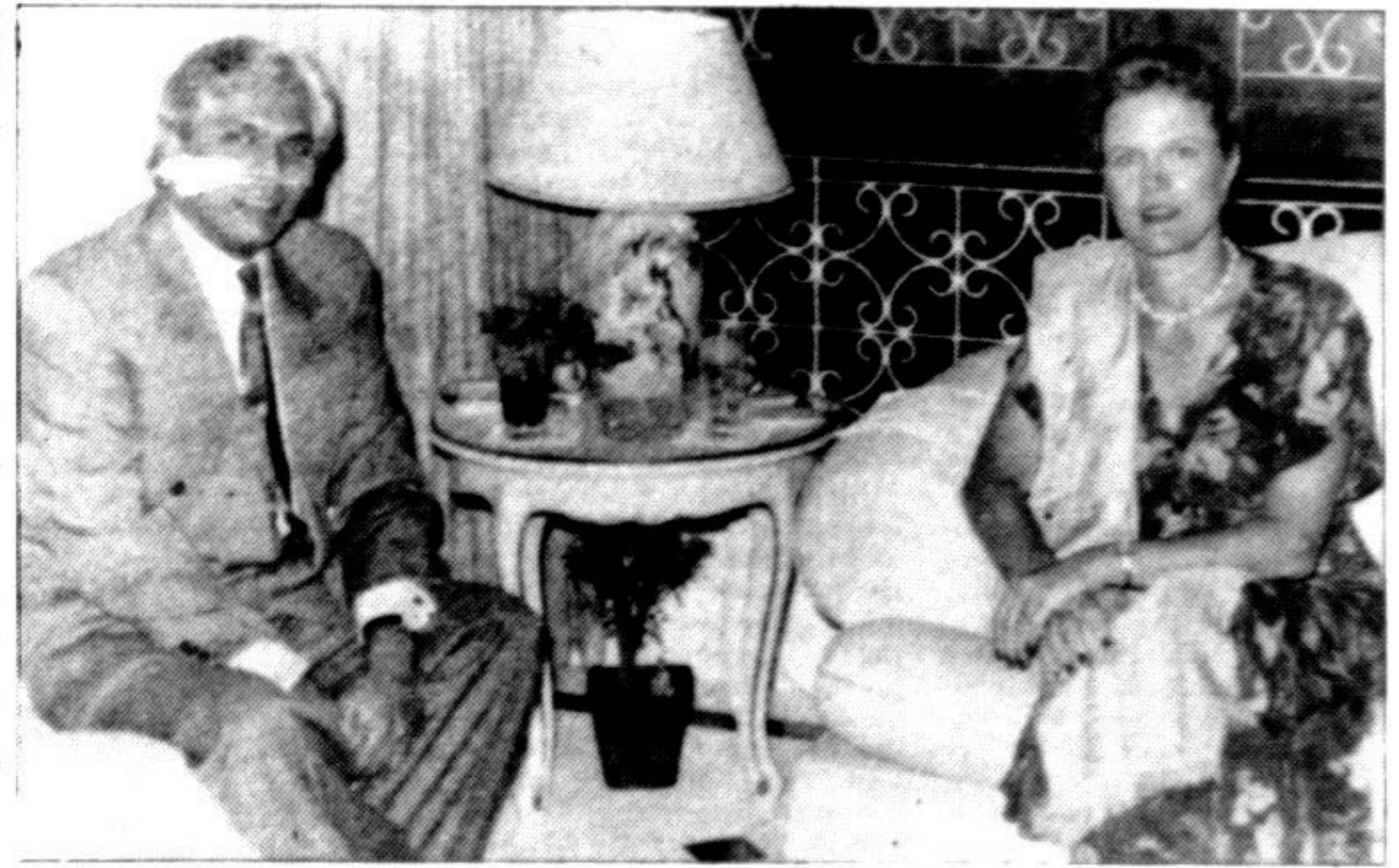
President Ken Wasch said the recommendation would "make it easier to prosecute people who take copyrighted works and distribute them broadly" using computers. Still, the report doesn't address the critical issue of enforcement of copyright laws and ways companies can best protect their products, services and other information from electronic eavesdroppers. The recommendations in the report seek to adapt existing copyright laws to the challenges of the digital age, when people can make one or thousands of perfect copies of anything — movies, books and musical recordings — with a few commands on a computer keyboard.

Kuwait to pay back \$800 m debt this month

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 6: Kuwait is to pay back this month a second slice of a 5.5 billion dollar debt granted in 1991 to finance post Gulf War reconstruction, a finance official said yesterday, reports AFP. Kuwait will meet its repayment timetable to pay back 800 million dollars of the debt in the first half of September, said the official from the Kuwait Investment Authority. The loan — the highest ever given to a government by commercial banks — was awarded by a syndicate of banks headed by the Morgan Guarantee Trust Company of New York in December 1991. It was to help Kuwait rebuild after the seven month occupation by Iraqi forces who were ousted by a US led coalition in February 1991. The emirate paid off the first slice of the loan also 800 million dollars, last June. The repayments are scheduled every three months to meet a 1996 deadline.

BJMC recruitment rules in 3 months

Recruitment rules for the workers and employees of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) will be formulated by next three months, reports UNB. Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah said this while addressing a gathering of workers and employees of BJMC at Motijheel on Tuesday. Bangladesh Jute Mills Sramik Karmachari Federation organised the meeting. Referring to the government decision for raising ten per cent wage for the workers of the nationalised mills and factories the Jute Minister said the government would fulfill the demands of the workers in phases. He urged the workers to follow the legal and organised trade union rules in the mills and factories and asked to boost production through united efforts. Presided over by the president of the federation Khawza Abul Khayer the meeting was also addressed by the general secretary of the federation Kazi Abdul Quddus, Mohabbat Ali Khan, Abdul Mannan and Momtazuddin Bhuiyan.



Robin Lynn Raphael, US Assistant Secretary of State, now on a visit to Bangladesh, met Salman F Rahman, President of FBCCI at his Gulshan residence yesterday evening. They discussed matters relating to investment climate in Bangladesh.

Cyberway wins licence for Internet gateway in Singapore

SINGAPORE, Sept 6: A new company promising to provide Internet connections to subscribers less than 10 minutes after they apply will be Singapore's third gateway to worldwide cyberspace, the government announced Tuesday, reports AP. Cyberway will outbid five other companies to win the licence from the Telecommunications Authority of Singapore, the national regulator and promoter of telecommunication and postal industries. Other tenderers offered service activation time between five hours to one week, a TAS statement said. But Cyberway has "guaranteed on-line activation time of less than 10 minutes which TAS will hold as Cyberway's guaranteed quality of service standard," the statement said. Cyberway will largely compete with SingNet, Singapore's largest public access gateway for Internet run by the state-owned Singapore Telecom. Post Gulf-War reconstruction

Manmohan tells seminar Economy performing well

NEW DELHI, Sept 6: Finance Minister Manmohan Singh said Wednesday that the Indian economy was performing well and the government's food stock has reached a record level, reports AP. The government sells subsidized food to millions of Indians who cannot afford to buy basic foods such as rice, wheat and sugar. So a food stock of 36.4 million tons is important. "Our economy is performing well," Singh, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of India, told an economic seminar. Singh said India's economy should grow by 5.5 per cent to six per cent during the current fiscal year, which began on April 1, compared with 5.3 per cent growth last year. "Overall we can draw considerable satisfaction. However, all is not rosy,"

Singh said, referring to the budget deficit. India's current deficit is likely to widen during the current fiscal year to one to 1.2 per cent of the gross domestic product, compared with 0.6 per cent last year, he said. Four years ago, India introduced free-market reforms under the leadership of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao and Singh, and the finance minister said they are still benefiting the economy. Singh said economic performance should remain strong with industry growing by at least 10 per cent in the current fiscal year and exports also growing rapidly. Inflation should remain under control, and he said it could fall to less than seven per cent by the end of the fiscal year, compared with slightly more than eight per cent now.

Singh also predicted that the economy would attract some 1.5 billion dollar in direct foreign investment this year, which would help to keep foreign exchange reserves at high levels. He said the Cabinet has cleared long-awaited legislation to allow for the creation of central depositories for securities. The government will issue an ordinance putting the legislation into effect in a matter of days, he said. Parliament will have to give its approval for the ordinance when it returns to session. The legislation is a crucial step toward eliminating the long delays that often plague stock market transactions in India. The law will permit electronic transfers of shares between parties, eliminating the difficult paperwork that delays transfers and stopping theft of share certificate in postal transactions.

Workers' protest over back wages in Russia

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia, Sept 6: Workers at a major Far Eastern shipyard barred Russia's newest nuclear-powered submarine from sailing off to sea in a protest over back wages, a news agency reported Wednesday, reports AP. The incident took place at a yard near Vladivostok, when several workers commandeered a tugboat and blocked the entrance to the harbour for four straight days and prevented the Dragon submarine from leaving, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported. The blockade prevented Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, who visited the region earlier this week, from touring the recently built boat. The Workers at the Vostok shipyard were protesting four months of back wages and other government debts to the plant totalling 57 billion rubles (dhrs 12.7 million). They ended their protest this week after top military officials promised to pay the arrears. The Russian armed forces and defence industry have long been plagued by a severe shortage of funding. In recent years, the Pacific Fleet had to reduce the number of its ships by 40 per cent and to slash its personnel by one third because of the lack of money, navy officials said last summer. It has also run up huge arrears to shipyards and fuel debts.

Inflation control brings massive layoffs in Brazil

BRASILIA, Sept 6: Strict controls on inflation have brought massive layoffs and could steer Brazil into a recession, businessmen and unionists say, reports AP. The powerful Federation of Industries of Sao Paulo State said on Tuesday that 101,818 workers had lost their jobs since May. In the last week of August alone, 17,659 were fired. "Industries aren't firing because they want to, because that also has a high cost," said Federation Director Mario Bernardini. "But they are more and more insecure about the behaviour of the economy." The government is concerned about its Real Plan, an anti-inflation programme launched in July, 1994. It has cut monthly inflation to just 1.4 per cent in August, compared with 50 per cent in June, 1994. But the plan's success sent consumers on a spending boom. Government economists afraid that spending would reheat inflation, put the brakes on hard. Credit was curtailed, and interest rates and tariffs rose sharply. The economy slowed, and industries suddenly found they were producing more than they could sell. In April, some businesses began putting their employees on collective holiday or releasing them outright. The auto and textile industries were hardest hit. The Central Workers Union, Brazil's largest labour

union group, has called on workers to join in a nationwide protest on September 29 "against recession and unemployment," spokesman Paulo Cesar Araujo said. "Interest rates are exorbitant," Araujo said in a telephone interview. "That's a cruel way to lower inflation. It's a painful medicine for workers, businessmen and society." President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who as finance minister created the Real Plan, denies Brazil is in a recession and says unemployment is steady at around 4.5 per cent. The government expects the economy to grow 4.5 per cent this year, lower than early-year predictions. But Diuese, a respected union statistics centre, calculates the jobless rate at more than 10 per cent. Brazil has 155 million people and a work force of about 65 million.

'Singapore economy should expand by 8.5 pc'

SINGAPORE, Sept 6: The Singapore economy should expand by 8.5 per cent this year, slower than the double digit annual growth clocked consecutively over the last two years, US investment house Salomon Brothers said yesterday, reports AFP. Rapid growth in Singapore during the last two years has continued to exert pressure on production costs, Salomon Brothers said in a report on further signs of a cyclical downturn in the island state's economy. It said that the growth in unit business cost, which takes into account labour and other costs of doing business, continued its rising trend, recording its fifth consecutive quarterly increase to 6.4 per cent in the three months to June. Growth of the manufacturing sector, the backbone of the Singapore economy, fell to 7.5 per cent in the three months to March from 8.3 per cent a year earlier the third consecutive quarterly decline, Salomon noted. Singapore's export growth also plunged sharply in the second quarter. Salomon said warning that slowing export demand together with rising costs would cap the growth of the manufacturing sector.

Strengthening criminal penalties against copyright violators and making it a copyright violation to willfully distribute copies worth more than dhs 5,000. Careless dis-

tributed a few copies with little monetary value would not be subject to criminal charges. — Making it illegal to import, manufacture and distribute devices designed to circumvent anti-copying technologies. — Making it easier for libraries to make electronic copies of protected materials without the creator's permission. — Permitting non-profit organizations to make copies of organizations of copyrighted works for the visually impaired under certain conditions without the creator's permission. All the recommendations were generally hailed by industry and would require congressional approval. Strengthening criminal penalties against copyright violators and making it a copyright violation to willfully distribute copies worth more than dhs 5,000. Careless dis-

tributed a few copies with little monetary value would not be subject to criminal charges. Copyright owners already have a hard time snagging street vendors with bootleg copies of "The Lion King." Cyberspace is a vast frontier, encompassing many different countries, companies and individuals. Enforcement issues were not addressed by the report, but Lehman and Brown said the government is working closely with other countries on copyright enforcement. The report also recommends: — Strengthening criminal penalties against copyright violators and making it a copyright violation to willfully distribute copies worth more than dhs 5,000. Careless dis-