

Steps taken to boost nat'l economy, says Moyeen

State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan yesterday said the government had undertaken various measures to boost the national economy considering the hopes and aspirations of the people, reports BSS.

"Courage is necessary in taking any political decision in the national interest and it is sure to bring about a positive and long-term impact on the economy", he said.

The state minister was inaugurating a day-long national seminar on "Local impact of global transformation with special reference to social development issues: Bangladesh perspective" here.

The seminar being held at the NEC auditorium was attended by educationists, development planners, social scientists and officials of both government and non-government organisations.

A country-paper will be prepared with recommendations of experts of the seminar which will be placed in the 11th meeting of the Asian Association of Social Science Institutions to be held in New Delhi next month.

The inaugural session was chaired by Member of the Planning Commission and Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh

Social Science Research Council Mohammad Abu Hena while Planning Secretary Dr Shah Mohammad Farid gave the welcome address.

Referring to the government's various steps, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan said the allocation to the social infrastructure development had now shot up to 35 per cent of the ADP from the level of 19 per cent five years back.

Besides, he said, country's macro-economy in view of reforms has seen 35 per cent increase in exports and 10 times increase in foreign currency reserve during the period.

"All these happened due to the reform measures undertaken by the government in view of the global transformation," he observed.

Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan said the massive reform measures undertaken by the government have encouraged the private sector industrial, banking and also the service sector enterprises in Bangladesh.

"But we cannot sit idle while transformation is sweeping across the world", he observed stressing the need for carrying out reform where necessary.

He also said that the private sector had failed to come

up during the fourth five-year plan period which ended in June this year. "It proves that the importance of public sector is still there," he said, adding that it should continue to play its due role until the private sector comes to the fore.

In this respect, Dr Khan emphasized the need for taking care of the people's buying capacity of the private sector products, and said the government should take proper steps in this regard.

Citing some drawbacks in the national perspective, the State Minister for Planning said at last 40 per cent people still live under poverty line.

Besides, he said, 65 per cent people were illiterate while 80 per cent were yet to be ensured of improved sanitation system all over the country.

"All these happened due to central control of the economy in respect of poverty alleviation in the past," he said.

Describing housing as an important sector of the social infrastructures, he said this facility was yet to be ensured for all. He sought cooperation of all concerned to create a rational atmosphere so that fruits of ongoing development activities can be reached to the doorsteps of the people.

Anwar urges BSC to explore new routes

By Staff Correspondent

Shipping Minister M K Anwar yesterday urged Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) to explore new routes and strengthen the feeder service for making the agency profitable.

The minister was speaking at the 155th meeting of the BSC Board of Directors at the Chittagong headquarters, says a BSC press release.

He asked the corporation to reduce the number of empty containers to streamline the feeder service. He promised government's co-operation in procuring one oil tanker and two container feeder vessels.

He also asked all shipping agents of BSC to be more active to generate more business for the corporation.

Anwar also ordered the organisation to realise the outstanding bills owed to BSC by different agents.

He said the government had taken a number of steps which reduced the losses of the corporation and hoped that the corporation would be able to compete with foreign liners.

Regarding the provision of priority of berthing to the corporation's fleet, the minister asked the authorities to sort out the issue with the port authorities.



Indian Public Relations Consultant in city

Renowned Public Relations Consultant of India Ms Rita Bhimani has arrived yesterday from Calcutta. On an invitation from Rapport Bangladesh Limited, says a press release.

Ms Bhimani will stay in Dhaka for a week to conduct a workshop on Public Relations sponsored by Rapport Bangladesh Ltd for the business executives engaged in marketing, sales promotion and public relations in various multi-national and national industrial and commercial houses in the private sector and NGO on September 30 at Sonargaon Hotel.

She will also conduct a number of Rapport sponsored Public Relations workshop for American Express Bank, Delta Life Insurance Company, Singer Bangladesh Limited and Partex Group.

A master's degree holder in journalism from the university of Georgia, Ms Bhimani has been actively involved with Public Relations in numerous ways.

She has been on the Board of Directors of the International Public Relations Association, a faculty member of Bhavan's College of Communication and Management, has held different posts with the Public Relations Society of India and Association of Business Communicators of India. She has been involved with various sub-committees of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry for many years and she is currently the Vice-Chairperson of the Calcutta I Care sub-committee, which gave Calcutta the son-et-lumiere at Victoria Memorial.

She was amongst the first news readers on Calcutta Doodardshan, and is a regular feature writer for numerous newspapers and periodicals in the country. Her husband, Kishore Bhimani, is a well known journalist and a broadcaster.

Potato output target set at 139900 MT under MAZ

From Our Correspondent

JAMALPUR, Sept 23: A total of 15,200 hectares of land will be brought under potato cultivation in five districts under Mymensingh Agriculture Zone (MAZ) in the current rabi season.

The districts are: Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Netrakona and Kishoreganj.

According to official sources, potato production target has been fixed at 1,39,900 metric tons in these districts.

Of the total area, 3300 hectares will be cultivated in Mymensingh, 4200 hectares in Jamalpur, 1300 hectares in Sherpur, 1500 hectares in Netrakona and 3500 hectares in Kishoreganj.

For successful implementation of the programme, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADCO) branches in the districts will supply high yielding variety (HYV) seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other necessary inputs to the growers of these districts.

Bangladesh Krishi Bank and other commercial banks will also provide necessary loans to the farmers.

Over 14 lakh hectares of land will be brought under boro cultivation programme in four districts of greater

Mymensingh region during the coming rabi season.

The districts are: Jamalpur, Sherpur, Mymensingh and Tangail.

According to Agriculture Extension Department (AED), of the total area, over one lakh 89 thousand 427 hectares will be brought under high yielding variety (HYV) and the rest under local variety.

The sources said 60 thousand hectares will be brought under onion, sweet potato, chilli, ginger, sugarcane and other seasonal crop farming in those districts.

New body of Shilpa Bank Officers' Assoc

A 19-member executive committee of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank Officers' Association has been elected for a two-year term, reports UNB.

Mohammad Abdullaah and Mohammad Abdul Motaleb Mia became President and General Secretary.

The Abdullaah-Motaleb panel bagged 14 posts out of 19-member committee in the election held on Thursday, said a press release.

Karnaphuli Jute mills earns Tk 41 lakh profit

RANGUNIA, Chittagong, Sept 23: Karnaphuli Jute Mills, an enterprise of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), earned a profit of Taka 40 lakh 90 thousand during fiscal 1994-95, reports BSS.

Jute Minister ASM Han-

nan Shah said this while reviewing the performance of the mill during his visit today.

The mill presently produces carpet backing cloth (CBC), sacks and high quality jute thread.

The Jute Minister later addressing a meeting of the workers and employees of the mill said demand of jute and jute goods is growing internationally. He called upon the workers and employers to work with utmost sincerity and maintain peaceful atmosphere in the mill premises.

Earlier, the Jute Minister visited the production process of development of decorative fabric (DDF) centre at Rangunia.

This centre produces one lakh shopping bags, dye-cloth and bleech cloth.

BNP Central Committee Office Secretary Nazrul Islam, Rangunia thana BNP President Fazul Quader, Labour leader Abdul Gafur and Karnaphuli Jute Mills Labour Union President and General Secretary were present.

Handicraft fair at Feni ends

FENI, Sept 23: A three-day handicraft fair organised by Feni Ladies Club, concluded here yesterday in the local Shishu Niketon premises, reports UNB.

Hand-made clothes, cane and bamboo products, toys and potteries made by women, were displayed and sold at 10 stalls run by various women organisations.

Eminent social worker Rizia AI inaugurated the fair on Thursday. President of Feni Ladies Club Roushan Islam presided over the inaugural ceremony.

Matsuzawa new OECF chief in Bangladesh

The Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan (OECF) has appointed Takeo Matsuzawa new Chief Representative of the Dhaka Office, says a press release.

Prior to this assignment, Matsuzawa was at the OECF headquarter in Tokyo as the Director, 3rd Division, Operations Department I.

Motomichi Ikawa, Managing Director, Coordination Department, OECF headquarter, will host reception at Sonargaon Hotel in the city today.

Matsuzawa obtained bachelor degree in Economics from Tokyo University in March 1979. He joined OECF in April 1979. He was posted as Representative of OECF Bangkok office from October 1983 to October 1985.

Matsuzawa is the 4th Chief Representative of OECF Dhaka Office since it was established in November 1988. He succeeds Hisao Tanimoto who worked as the Chief Representative since 1992.

OECF is an aid agency of the government of Japan, the largest bilateral donor to Bangladesh. Since Bangladesh became independent, OECF has provided ODA (Official Development Assistance) loans, as of 31st August, totaling 4.65 billion US dollar, including Jamuna Bridge Construction Project.

Over 10,000 questionnaires were circulated region-wide and 54 international airlines were surveyed in the Business Traveller poll, conducted in association with Market Behaviour Limited.

Tk 6.5 cr goods seized in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Sept 23: Goods worth Tk 6.5 crore were seized, and 131 cases were filed with the police of 13 frontier districts of the division during the month of August, reports UNB.

This was disclosed at the Rajshahi regional conference of the Task Force for checking smuggling, held on Thursday at Rangpur Circuit House.

Presided over by Divisional Commissioner A F M Yahya, the conference was attended, among others, by Deputy Commissioners of Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Nilphamari districts and the commanders of BDR's Rangpur, Rajshahi and Dinajpur sectors.

The convenor of the district Task Force, BDR sector commanders and other officials concerned, while addressing the conference, highlighted their activities about checking of smuggling.

20th governing board meet of IIT concludes

The twentieth governing board meeting of the Institute of Technology (IIT), a subsidiary organ of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Board Bazar, Gazipur concluded at a hotel in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The meeting was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia September 21.

Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Kuwait, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Representative of the Secretary General of the OIC and Director General of IIT are members of the Governing Board of IIT.

Dr Nasser A. Al-Dekhyel of Saudi Arabia chaired the meeting. Bangladesh, Egypt and Iran were the Vice-Chairmen and Indonesia was the rapporteur of the meeting. Ousman N R Othman, Assistant Secretary General of the OIC attended the meeting as representative of the Secretary General of the OIC. The Pakistani delegation was led by Karam Elahi, the High Commissioner of Pakistan in Dhaka. The Bangladesh delegation was led by Dr. Mohammad Haroonur Rashid, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Manpower and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Institute.

The Board adopted resolutions approving report of the Director General. Recommendations of the Academic Committee, Finance Committee, Executive Committee and Selection Committee.



Khorshed Alam, Governor, Bangladesh Bank, inaugurating the three-day general managers' conference in the bank's conference room yesterday.

Smallest digital audiotape recorder soon

TOKYO, Sept 23: Japan's Aiwa Co. said Saturday it would market the world's smallest digital audiotape recorder here from next month, reports AFP.

The Tokyo-based audio equipment manufacturer said the new portable recorder, the HH-S 200, was 13 centimetres (5.2 inches) high, 8.5 centimetres (3.4 inches) wide and 3.8 centimetres (1.5 inches) deep.

The machine, which weighs 280 gram (9.8 ounces), is capable of operating up to five hours and 15 minutes. It will be priced at 85,000 yen (850 dollars) and will go on sale in Japan starting October 1.

Meet on sick industries held

A review committee meeting on rehabilitation of sick industries of the Ministry of Finance was held at Agrani Bank head office yesterday with Dr ATM Shamsul Huda, Secretary, Banking Division, Ministry of Finance in the chair, says a press release.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank, Managing Directors of all nationalised commercial banks and other financial institutions.

The meeting discussed the present condition of sick industries where Taka 100 crore has already been invested.

No breakthrough in US-ROK auto talks

WASHINGTON, Sept 23: The United States and South Korea met for a fourth day Friday but reported no breakthroughs in their effort to resolve a trade dispute involving American demands for greater access to the Korean auto market, reports AP.

US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor told reporters it was possible both sides would get together again in the next few days, but he refused to characterize what progress, if any, was being made.

Negotiators are working on \$40 m ADB loan to Nepal

MANILA, Sept 22: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a 40 million dollar loan for road projects in Nepal, the Manila-based institution said yesterday, reports Reuter.

The project is designed to improve 250 km (155 miles) of roads in the eastern and far western regions of Nepal and to rehabilitate 100 km (60 miles) of priority roads across the Himalayan nation, the ADB said in a statement.

The road sections serve major agricultural production centres of the country and were selected because of their importance to the network, their present poor conditions, and because they provide connection to the east-west highway, the key arterial route in the country," the ADB said.

Construction work of Tk 8.90cr Agrabad-Ctg Port road begins

CHITTAGONG, Sept 23: Construction work of Taka eight crore 90 lakh Agrabad-Chittagong Port link road began here today, reports BSS.

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury inaugurated the construction work by unveiling the plaque as the chief guest.

The 2.2 kilometre long and 120 feet wide road is expected to be completed by the next fiscal.

Out of Taka 8.90 crore, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) will provide Taka 6 crore from its own source and the rest Taka 2.90 crore will be funded by the government.

On completion of the construction of the road, it will reduce about three and a half kilometre road distance from Agrabad to the port and the traffic jam in Agrabad Commercial Area (ACA) will be eased of a great extent.

Sonali Bank ups interest rate on STD

Sonali Bank has raised the rate of interest on Short Term Deposit (STD) from three per cent to 4.50 per cent, reports BSS.

The new rate came into effect from September 21, a press release said yesterday.

Call money rate

Money rates in the call money market during the week ended Wednesday ranged from 3.00 per cent to 6.25 per cent.

During the same week interest rates offered by the Bangladesh Bank on Certificate of Deposits varied from 2.00 per cent to 7.75 per cent, says a press release.

Corrigendum

The Padma Textile Mills Ltd earned a profit of Taka 59.014 million during the period of January to June 95. The figure was wrongly put in the company's press release issued on September 21 as Tk 590.14m which was published on page 6 of our September 22 issue. The company has regretted the mistake through another press release yesterday.



Dr A T M Shamsul Huda, Secretary of Banking Division, presiding over a meeting of review committee on sick industries rehabilitation in the Board Room of Agrani Bank yesterday. Shah Abdul Hannan, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank, Mustafa Aminur Rashid, Managing Director of Agrani Bank, and Ahsanul Haque, Managing Director of Sonali Bank, are also seen.