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# The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1995

**HYUNDAI**

CARS THAT MAKE SENSE

## Dhaka to receive Tk 15m grant from DWGIR

Bangladesh will receive a grant of Tk 15.472 million from an eight member donor working group on institutional Review (DWGIR) consisting of Denmark, Canada, UK, Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden, UNICEF and UNDP, reports BSS.

An agreement to this effect was signed here yesterday between the government of Bangladesh and the government of the Kingdom of Denmark on behalf of the donor working groups.

The grant amount will be utilised to support implementation of a technical assistance project styled "Institutional review of WID (Women In Development) capability of the government of Bangladesh" of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs.

The overall development objective to which the project is related is to contribute towards operationalisation and implementation of the policy of Bangladesh government for mainstreaming women in the development process through effective institution arrangements.

A K M Rezaul Rahman, Joint Secretary of Economic Relations Division (ERD) and K K Nielsen, Charge d'Affaires of Denmark signed the agreement on behalf of the respective sides.

## Rupali Bank raises interest rate

Rupali Bank has increased the rate of interest on Short Term Deposits (STD) from three to 4.50 per cent, says a press release.

The new rate has been effective from September 23, 1995.

The interest rate has been raised with a view to generating savings habit among the customers.

## Foundation of Laltia Irrigation Project laid

CHITTAGONG, Sept 25: The government is trying hard to fulfil the food requirement of the increasing population, Communications Minister Oli Ahmad said, reports UNB.

He was addressing a public meeting organised on the occasion of foundation laying ceremony of Laltia Irrigation Project at Dohajari of Chandnaish, said an official handout.

The irrigation project costing Tk 1.33 crore will supply water to 300 hectares of land, which will help produce an additional 1,000 metric tons of rice annually in the area.

"This government is committed to fulfil the basic needs like food," the minister said, adding "the government's main objective is to work for the welfare of the people."

Referring to the opposition's negative and anarchic political behaviour, Oli said the conscious people of the country will unitedly resist their conspiracy and vandalism.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Chief Engineer of Water Development Board Ataul Haq, local leaders Abdul Mannan, Abu Sayed, Nurul Anwar, Abul Kashem, Sarwar Hossain, Akhtarul Alam, Abdul Jabbar, Dil Mohammed, Abul Khair and Abu Taher Chowdhury.

## Tk 59.70 lakh dev schemes for Rangpur

RANGPUR, Sept 25: Rangpur Zila Parishad has taken up 11 uplift schemes at a cost of Tk 59.70 lakh in the current fiscal year, official sources said, reports UNB.

According to the sources, the government will provide the fund for the successful implementation of the schemes. The schemes include construction and reconstruction of box culverts, passenger sheds and carpeting of roads. The work on the schemes will start soon.

Besides, work on another 22 development schemes is progressing fast in the district at a cost of Tk 59.21 lakh. Meanwhile, work on 18 schemes have already been completed and the rest will be finished soon.

## Permanent Bangladeshi seafood showcase to be set up in S'pore

By Staff Correspondent

A permanent Bangladeshi seafood showcase will be set up in Singapore to promote export of Bangladeshi items to the Asia-Pacific rim as well as to Europe and the USA.

This was agreed upon during a meeting of Bangladesh-Singapore Joint Seafood Committee in Singapore, says a press release of Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association (BF-SEA).

The meeting was attended on part of Bangladesh by a delegation of BFSEA headed by Dr Aftabuzaman.

The BFSEA delegation also had talks with its counterpart organisation, Seafood Industries Association of Singapore (SIAS) and the officials of the Singapore Trade Development Board.

They identified specific areas of co-operation regarding trade and joint venture investments by Singaporeans in hatcheries, shrimp and fish plants, says the release.

"Direct contact established during the visit also opened up avenues for increased export of our frozen food to Singapore which is

expected to exceed the figure of ten million US dollars by the end of the year," it said.

Singapore imports seafoods including shrimp for home consumption as well as for re-export to third countries. Yearly consumption of shrimp in Singapore has been estimated at around 11,000 metric tons. Bangladesh can meet this demand if adequate transport facilities are made available by the government, the delegation felt.

## OMS of rice to be geared up from tomorrow

The government will gear up open-market sale (OMS) of rice across the country from Wednesday by increasing the number of OMS centres and distribution quotas, reports UNB.

An official announcement yesterday said the decision had been taken to maintain stable prices of foodgrains.

As per decision 250 sale centres will operate in the capital city instead of 130, while 80 each in Chittagong and Khulna instead of 20, 30 each in Barisal and Sylhet instead of 15.

Besides, 20 tons rice will be sold in the old district towns a day and 15 tons in other district towns. One ton of rice will be sold in every union.

Workers and employees of government, semi-government and autonomous organ-

isations and mills and factories having more than 50 staffs will get 30 kg rice per head a month, up from 20 kg.

Meanwhile, the government has started supplying one ton of wheat to every 'grinding mill' and the mill owners have been selling at Tk nine per kg among the people.

The OMS centres in Dhaka and Chittagong will sell rice at Tk 11 per kg. The rate is Tk 10.50 elsewhere.

Now the centres will remain open on Fridays and other government holidays.

The government employees and industrial workers who have not yet applied for OMS card have been asked to avail this opportunity soon.

The authorities requested all to inform the Food Ministry immediately of any bungling or corruption found in OMS system.

## BSAF workshop on working children held

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) has organized a workshop entitled "Working children in Bangladesh and their future" at the Center for Development Management (CDM) of BRAC at Rajendrapur in cooperation with UNICEF and ILO on Saturday, says a press release.

About 40 representatives from UN organizations, donors, international organizations, BSAF networking NGOs and other NGOs, trade unions and others concerned in child rights issues actively took part in the workshop.

Under-privileged working children form the projects of Trres Des Hommes (Swiss), UCEP and Ain-o-Salish Kendra staged a skit on "Problems of working children and solution" Sunday, the press release added.



Syed Ahmad B Tun (Dr) Syed Nasir (L), Area Manager of Malaysia Airlines for Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, seen addressing the press conference in the city yesterday. Md. Shah Jalal Majumder, Managing Director of Shah Jalal Aviations, GSA of the airlines, is also seen.

## World's first mobile video phone unveiled

TOKYO, Sept 25: Japan's Matsushita Electric Industrial Co Ltd, unveiled the world's first mobile video telephone here today, but said it did not expect the system to be operational for another two years, reports AFP.

"We are firstly thinking of company users," said Masashi Kanno, Manger of Matsushita's information and Communications Technology Laboratory.

Such applications could include video conference inside a company building or plant as well as security systems, he said, adding that the system was unlikely to be applied to public networks in the near future.

The prototype cordless videophone weighs 560 grams (20 ounces) and feature a 2.5 inch (six centimetre) colour display as well as a small video camera.

Matsushita hopes to combine the system with next-generation portable computers or Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) devices.

Although the system is based on Japan's personal handyphone system, it cannot simply be connected to the voice-only network introduced in July.

## Full-fledged Dhaka-KL flights of Malaysia Airlines from Oct 1

By Staff Correspondent

The Malaysia Airlines will start full-fledged flights between Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur from October 1 this year.

The thrice-weekly Airbus A 330 flights will replace its current chartered flights on narrow-bodied B737-400 aircraft, the Area Manger for Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan of the airlines, Syed Ahmad B Tun (Dr) Syed Nasir, said here Monday at a press conference.

The flights operating on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays will depart from Kuala Lumpur at 2345 LT and arrive in Dhaka the following days at 0120 LT. The flights will then depart from Dhaka at 0235 LT and arrive in Kuala Lumpur at 0815 LT.

However, these schedules will undergo slight changes during winter from October 29 this year. Details will be announced later.

Presently, Biman is operating on the same route and is likely to face stiff competition from the South East Asia's highest passenger carrying Malaysia Airlines.

"This route is very important to us because of the in-

tense labour movement," said the Area Manger. "That is why we felt the necessity to establish permanent flights on this route."

"We will include Bangladeshi cabin crew on our flights for better communication with non-English speaking passengers," he mentioned. "I am confident that passengers will like our better service."

When asked if the recent stern measures taken by the Malaysian government against labourers will affect the viability of the route, he said, "Whenever there is restriction, it will affect flights. But this is temporary and for the benefit of both the countries."

The Malaysia Airlines is now serving 63 international and 27 domestic destinations with its 90 aircraft-fleet power. It expects to bring three more international cities under its wings this year.

The press conference was also attended by Md Shah Jalal Majumder, Managing Director of Saha Jalal Aviations, the General Sales Agent of Malaysia Airlines.

## Shinepukur exports 10,166 MT of JYT in '94-'95

Shinepukur Holdings Limited (SHL) exported 10,166 MT of jute yarn and twine (JYT) during the year from July 1994 to June 1995, says a press release.

During the same period, the country's total JYT export was 130,638 MT.

This was revealed from a statistics of JYT export compiled by Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSA).

SHL's export of JYT represents 7.78 per cent of the country's total export in 1994-95.

SHL, formerly Shinepukur Jute Spinners Ltd, is a public listed company. The shareholders of the company changed the name to SHL when the company decided to start real estate business in January 1995 side by side manufacturing and export of JYT.

New Dacca Industries Ltd. (NDI), another Beximco Company, was the second largest exporter of JYT in 1994-95. NDI exported 9047 MT representing 6.93 per cent of total Bangladesh export.

Manufacturing and export of JYT is a diversified and value added sub-sector of Jute Industry.

According to EPB, value of total export of JYT from Bangladesh during 1994-95 was Taka 4, 245 billion, 3.05 per cent of total Bangladesh export of Taka 139,284 billion.

Jute mills under BJMA and BJMC were included in the World Bank sponsored JSAC programme and had received benefits of waiver of part of loan and rephasing of part of loan at a reduced interest rate.

Similarly, Indian government encourages the export of JYT and is extending incentive on the export of JYT in the form of External Market Assistance (EMA) at the rate of 10 per cent on FOB value.

BJSA member mills has been excluded from the World Bank sponsored JSAC programme.

## Frequent power failure hinders ice production in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Sept 25: The ice factories of Kalapara, Kuakata, Mohipur and Patharghata of greater Patuakhali district have been facing serious set-back due to frequent power failure during the past few weeks, reports UNB.

These factories are being used for processing and preservation of hilsa and some other sea fish. Fish worth Taka one crore have already been rotten due to lack of necessary ice, fishermen sources said.

The power supply has suddenly become erratic during the current hilsa catch season causing extensive damage to the fish and the fishermen incurred huge loss. The fish exporters are forced to shrink the export quantity due to shortage of ice.

At present, a huge number of hilsa fish are being caught in the coastal belts of Kuakata, Alipur, Mohipur, Kachufatra and Ramnabad.

The local fishermen and fish exporters have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to ensure unhindered supply of power in the area for the greater interest of the nation.

## Saudi Arabia still oil king

PUERTO LA CRUZ, Venezuela Sept 25: Saudi Arabia remains the world's largest oil producer but non-OPEC member-countries have a larger share — 32 million barrels per day in 1994 — of the international market, says AFP.

Production for the 12 members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Saudi Arabia, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates, Gabon, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar and Venezuela) totaled 27 million barrels per day.

The leading producers of oil are:

Saudi Arabia 8.9 million barrels/day, United States 8.3 million b/d, Russia 6.3 million b/d, Iran 3.6 million b/d, Mexico 3.2 million b/d, China 2.9 million b/d, Norway 2.7 million b/d, Venezuela 2.6 million b/d, Britain 2.6 million b/d and Canada 2.2 million b/d.



Khurshid Alam, Director of Singer Bangladesh Limited, inaugurated the relocated Singer show-room-cum-sales centre at South Jatrabari in the city yesterday. Mahub Jamil, Chairman and Managing Director, management committee member, marketing and sales executives were also present on the occasion.

## Milk production in Natore scanty

NATORE, Sept 25: Despite totalling the number of dairy farms to 180 in the district's six thanas, it lacks adequate supply of milk for the consumption of about 15 lakh people, reports UNB.

According to official sources, 180 dairy farms have so far been registered with Department of Livestock and another 10 farms are awaiting registration.

The number of milch cows of these farms are about 900 which are of high variety. About 6,575 litres of milk are produced from these farms a day, the market value of which is Tk 70,000.

But this production is quite low commensurate with the demand and a large section of people are being deprived of the nutritious food.

There are artificial insemination centres and sub-centres in few places of the district to produce better variety of cattle, but these are not functioning well.

Concerned departments have taken more steps in encouraging people to rear cattle, but for want of proper training on the part of the doctors and lack of medicines, a large number of cattle die every year due to the outbreak of various diseases.

As a result, people are losing their interests in rearing cattle in this very vital sector for business and a huge quantity of powder milk is being imported every year giving scope of draining out foreign currencies.

Besides, there are shortage of fodder as well as fallow lands. The fallow lands are being brought under IRRI-Boro scheme. The green grass which is needed for milch cows is not available at all.

The dairy farm owners appealed to the government to take necessary steps to remove the problems in rearing cattle in the district.

## SCB-CPA meet in Ctg Thursday

"A meeting between Chittagong Port Authority and the Shippers' Council of Bangladesh, shippers and port users will be held in the conference room of the Chittagong Port Authority in Chittagong on Thursday, says a press release.

It will review the Chittagong Port congestion situation, and steps taken by CPA, Customs, and Food Department for removing the congestion.



SH Kabir (3rd from left), Chairman of Renata Limited, addressing the 22nd annual general meeting of the company held at a city hotel on Sunday. Seating from left are: Dr. MA Rahim, R&D Director, Dr. Sarwar Ali, Managing Director, Dr. SF Begum, Director, M. Syedullah, Director and Moinul Islam, Director.

## 'Bangladeshi handicraft products need good marketing campaign'

By Rafiq Hasan



Johanna C Lockhart a business plan for the exportation of selected handicrafts to foreign markets. Evaluating the existing si-

A good marketing campaign by Bangladesh of its handicraft products in the global market can drastically boost the export turnovers, a US handicraft consultant observed here.

"The quality and designs are fine, and prices competitive. But the only thing absent is the marketing drive," said Johanna C Lockhart who is in the capital to assess the quality of local handicrafts and to formulate a business plan. "Bangladeshi products do not have any exposure in the US market, a lucrative selling place for any exporter," she mentioned.

Johanna C Lockhart, President of Lockhart Consults, a

US-based design development organisation has come to Bangladesh under a handicraft technical assistant project jointly organised by Pragma Corporation of Washington, and Bangladesh Business Advisory Services Centre.

During her three week stay in Dhaka, she visited about 30 handicraft manufacturing units in and around the city.

Talking to The Daily Star, she said, the goal and objectives of the project include evaluation and assessment of individual handicraft products, textiles, stationery, pottery, leather, wood, cane and brassware, and formulation of

tuation in the handicraft sector of the country, she said the prospect of some sectors is very bright, particularly she mentioned leather goods, pottery, bamboo and cane products and weaving textiles.

"I was very surprised to find so many products with high quality of modern design and taste. The designs of many items, specially basket and pottery, are very much on a level with American taste," she noted.

So they can be displayed in the department stores, retail shops and other marketing places in the states, she added.

Underlining the need for

proper education and training, she further said, by improving the quality of the products Bangladesh can earn a lot of foreign currency.

She appreciated the role of the non-government organisation (NGOs) for bringing the handicraft sector to its standard level.

Suggesting the private entrepreneurs to come to this sector, the US consultant said, without private initiatives such a vast sector can not expand and compete with the foreign products. "If private enterprises come and act as export agencies, the gap now existing between the producers and buyers will be

narrowed down slowly," she added.

The US consultant stressed the need for regular participation of the local companies in the international trade fairs and exhibitions for marketing and promotional drive to attract foreign buyers.

Focusing on the declining trend of the country's export earnings from this sector, she emphasised the need for active publicity campaign by both government and private organisations in the buying countries for increasing sale of handicraft products. She is scheduled to leave Dhaka today.