

Govt claims Production normal

Production situation in different enterprises of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) and Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) under the Ministry of Industries in Dhaka and other regions of the country was normal yesterday, an official handout here said, reports BSS.

Presence of officials, employees and workers was also normal, the handout added.

Women workers of Netrokona not getting proper wages

NETROKONA, Nov 11 Women workers in all the 10 thanas of the district are not getting their due wages though, their output of labour is no less inferior than the male workers," reports UNB. The number of female labourers has been increasing day by day in the district due to various reasons. The women workers are now engaged in different professions and they are being deprived of their due wages, it is alleged.

According to a local estimate, about 25,000 female workers are working in different fields and sectors throughout the district. But they are denied of their real wages by their employers.

The woman workers time and again drew the attention of the district administration for the injustice done to them by the dishonest employers, but no action has yet been taken in this regard due to mysterious reason.

Planning, patronisation needed

Proposed industries yet to be set up in Natore

NATORE, Nov 11: Despite bright prospect, the proposed small, medium and large scale industries could not be set up in the district due to lack of planning and patronisation of the authorities concerned, reports UNB.

According to local experts, feasibility studies done by the government about the possibility of setting up industries have indicated that different industries including bio-gas plant, paper mills, leather and edible oil industries, milk, fish and vegetable processing units have bright prospect in this area.

The sources said, at present, there are two sugar mills which cannot use the huge quantity of sugarcane produced in the district.

Natore, basically an agro-

based area, is also capable to operate another two sugar mills and a distillery plant with the sugarcane and its by-product — soup molasses.

Moreover, the use of waste materials from the sugar mills and distillery is possible in generating bio-gas plant, according to the experts' observation, the prevailing paper crisis might be overcome with the establishment of more paper mills here utilising huge quantity of unused cane-cog.

Meanwhile, participants of a seminar on 'Expansion and Appropriation of Locally Innovative Appropriate Technology' also adopted above proposals but due to lack of fund, the plans could not be implemented despite the assurance of State Minister for

Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman who was the chief guest.

The experts also viewed that the prospect of availability of gas in the district is bright and with the exploitation of the same, the entire northern districts may be brought under gas network ushering in new era of economic development.

The oil and gas drilling works which were started during the period of late President Ziaur Rahman in Shingra thana at present remained stopped due to unknown reason.

The experts said more research and investigation is required to find out oil and gas fields in the district to mitigate the growing demand in the country's energy sector.

Activities at Burimari land port being hampered

LALMONIRHAT, Nov 11: Activities at the Burimari land port is being hampered due to lack of infrastructural facilities although it is becoming more important day by day, reports UNB.

A total of Tk 9.02 crore revenue were collected at the port during the first four months of the current fiscal year as against Taka 4.48 crore in the corresponding period of last year.

There is no telephone, electricity or any other urban facilities here. These are available at the nearest thana headquarters Patgram, 12 kilometres from the port.

Land customs department has no godown and weighing bridge at the port. As a result, customs authorities have to face problems in storing imported goods and in fixing revenue.

On an average, 200-300 trucks reach every day at the port from both sides of the border carrying various goods including rice, wheat, flour, apple, stone, tobacco stick, limestone, timber, onion, ginger, potato seeds and seasonal fruits.

These trucks have to pass the 12-kilometre connecting road between Burimari and Patgram with great risk as the road is now in a deplorable condition.

Nearly one kilometre portion of the road adjacent to the port is full of 6 inches to 2 feet deep ditches. Accident may occur at any moment on this road.

Local people urged the government to take immediate steps for providing necessary infrastructural facilities at the port that earns a large amount of revenue every year.

CSE creates interest among investors

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Nov 11: The country's second bourse in this port city has created growing interest among investors, sources concerned said.

Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) started floor trading on October 10.

In about 20 days of operation, the market capital of CSE rose to Tk 21,05,76,73,957 showing an increase of over Tk 1300 crore compared with that on the starting day. The number of listed companies rose to 50 while CSE started with 33 companies, the sources said.

President of CSE Amir

Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, MP, talking to this correspondent on Friday, said "more companies are now applying to be listed here as CSE is progressing. The trading also is picking up gradually".

For the past few days, however, CSE witnessed a steady market, sources said.

CSE started floor trading in cry-out system, which would be replaced by screen-based trading from July next year.

CSE was formally inaugurated on November 4 by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Delhi approves Rs 3100 cr jt venture projects

NEWDELHI, Nov 11: The Cabinet Committee on Foreign Investment (CCFI) approved joint venture projects worth Rs 3100 crore with world automobile giants like Ford, Honda, and Mitsubishi to manufacture their popular brand like Escort, Fiesta, Lancer and a totally new brand for the Asia market in India, reports PTI.

The CCFI also approved the Bombay Suburban Electricity Supply Limited proposal to raise 125 million US dollars in global depository receipts besides clearing BHP, Australia's proposal to set up an Indian subsidiary to manufacture zinc aluminium coated sheets with foreign investment of 285 million US dollars (over Rs 641 crore). An official spokesman told newsmen here that a proposal for setting up Rs 4800 crore integrated steel plant as a joint venture between Usha Iron and Ferro Metals Corporation and Ferrostal AG Germany was also cleared.

A Rs 14.2 crore proposal from the leading scotch whisky maker Whyte and Mackay for manufacturing their popular brand liquor in collaboration with Rampur Distilleries was also approved. While Mahindra and Mahindra ties up with Ford, Sriram industrial enterprises teams up with Honda, Hindustan Motors joins Mitsubishi to manufacture over 2.30 lakh passenger cars within the next two to five years.

WFP to supply \$8.8m rice, oil to DPRK

BEIJING, Nov 11: The UN World Food Programme will supply flood-ravaged North Korea with emergency supplies of rice and cooking oil under a pact signed in Pyongyang yesterday, the Chinese Xinhua news agency said, reports Reuter.

The UN agency will supply 8.8 million dollars worth of rice and edible oil to the isolated Stalinist state, where severe floods last summer killed at least 68 people and damaged the main grain crops, Xinhua said from Pyongyang.

North Korea has estimated economic losses at a staggering 15 billion dollars, saying the disaster affected 5.2 million people — a fifth of the population — and destroyed 5.7 million tonnes of rice and other grains. The country in October agreed to let the World Food Programme open a temporary office in Pyongyang to assist with the distribution of disaster relief aid.

Pyongyang stunned observers in June by breaking its policy of stubborn self-reliance and asking long-time enemies South Korea and Japan for emergency grain, saying initially that bad weather had caused "minor and temporary" setbacks to the spring harvest.

PKSF disburses Tk 100m as loan among rural landless people

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) has disbursed a loan of Taka 100 million to the rural landless and assetless people for income-generating activities and poverty alleviation during July-October this year, reports UNB. The amount has been distributed through 35 partner organisations (NGOs) in far-flung rural areas of Bangladesh, a press release of the organisation said.

The PKSF has undertaken a programme for distributing a total amount of Taka 600 million as loan during the current fiscal year to the poor landless-assetless people of the rural areas through its 117 partner organisations (NGOs) in 48 districts. The PKSF has started lending operation since 1991 and is financed by the government for alleviation of poverty and creating rural employment.

It encourages small business, shops, rearing milch cow paddy husking, vegetable gardening, nursery, goat rearing, poultry, fishery, vendoring purchase of rickshaws, vans, boats, weaving, tailoring, handicraft etc.

BSC to procure two container vessels

CHITTAGONG, Nov 11: Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) has decided to procure two container vessels each with the capacity to handle 300-35 containers, reports BSS.

Besides, the BSC has also decided to procure one mother oil tanker with the capacity to carry 1.35-1.60 lakh metric tons of crude oil and petroleum products.

This was informed at the 156th Board Meeting of BSC held here yesterday with State Minister for Shipping Shajahan Siraj in the chair.

The State Minister directed the BSC officials to take immediate measures to procure the ships by early next year.

Shipping Secretary Waliul Islam, among others, attended the meeting.

Later, the State Minister had a meeting with the port users here at the Bandar Bhaban. The meeting expressed satisfaction as the congestion in Chittagong Port eased to a great extent.

The State Minister urged

the exporters and importers to take the opportunity being provided by the authorities for faster handling of containers and cargo.

The State Minister asked the authority concerned to inform the schedule of ships of BSC anchored in Singapore regularly to the exporters and importers.

'Keep Ctg Port free from halt'

Another report adds: The State Minister has called upon all concerned to keep the Chittagong Port free from the purview of haltal.

It is imperative to continue round the clock operation of Chittagong Port for the sake of national interest, he said while addressing a gathering of labourers, organised by Bandar Combined Workers' and Employees' Federation, here yesterday.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Amir Kharsu Mahmud Chowdhury, MP and President and Secretary of the Federation Hazi Younis and Nurul-lah Bahar.

US, turns down corn harvest forecast

WASHINGTON, Nov 11: The US Agriculture Department turned down its forecast for the country's corn harvest yesterday to 7.37 billion bushels as compared to the record output 10.1 billion bushels last year, says Xinhua.

The forecast, reflecting a harvest that is nearly over, dropped 2 per cent from October's projection of 7.54 billion bushels and was also below the 7.47 billion market analysts had predicted.

The forecast for soybeans dropped to 218 billion bushels less than a 1 per cent decline from the October forecast.

Because of favourable exchange rates, the high corn prices look less imposing to overseas buyers a market analysts said however, the department report said that the world supply picture was aggravated by a lower Russian grain harvest.

The department also forecast a cotton crop of 18.8 million bales one bale is 480 pounds, down 2 per cent from last month and 4 per cent from last year's record. Drought and insect damage, especially in Alabama, contributed to the decline.

Move to privatise rly system UK sells fleet of passenger trains

LONDON, Nov 11: Britain yesterday announced the sale of the railway's entire fleet of passenger trains for 1.8 billion pounds (2.84 billion dollars), in a major step to privatise the railway system, reports AFP.

Transport Secretary Sir George Young dubbed it the "largest ever privatisation by direct sale" in British history. The deal also marks the biggest railway sell-off to date, in one of the last major privatisation programmes in Britain two of the three rolling stock leasing companies which between them own British rail's entire fleet of 12,000 passenger trains, have been taken over by management buy-out teams.

And the third has been sold to an international consortium which includes the Japanese bank Nomura International and US financing a company Babcock and

Brown. The three companies will lease rolling stock to the 25 train operating companies which will take over from British rail when privatisation is completed.

The conservative government has pledged to privatise 51 per cent of the railways ahead of April 1996, or at the latest by the next general election, which must be held by spring 1997.

The network for passenger and freight services has been separated into 25 distinct lines, and 40 per cent of these have already been offered to private operators as these have already been offered to private operators as franchises.

And most of the shares in the railtrack company which owns and manages all rail infrastructure, is to be sold next spring for an estimated two billion pounds.



US President Bill Clinton reads a brief statement about the budget battle with Congress in the White House Briefing Room in Washington on Friday. President Clinton urged Congress to stay in session over the weekend to work on the budget. — AFP/UNB photo

WB warns of halving US contribution to IDA

PARIS, Nov 11: The World Bank warned Friday that the world's poorest countries, mostly in Africa, would face dramatic consequences if the United States halves its contribution to the International Development Association (IDA) reports AFP.

IDA is the World Bank's affiliate for interest-free long-term lending to countries that had an average per capita annual income of barely 400 dollars last year.

Its future funding is now in the balance because the Republican dominated US Congress proposes to roughly halve US contributions to IDA for the current financial year. The World Bank fears this could induce other donors to invoke the existing burden sharing and proportionally cut their own commitments to IDA's 11th replenishment (IDA-11), for the three years starting next July.

A scenario worked out by the bank's economists, shows a possible 50 per cent reduction in funds available for IDA lending over this period could sharply cut IDA aid to over 30 African countries, including 14 rated as severely indebted. It would also severely affect the outlook in such countries as Vietnam, one of IDA's five poorest

clients, and Armenia, where IDA has become a key financing partner in the transition to market economy.

"In Cameroon, Malawi and Senegal, major cuts would undermine recent reform gains," the bank said.

"In Eritrea, Angola and Ethiopia, they would virtually halt post-war reconstruction, and in Zambia and Cote d'Ivoire they would make debt service virtually unbearable," it added, noting that growth prospects would "diminish greatly" in all these countries.

IDA could meet a shortfall either by reducing the size of credits or by focussing its aid on better performing countries. But the bank said IDA, which has provided emergency aid to such countries as Rwanda and Haiti, would clearly have difficulty of offering similar assistance to Bosnia, or Angola and Liberia, now emerging from civil wars.

If IDA were forced to seriously curtail its lending, "new money" would not be available to help debt-ridden African countries finance economic adjustment imposed by their creditors and assist their "exit from over-indebtedness," a top World Bank official said.

US House passes bill to raise credit line

WASHINGTON, Nov 11: The House of Representatives passed a bill yesterday to raise the nation's credit line temporarily, but White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta charged its many extraneous conditions amounted to a "form of terrorism," reports Reuter.

The measure to increase the nation's debt limit temporarily from 4.9 trillion dollars to 4.967 trillion dollars through December 12 passed mostly along party lines, 227-194. Seven Republicans and four Democrats crossed party lines.

At the same time, the Senate was working on a stop-gap spending bill needed to pay government bills after midnight Monday, when the current spending law expires.

Panetta said more than 800,000 government workers face layoff and the country will be at the brink of default if Republicans continue to push their agenda as a condition for passing the short-term spending and debt measures.



Sonali Bank Baridhara Model Town branch shifted from Sector No. 12 to Sector No. 11 recently. M Ahsanul Haque, Managing Director of the bank seen opening the new premises of the branch. Major (Retd) Kamrul Islam, MP, and bank's clients and well-wishers were also present on the occasion.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD) Road Division, Pirojpur Notice of RHD Inviting Tender

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় স্থানীয় সরকার প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর জেলা- মেহেরপুর

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