

**Libya bans foreign workers from 60 occupations**

CAIRO, Dec 15: A warning to hairdressers, calligraphers, and gardeners. Don't look for work in Libya, reports AP.

Col. Moammar Gaddafi has banned foreigners from 60 occupations, the latest campaign against the huge expatriate community in Libya, Egypt's Middle East News Agency reported Thursday.

The list includes muezzins — the men who give the Muslim call to prayer — hairdressers, gardeners, calligraphers, mechanics and sweetmakers. The decree takes effect immediately.

Surprisingly, the government also declared that all doctors, nurses and teachers in primary schools must be Libyans. Traditionally those jobs have been filled by expatriates.

Libya has also expelled tens of thousands of foreign workers, mainly other Arabs and Africans. Sudanese officials say 70,000 of their workers have returned from Libya since the summer.

**NZ labour costs rise**

WELLINGTON, Dec 15: Labour costs in New Zealand rose 2.2 per cent from the September 1994 quarter to the September 1995 quarter, showed labour cost index received from statistics NZ today, reports Xinhua.

This followed increases of 1.8 per cent and 2.0 per cent for the years to March and June 1995.

Labour costs climbed 2.1 per cent in the private sector and 2 per cent in the public sector during the year to September 1995.

Over the year, salary and wage rates rose 1.5 per cent. Non-wage labour costs increased 5.2 per cent, with public sector costs going up 5.4 per cent and private sector costs 5.2 per cent.

**ASEAN agrees to slash tariffs on most products by 2003**

BANGKOK, Dec 15: Southeast Asian Nations have agreed to slash tariffs on most products by 2003 as part of plans for a free trade zone but details will have to be worked out between economics ministers, officials said yesterday, reports Reuters.

They (the ASEAN leaders) agreed on the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) achieving the zero-per cent level by the year 2003, Philippine Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Rudolfo Severino told reporters after the first day of a summit.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister Annuay Virawan told reporters that talks to free up the financial and banking, tourism and telecommunications sectors would be completed by mid-1997, 18 months ahead of target.

The seven-member summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) featured a row over Jakarta's refusal to lift barriers on 15 farm goods.

Thai Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-Archa had called earlier yesterday for radical steps to accelerate tariff cuts and for talks on the three service sectors to be ended in 18 months.

ASEAN had originally planned to negotiate the liberalisation of services over three years from January 1996.

Earlier, Singapore premier Goh Chok Tong warned ASEAN that it was falling behind in the battle to lure investment dollars.

"ASEAN is clearly no longer at the head of the trade liberalisation process. In terms of

economic integration, ASEAN is actually behind other regions," Goh said in a speech at the opening of ASEAN's three-yearly summit in Bangkok.

There is general agreement on a substantially tariff-free regime," said Severino.

ASEAN groups — Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore and the Philippines.

A row over farm trade had threatened to overshadow the summit.

An agreement granting Jakarta the right to keep its farm markets closed until 2010 was rejected by Hartanto, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Production, who said the proposal needed approval by his government.

The dispute was shelved

for further discussion by the economics ministers during a special meeting in Singapore in April, ASEAN officials said.

**Joint drive with China approved**

Another report adds: Southeast Asian Nations have approved a joint drive with China to develop the Mekong river basin and lure investment from Japan and South Korea, a senior official said.

"There has been an agreement that the ASEAN countries assist in the development of the Mekong river delta region together with China, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam," Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Domingo Siazon told reporters late on Thursday.

**Taiwan opens advice centre for foreign labourers**

TAIPEI, Dec 15: Taiwan's government opened its first advice center for foreign labourers Thursday, amid concerns that the workers are contributing to crime, reports AP.

The Overseas Contract Workers Counseling Center in Taipei will offer free information and assistance on legal and psychological problems in English and Thai, the government's Labour Affairs Council said.

Thai workers account for more than 50 per cent of the 200,000 legal foreign workers in Taiwan. Other workers are brought mainly from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to help ease Taiwan's labour shortage.

Officials have recently expressed concern that increasing numbers of foreign labourers are becoming involved in crime, especially robbery and theft.

The council said 202 foreign labourers from the four countries were charged in 140 criminal cases in the first 10 months this year. That compares to 92 workers charged in 64 cases in the same period last year.

Officials said they plan to set up more counseling centers in central and southern Taiwan in the near future to help foreign workers adjust to life in Taiwan.

**French workers' strike begins to falter**

PARIS, Dec 15: Strikes by public sector workers in France entered their fourth week today amid signs that their protests against the government's welfare reform plans were beginning to falter, reports Reuters.

Transport chaos still reigned after most rail workers voted to continue their stoppage, but trade unions pushed for a labour summit meeting with Prime Minister Alain Juppe to be moved forward, suggesting that they might be ready to strike a deal.

The SNCF, the national railway company, said some trains would run from 23 stations in northern France after drivers at 19 of its 345 depots voted to return to work. Normal services would also run to and from Belgium.

The FGAAC union, which represents a third of SNCF drivers, called for stoppages to end.

In Paris, six per cent of buses were on the road on Thursday, just over the recent average. Air traffic controllers planned limited strikes on Friday and three doctors' unions planned a Paris protest on Sunday.

The strikes, over Juppe's ambitious welfare reform plans and a plan to restructure the heavily loss-making SNCF, which unions fear could hurt jobs, have paralysed the rail system nationwide.

But, with Christmas approaching, there were indications that the strikers' determination was starting to weaken. Signs that a settlement could be near sent the stock market rocketing 2.25 per cent.

The main unions spearheading the strikes, the communist-led CGT and the independent Force Ouvriere (FO), called on Juppe to bring forward a December 21 labour summit and expand its agenda.

**Euro — future single currency of EU**

MADRID, Dec 15: European Union leaders agreed today to call their future single currency the "euro", Belgian government spokeswoman Monique Delvoux told reporters, says Reuters.

"I've just heard on the phone, it's the euro," she said, adding there was an agreement on all aspects of the single currency issue.

Commenting on an earlier report that French President Jacques Chirac had vetoed such a decision, Dutch Foreign Ministry spokesman Bob Hensch said, Chirac made a statement that maybe the public should decide in a referendum.

But Hensch confirmed that euro had been chosen unanimously as the name.

Delvoux said the summit had agreed on all of the outstanding issues on the single currency, including the date for a decision on who should participate and how to denominate new debt issues by countries in the monetary union.

**Pakistan won't give India MFN status**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 15: Pakistan said yesterday it was bound to open trade borders with India under new international treaties but would not give it the most favoured nation status, reports Reuters.

Commerce Minister Ahmad Mukhtar told parliament that Pakistan would import only those Indian goods that benefited it, while pursuing the objectives of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and a newly launched South Asian trade pact.

India and Pakistan are the main partners in the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which launched a trade pact last Friday.

Replying to opposition fears that freer trade with India, the largest SAARC economy, would harm Pakistani manufacturers, he said Pakistan would have suffered more if it had not signed the GATT treaty envisaging freer trade.

But he said Islamabad would "allow only those imports where Pakistan would also benefit" and added: "We will protect our industry by enforcing anti-dumping duties."

Rejecting speculation that Pakistan planned to give most favoured nation status to India, he said trade with that country would be allowed as with any other country. "We can make our industry more competitive and not let it die."

Political disputes between India and Pakistan, which

have fought three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947, have severely limited bilateral trade.

Top SAARC commerce officials achieved a breakthrough in talks in New Delhi last month when Pakistan, which had been considered reluctant to participate, committed to a quick lift off for the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAFTA).

**India, Armenia sign two accords**

NEW DELHI, Dec 15: Indian and Armenian representatives signed two agreements yesterday and will "work out" a third trilateral trade and transit agreement with Iran, officials said here, reports AFP.

Under a technical and economic assistance agreement, Armenians will be trained in Indian institutions and Indian students will go to Armenia for courses in science, technology and public health.

The second friendship and cooperation agreement envisages help in culture, arts, education and tourism, sports and mass media, officials said.

The agreements were signed after talks between the Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao and the Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian, who is on a four-day visit.

**Danish Parliament approves state budget for '96**

COPENHAGEN, Dec 15: The Danish Parliament yesterday approved by a majority of 118 votes to 21 a 1996 state budget running a 28.8 billion crown deficit compared with an estimated 36.4 billion crown shortfall in 1995, reports Reuters.

The budget, agreed last month in a deal between the ruling centre-left coalition and opposition conservatives, won the backing of the Liberals in the closing parliamentary debate.

The Liberals, who are the largest opposition party and traditional allies of the Conservatives with whom they ruled Denmark from 1982-93, did not join last month's formal budget pact between the government and the conservatives.



Jewelry from the estate of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis on preview at Sotheby's in New York on Thursday. At centre is a ruby and diamond necklace from Van Cleef & Arpels, in front of it is a 40.42 carat Marquise diamond ring given to Onassis by her husband Aristotle. This and other items will be auctioned in April 1996. — AFP/UNB photo

**UK parliamentary body to probe Barings collapse**

LONDON, Dec 15: A British parliamentary committee is to carry out its own inquiry into the collapse of Britain's oldest merchant bank, Barings, after spotting discrepancies between reports produced in Britain and Singapore, the committee's chairman said yesterday, reports Reuters.

Barings bank collapsed last December with debts of 1.4 billion dollars, blamed on the rogue dealings of Nick Leeson, who is now serving six and a half years in a Singapore jail.

Sir Tom Arnold said his powerful treasury select committee would seek its own answer to discrepancies between the report into the Barings collapse by the Bank of England and one written by inspectors appointed by Singapore's ministry of finance.

He did not say what the discrepancies were, but said "a very different tale apparently emerges" from Singapore's account to that given by Britain's central bank.

**IMF MD backs Bosnia's bid for membership**

WASHINGTON, Dec 15: IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus on Thursday backed Bosnia's bid for membership in the international Monetary Fund and said the International Monetary Fund was ready to give the war-battered nation emergency loans once it joins next week, reports Reuters.

"I expect to be able to recommend Bosnia and Herzegovina's membership in the IMF at a formal board meeting to be held next week," the IMF chief said.

"Moreover, I expect to recommend approval of financial assistance... immediately upon its becoming an IMF member."

The credit will come from a special lending window approved by IMF member nations in October that allows the fund to give money without tough conditions to countries that need emergency loans to rebuild their shattered economies.

Bosnia is behind on its debt payments to the IMF by some 45 million dollars and those must first be cleared before it can become a member. The debts were inherited from the former Yugoslavia, which was a member.

Camdessus said in a statement that the Netherlands central bank will help Bosnia clear the arrears with a bridge loan.

The IMF chief's statement came after an informal meeting of the fund's board on Thursday.

**Nepal sees improvement in export sector**

KATHMANDU, Dec 15: Nepal has seen some improvement in its export sector during the first four months of the current fiscal year from mid-July, the country's central bank said yesterday, reports Xinhua.

According to a press release by the Nepal Rastra Bank, the total export earnings in that period registered a positive growth after several years of decline.

Total exports increased by 1.8 per cent to about 97.8 million US dollars in the first four months of 1995-96 fiscal year beginning from July 16, the press release said.

During that period, Nepal's exports to India, its biggest trade partner, increased by 14.5 per cent to 32.2 million dollars while exports to third countries maintained the trend of decline. The exports to third countries declined by 1.3 per cent.

Export growth to third countries remained negative mainly due to the continuing decline in export of ready-made garments which showed a decline of 28.6 per cent in the review period.

However, another major export item, woolen carpets,

has shown a marked improvement compared to the same period of last year. Export of woolen carpets, which was down 16.9 per cent last year, has been up 2.8 per cent so far this year, according to the bank.

The bank's press release said the overall export growth would help ease the pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves.

The country's total imports increased by 33.3 per cent to 411.7 million dollars in the review period with imports from India and third countries up 32.4 per cent and 33.3 per cent respectively.

Despite the growth in export Nepal's overall trade situation remains adverse. Total trade deficit widened further by 41.7 per cent to 313.9 million dollars in that period.

The country's total foreign exchange reserves stood at 742.3 million dollars early this month, representing a decline of more than half percentage.

The available reserves could only meet more than seven months of merchandise imports, according to the central bank.



US fashion designer Oscar de la Renta poses with his models following a fashion show featuring some of his latest creations in Jakarta on Thursday. De la Renta signed a licensing agreement with Indonesian textile giant PT Great River Industry on the same day that will enable the company to manufacture Oscar de la Renta fashions under licence in Indonesia. De la Renta also expressed his desire to expand into Asia through this Indonesian base. — AFP/UNB photo

**DESA Tender Notice**

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) invites tenders for turn-key supply & installation of electric distribution system at Mirpur in "Dhaka Urban Infrastructure Improvement Project". The work will be implemented by DESA as deposit work. The project is funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB).

"A" Class Electrical contractors of BPDB/DESA/REB/PWD with similar experience of electrical distribution system development works are eligible to participate in this tender. The Currency of Bid is Bangladeshi Taka only.

Particulars of the tender covered by this notice is as under:

- Tender Enquiry No : 949602/1
- Name of the work : Electric Distribution System Development Works in Dhaka Urban Infrastructure Project, Mirpur
- Tender Document to : 12.12.95
- be sold from
- Tender Submission/ : 15.01.96
- Opening Date
- Cost of Tender Document (in Taka) : Tk 2000.00

Interested bidders may inspect sample copies of the Tender Document in any of the following offices during normal working hours from 12.12.95 and refer queries, if any, to the same office at least 15 days before submission of Bid.

- a) Project Director, Greater Dhaka Power Distribution Project, House No 47, Road No 135, Gulshan, Dhaka - 1212.
- b) Superintending Engineer, (E&I), GDPDP, DESA, House No 47, Road No 135, Gulshan, Dhaka - 1212.
- c) Director (P&D) 1, Abdul Gani Road, DESA, Dhaka.
- d) Executive Engineer, Distribution Lines Division, Greater Dhaka Power Distribution Project, 3rd Floor, House No 47, Road No 135, Gulshan, Dhaka - 1212.

Prospective bidders can buy Tender Documents from any of those four offices on written application supported with documentation duly attested by Gazetted Officer. The cost of Tender Document which is non-refundable shall be paid through Pay Order/ Demand Draft issued by any scheduled local bank in favour of Director, Finance & Accounts, DESA. No tender document will be sold on the tender submission date or the day before.

Tender Document shall be obtained personally and DESA will not take any responsibility for sending Tender Document to anybody. Tenders shall be received in the office of the Executive Engineer, Distribution Lines Division, Greater Dhaka Power Distribution Project, 3rd Floor, House No 47, Road No 135, Gulshan, Dhaka - 1212 on the specified date up to 11:30 hrs (BST). The tenderer shall ensure timely submission of his bid and late tenders, if any, shall summarily be rejected. Receiving tender will be opened publicly on the same day at 12:30 hrs (BST).

DESA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

**Executive Engineer**  
Distribution Lines Division, Dhaka  
Electric Supply Authority  
House No 47, Road No 135  
Gulshan, Dhaka-1212

**Government of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
PWD Division, Bagerhat  
Notice Inviting Tender  
No 22/1995-96**

1. Sealed tenders in BD Form No 2911 are hereby invited from the approved enlisted building contractor/Firm of PWD according to their enlistment capacity for the undermentioned work and will be received by the undersigned and as well as the Executive Engineers PWD Division-I/II, Khulna & Satkhira up to 12:00 Noon of 31-12-95 and will be opened on the same day at 12:15 PM in presence of the intending tenderers who may like to remain present. The tender form and tender documents may be seen and obtained from all the Offices of the Executive Engineers under PWD Circle, Khulna up to 30-12-95 during office hour on payment of usual charges.

2. Name of work : Construction of 44 Nos. newly created Dist Head Quarter one at Bagerhat (Sub-Head: Construction of 6000 gallon capacity underground reservoir with Pump House, providing distribution Pipeline to Judge Court building at Bagerhat.
  3. Estimated Cost : Tk 3,68,090/00.
  4. Earnest Money : Tk 7,375/00.
  5. Time for completion of the work is 45(forty five) days/months from the date of issue of work order.
- KM Habibur Rahman**  
Executive Engineer  
PWD Division, Bagerhat

**Notice of RHD  
Inviting Tender**

1. Tender No : 69/EE/1995-96.
2. Name of work : Supply of Tyre with tube for Savium Truck SG-4 (France) of different Road Division of RHD, during the year 1995-96.
3. Estimated cost : Tk 3,27,600/-.
4. Earnest money : Tk 6,552/- in favour of Executive Engineer, RHD, Workshop Division, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
5. Time allowed : 45 (Forty-five) days from the date of issue of work order.
6. Eligibility of contractors : Eligible enlisted RHD, "A" to "E" category contractors.
7. Name of offices of availability of tender documents : Printed BD Form 2908, notice inviting tender, schedule of items and terms and conditions etc of Tk 510/- only per set (non-refundable) from the office of RHD, Workshop Division, Tejgaon, Dhaka/Executive Engineer, RHD, Workshop Division, Mymensingh.
8. Name of the offices where tender will be received : Superintending Engineer, RHD, Workshop Circle, Tejgaon, Dhaka/ Executive Engineer, RHD, Workshop Division, Tejgaon, Dhaka/Executive Engineer, RHD, Workshop Division, Mymensingh.
9. Last date of receipt of tender : Up to 12:00 Noon of 28-12-95.
10. Date and time of opening of tender : At 12:30 PM of 31-12-95.

**Md Ashrafur Islam**  
Executive Engineer, RHD  
Workshop Division, Tejgaon, Dhaka