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DHAKA SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1996

Ocean-going ship owners reluctant to register vessels with local authority

By Rafiq Hasan

The ocean-going ship owners are reluctant to register their vessels with the local authority due to stiff rules and regulations and lack of enough financing institutions in the country.

According to shipping department sources, a number of Bangladesh-owned cargo vessels are moving around the world with registration abroad and carrying foreign flags.

The rules and regulations for obtaining registration are much relaxed in some countries than Bangladesh. This is one of the main reasons hindering the increase of ocean-going cargo vessels in private sector, the source said on condition of anonymity.

They get their registration, loan and other facilities within a very short time.

The number of privately owned cargo ships has remained almost stable during the last five years which now stands at only 13 out of a total of 31 ocean going vessels of the country.

The remaining 18 ships are under Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC), the lone public sector shipping company, according to the shipping department statistics.

A cargo vessel, Al Kashem has been missing for more than one and a half months which is owned by a Bangladeshi and registered in

Belize, a South American country.

The report which came out in the media mentioned that there were 24 Bangladeshi crew on board the ship when it disappeared in the China Sea last November.

"We have hardly anything to do if the owners prefer to register their vessel outside the country and do business at their own risk," Abdul Malek, Director General of the Shipping Department said.

He, however, said that the government will do everything which is possible to trace out the location of the missing ship with 24 Bangladeshi people on board.

If the ship is located, steps would be taken to rescue the Bangladeshi citizens.

He could not confirm how many Bangladeshi ships like Al Kashem were registered abroad and carrying foreign flags.

Malek underscored the need for liberalising the registration procedures for encouraging local ship businessmen and attracting foreign investment in this vast potential sector.

We are preparing a set of recommendations in this regard and these will be forwarded to the concerned government authority soon, the DG Shipping added.

'Dredging work to be carried out for navigability of N'ganj port'

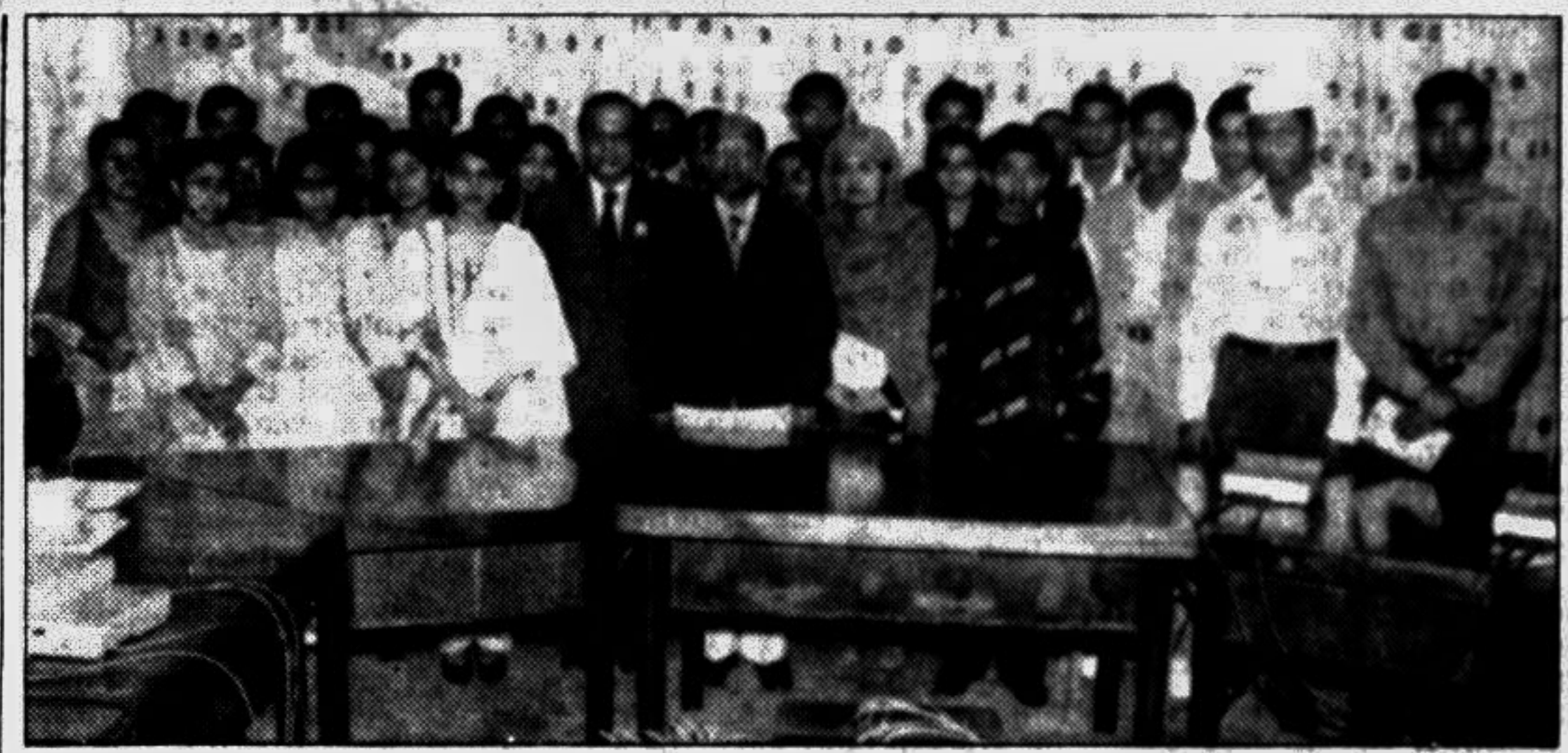
NARAYANGANJ, Jan 12: State Minister for Shipping Shahjahan Siraj Thursday said, necessary dredging work will be carried out for maintaining navigability of the age old Narayanganj river port, reports BSS.

While visiting the river port site, the state minister asked the concerned authority to set up new warehouses at the port area for the handling of cargo, an official handout said.

Shahjahan Siraj said, passenger shed will be constructed at the opposite side of the BIWTA terminal and resting place for the workers will be constructed at the port area. Arrangements were being done to allocate land for Launch owners' Association in Narayanganj and Dhaka, he added.

During the visit the state minister was informed that about 6,000 passengers travel through Narayanganj port daily, while the port handles ten lakh tons of cargo annually.

Shipping Secretary Anwarul Islam, Chairman of BIWTA Nurul Abedin, President of Narayanganj Chamber of Commerce and Industries Afzal Hossain and Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Inland Waterways Passenger Carriers' Association Md Baizuzaman Badal accompanied the state minister during the visit.



Md Omar Farooq, Biman's Managing Director, and Raisuddin Ahmed, Director Administration, are seen with meritorious students who were awarded scholarships by Biman on Thursday. These students, who are wards of Biman officers and employees, did brilliant results in SSC and HSC examinations in 1993 and 1994.

Recent boom in commodity prices a boost to developing states: WB

WASHINGTON, Jan 12: A recent boom in commodity prices should allow developing countries to improve their fiscal positions before the inevitable bust that will follow, the World Bank said Wednesday, reports AFP.

Primary commodities account for half of export revenues from developing countries, but poor fiscal management often leaves them worse off after a boom and bust in prices than they were in the first place, the bank said in a new report.

"Countries that have managed to invest the gains from the boom come out of it stronger and with higher rates of growth," said World Bank Senior Vice President and chief economist Michael Bruno.

"Countries that, through misguided policies, consume the windfall gains and allow production to shift from exports to domestic markets have nothing to show for it at the end of boom and find it difficult to undo the misalignment in relative

prices produced by the boom," he said.

Commodity booms occur about every 10 years, with the most recent beginning in 1992 and resulting from supply shocks rather than demand spikes, the banks said.

The World Bank's index of primary commodity prices is expected to increase by 8.6 per cent in nominal terms in 1995, then fall in 1996-97, the report said.

The latest boom has favoured developing countries because the price of commodities they export — such as coffee and copper — have risen more than price of commodities they import — such as grains and petroleum.

To sidestep an economic downturn when the commodity boom ends, the World Bank urged developing countries to: avoid overcommitting to long-term spending; adopt prudent fiscal and monetary policies; cut import and investment controls; diversify revenue sources; use hedging instruments; and consider creating a revenue stabilization fund.

Govt of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Road Division, Natore

Notice Inviting RHD Tender

- Tender Notice No: 10-NRD/1995-96.
 - Name of work: Construction of extension work of office Building of Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Natore and re-construction of boundary wall for Salbagan, RHD office compound at 3rd KM of Natore-Bogra Road under RHD Road Division, Natore during 1995-96 in 2 (two) groups.
 - Chargeable head: As per group list.
 - Estimated cost: As per group list.
 - Earnest money: As per group list.
 - Group No: As per group list.
 - Time allowed for completion of work: As per group list.
 - Eligibility of contractor: As per group list.
 - Name of offices where tenders will be received: (a) Add Chief Engineer, RHD, Rajshahi Zone, Rajshahi. (b) Superintending Engineer, RHD, Road Circle, Pabna. (c) Superintending Engineer, RHD, Monitoring and Evaluation Circle, Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka. (d) Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Natore/Pabna/Sirajganj.
 - Name of office where tender documents will be sold: (a) Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Natore/Pabna/Sirajganj/Rajshahi/Planning Division, Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka. (b) Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Road Sub-Division-VII, Natore.
 - Last date for selling tender: 21-1-96 Eng/8-10-1402 Beng during office hours.
 - Last date & time for receiving tender: 22-1-96 Eng/9-10-1402 Beng up to 12-30 PM.
 - Date & time for opening tender: 25-1-96 Eng/12-10-1402 Beng at 12-45 PM.
 - Date of lottery: 29-1-96 Eng/16-10-1402 Beng at 12-00 Noon.
- NB: (i) All participants will have to submit the attested copy of "VAT" registration certificate along with the tender, otherwise the tender will be treated as informal.
(ii) All tenderers will have to submit the attested copy of page No 6 & 7 of the new registration book of contractor (information about the identifications of contractor) otherwise the tender will be treated as informal.
(iii) SI No 2, Group No 2 will not be received by the office of the Addl Chief Engineer, RHD, Rajshahi and Superintending Engineer, RHD, Monitoring and Evaluation Circle, Dhaka and tender documents will not be sold by the Executive Engineer, Rajshahi and Planning Division, Dhaka.

Tender Notice No	Group No	Name of road with location	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Eligibility of contractor	Price of tender documents	Time for completion of the work from the date of issue of work-order
10-NRD/95-96	1 (one)	Construction of extension work of office building of Executive Engineer, RHD, Salbagan at 3rd KM of Natore-Bogra Road under Road Division, Natore during 1995-96 (Ch.168-RBF)	Tk 7,40,618/-	Tk 14,813/-	RHD enlisted of general category from "A" to "E" as per rule	Tk 500/-	45 (Forty-five) days
-do-	2 (two)	Re-construction of boundary wall for Salbagan office compound at 3rd KM of Natore-Bogra Road under Road Division, Natore during 1995-96 (Ch.168-RBF)	Tk 4,75,905/-	Tk 9,519/-	-do-	-do-	-do-

A K M Mosharraf Hussain
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Natore.

Natore Palli Bidyut Samity achieves progress

NATORE, Jan 12: Natore Palli Bidyut Samity-1 (NPBS) has achieved a significant progress in rural electrification in five thanas of Natore and Rajshahi districts, reports UNB.

This was informed at the 13th Annual General Meeting of the Samity, official sources said here today.

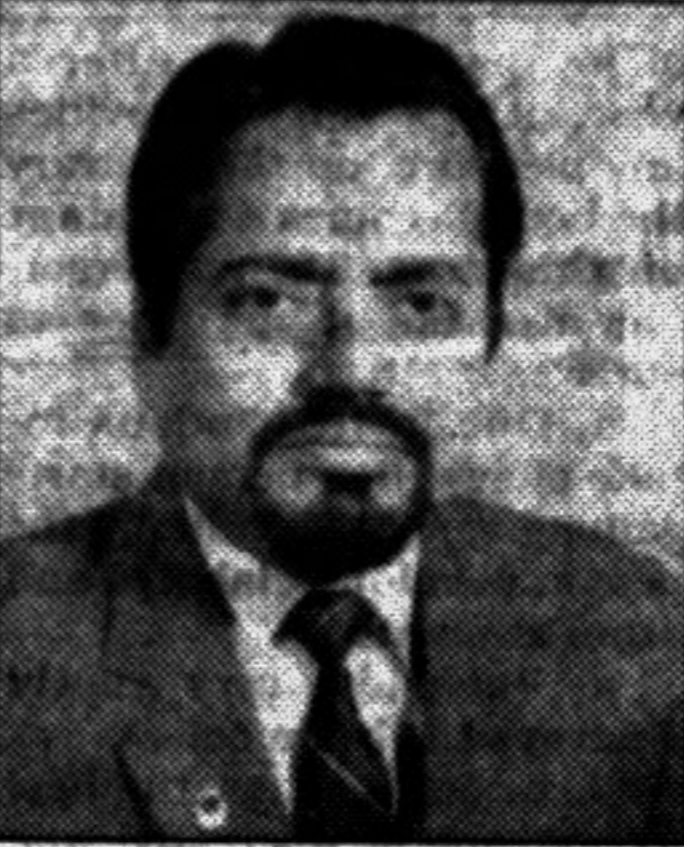
The meeting was held at 1,300 villages in Sadar, Shingra and Bagatipara thanas of Natore and Putia and Baghmara thanas in Rajshahi districts were brought under electrification since the inception of the Samity in 1980.

The NPBS has so far provided 26,000 power connections to its subscribers for different purposes, including residential, commercial, small and heavy industries and irrigation schemes, with about 1,400 km lines under its two power stations.

Suharto asks cos to donate 2 pc of profit to fight poverty

JAKARTA, Jan 12: Indonesia's President Suharto called on foreign and publicly-listed companies to donate two per cent of their profits to state-run poverty alleviation programmes, a press report said here yesterday, reports AFP.

"All companies, including those which are publicly-listed and foreign-owned, are urged to help this programme," State Minister of Population Haryono Syuono quoted Suharto as saying after meeting the President, according to a report in the Bisnis Indonesia Daily.



Nizamuddin new MD of Ansar-VDP Bank

Shahzad Syed Nizamuddin Ahmed has been appointed as the Managing Director of Ansar-VDP Unnayan Bank, says a press release.

A carrier banker, Nizamuddin completed his 30 years in banking profession before joining Ansar-VDP Unnayan Bank on October 26.

He held various important senior executive positions in Agrani Bank.

Nizamuddin has served as General Manager of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Janata Bank and Sonali Bank for more than 8 years. He also attended a good number of important seminars, symposiums and workshops.

NBL earns Tk 62 cr profit in '95

National Bank Limited (NBL) has earned a profit of Taka 62.08 crore in '95, says a press release.

This was stated by the Managing Director of the bank Kazi Abdul Mazid while addressing the annual conference of executives and branch managers at a city hotel on Thursday.

The conference was inaugurated by the Chairman of the bank Abdul Awal Mintoo.

The Managing Director said 1995 was the year of success for NBL. It earned Taka 20.35 crore in 1994. The deposit of the bank has increased to Taka 1329 crore and other business by 30 to 40 per cent.

He said the Bank is expanding its sources and network to keep pace with the demand of the market.

Mazid expressed his gratitude to the Board of Directors for their guidance towards the success.

In his speech, Abdul Awal Mintoo said NBL has achieved remarkable success in every sector in 1995. It has been possible for sincere efforts put by the all level employees of the Bank, he remarked.

Habibullah, Director of the Bank, said NBL has been maintaining goodwill for its well reputed customer service and thus achieved tremendous success in 1995.

All Akbar Khan, and M A Reza, Directors of the Bank, were also present on the occasion.

The Executives and Branch Managers participated in open discussions.

Lanka to host 2nd round SAPTA talks

COLOMBO, Jan 12: Sri Lanka will host the second round of talks aimed at setting up a free trade area among seven South Asian countries, a Commerce Ministry official said Thursday, reports AP.

The meeting of the South Asian Inter-Governmental Group on trade liberalisation will be on March 14 and 15, said Saman Udagedera, Assistant Director of Commerce.

The dates must be approved by the other member countries: India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Bhutan.

The meeting is expected to discuss further tariff cuts in trade among the member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

A South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) among the members came into effect Dec. seven, lowering tariffs on 226 items.

Dispute over wage-rise in Malaysia Civil servants reject govt offer

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 12: Malaysia's civil servants and the government were yesterday locked in dispute over how proposed wage rises would be distributed, reports AFP.

The congress of unions of employees in the public and civil services (CUEPACS) rejected the government's offer of two billion ringgit (800 million dollars) in wage rises.

The money would cover arrears and backpay for calendar 1995. The increased salaries would be in force through 1996 if the scheme is agreed by both parties.

The union decision was in protest at the Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's formula for roughly equal distribution of the pay increase.

CUEPACS, which represents 848,000 government employees, is asking for a 29-to-41 per cent wage increase for lower category workers and only 2.5-to-5.8 per cent

for senior government staff.

But Mahathir iterated Thursday that senior civil servants deserved a fairer salary revision.

"All the members must get a fair share. If they have other views, they can bring up their views," Mahathir said.

"But negotiating means willingness to accept what is fair," he told reporters standing firm against CUEPACS demands.

CUEPACS had in July last year threatened to go on strike after the government rejected its demands for wage increases that would cost three billion ringgit in backpay and arrears for 1995.

But the plan was called off after the government agreed to negotiate, leading to a counter-proposal for a two-billion-ringgit package.

CUEPACS, however, late Wednesday unanimously rejected the offer, saying it would rather not accept the

increases if the government insisted on equal distribution.

"The amount would not be more than what the government had offered and the distribution must be fair," Mahathir insisted.

Asked about the government's reaction if CUEPACS resorted to strikes, Mahathir said: "there is talk to refer to higher authorities, but I don't know. But if there is arbitration, there should not be a threat to strike."

"If there is a threat to strike, then it is not arbitration as the decision made would be under pressure," Mahathir said, without elaborating.

CUEPACS secretary-general A. H. Penniah said he could not predict what would happen when asked about the possibility of strike action if the union demands were not met.

German economic growth slows sharply in '95

WIESBADEN, Germany, Jan 12: German economic growth slowed sharply last year and the government worried yesterday there was little hope that 1996 would be any better as a debate raged about how to create jobs and stay competitive, reports Reuter.

The economy grew just 1.9 per cent in 1995, the government's statistics office said, a slowdown from 2.9 per cent in 1994. The data came as another blow to Europe's largest economy after news that unemployment surged to 9.9 per cent in December.

The strong mark, high wage deals and tax rises in 1995 were to blame for the drop in growth, German Economics Minister Guenter Roxoldt said.

He forecast that economic expansion would continue weak this year and could be less than two per cent.

"Germany is not in recession in the winter of 1995/1996 but in a phase of clearly dampened growth," Roxoldt told a news-conference in Bonn.

But economists warned the economy was losing momentum rapidly and that growth could slip as low as 1.5 per cent in 1996. Fear of unemployment and higher pension contributions are expected to keep consumer

spending weak despite an expected 2.5 per cent rise in real disposable incomes.

They were particularly concerned that growth in West Germany slowed to 1.5 per cent from 2.4 per cent last year. The rate for pan-Germany was higher due to 6.3 per cent growth in the East.

Germany, which has become used to its reputation as Europe's paragon of economic virtue, is alarmed at mounting evidence that its economy has run out of steam, while the authorities appear to have few tools left to revive it.

With interest rates already low and no scope left for a rise in state spending if the country wants to qualify for European Monetary Union, the government is desperately seeking alternative ways to boost output and create jobs for its 3.8 million people unemployed.

Politicians, business leaders and unions are calling for more flexible working practices, tax cuts and deregulation to make the country a more attractive investment target.

Germany, which has been pressuring its European Union (EU) partners to get in shape for a single currency in 1999, itself failed to meet a key requirement for monetary union last year.



C M Koyes Sami appointed AB Bank Country Manager to India

The Arab Bangladesh Bank has decided to appoint C M Koyes Sami as Country Manager to India, says a press release.

He is at present Senior Vice President, international division of the bank in Dhaka.

Sami joined Arab Bangladesh Bank in 1983. He worked in different branches of the same bank in Sylhet, Chittagong and Dhaka from 1983 to 1995.

He obtained his bachelor (with Honours) and master degrees from Dhaka University in 1968 and 1969 respectively.

Sami was a lecturer of the Ideal College, Dhaka, for a very short period of time.

He worked in different branches of Agrani Bank from 1972 to 1983 till his joining in Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd.

Israeli diamond industry hope for Arab markets

TEL AVIV, Jan 12: Israel is offering the Arab world a more aggressive marketing and establishing direct ties to low-volume buyers and bypassing expensive middlemen.

The fair was the first move in that direction.

Organiser Ian Sossor said it succeeded "way beyond expectations." Although he did not have a total for the deals struck during the four-day exhibition, he said one firm sold 700,000 dollars worth of polished diamonds the first day.

The fair was basically a new market strategy to reach new, mainly lower-end buyers, said Halpern, referring to those who bought in relatively small quantities.

Israel is considered a center of diamond-cutting expertise. Its industry is guaranteed a majority of middle-grade diamonds provided by the London-based central Selling Organisation, the worldwide diamond repository.

The diamonds are cut and polished in Israel and then resold to distributors worldwide.

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Narail poultry farms facing problems

NARAIL, Jan 12: Most of the poultry farms in three thanas of the district are in poor condition due to various problems, including price hike of poultry feed and lack of treatment facilities, reports UNB.

Officials sources said there are 350 poultry farms, including 150 of ducks and 200 of hens in Kalia, Lohagara and Sadar thanas.

They said the chickens of hen and duck frequently fell victims to various diseases like gumboro, cholera, ranikhet and coccidiosis due to inadequate supply of medicines and vaccines in the local markets.

Besides, there are also egg preservation problems due to lack of cold storage in the areas, intensifying the owners sufferings in marketing the products.

China's currency deposit rises by \$ 11.5b in '95

BEIJING, Jan 12: China's main foreign exchange bank, the Bank of China, saw local currency deposits grow a record 95.3 billion yuan (11.5 billion dollars) from a year earlier to 390 billion yuan in 1995, Xinhua announced today, according to AFP.

Foreign exchange deposits totalled 27 billion dollars — up 476 million dollars from 1994.

Outstanding Chinese currency loans by the bank stood at 418 billion yuan in 1995, while foreign exchange lending totalled 30.7 billion dollars, increases of 57.2 billion dollars and 2.9 billion dollars respectively.

The results will likely be used by the bank to back up its irritation at the decision last April by moody's investors service to lower the bank's credit rating, because of doubts over China's banking reforms.

According to preliminary estimates, the bank generated around 10.5 billion yuan in pre-tax profits in 1995 — ranking it first among all major domestic banks, the official news agency said.



Kazi Abdul Mazid, Managing Director of National Bank Ltd, delivering his speech at the annual executives and branch managers' conference held at a city hotel on Thursday.