

India urged to extend reforms

MANILA, Apr 12: India will not be able to sustain its impressive economic progress since embarking on major reforms in 1991 without huge investment in infrastructure, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday, reports Reuters.

It must also press ahead with reforming the public sector and extending reform down to the level of state governments, Manila-based bank said in its 1996-97 Asian development outlook.

The report said gross domestic product growth was estimated at a real 6.2 per cent in 1995, rising to 6.4 per cent in 1996 and 6.6 per cent in 1997.

This represented a broad-based economic recovery as a result of the reforms, which liberalised trade and investment, and removed interest rate controls.

"However, progress has been limited in several areas, particularly public sector reform," the report said.

DPRK seeks rice from Vietnam

HANOI, Vietnam, Apr 12: Vietnam has offered sympathy but only limited help in response to a North Korean request for cheap rice, according to official news reports Thursday, says AP.

The Vietnam News Agency said the request was made by a North Korean trade delegation in a meeting Wednesday with Deputy Premier Phan Van Khai.

VNA said Khai replied that "Vietnam could trade in rice but the trade was being handled by various food companies and the government could subsidize them for only a limited period."

He said that any transaction should be based on "detailed discussions about modes of payment."

The report did not say how much rice the North Koreans requested or what terms they proposed, and Vietnamese government officials did not immediately respond to queries.

North Korea appealed for food donations after experiencing heavy flooding last year, but it has few foreign friends and the international response was weak. Vietnam announced it sent 100 tons of rice in December, but did not disclose the terms.

Khai was quoted as saying that Vietnam sympathizes with the sufferings of the Korean people, and is sure they will tide over this difficult period and continue to advance under the guidance of their leader, Kim Jong Il.

As two of the few remaining socialist countries, Vietnam and North Korea have friendly relations, but commercial contacts have dwindled since Vietnam switched most of its trade to a cash basis.

France Telecom workers stage strike to fight privatisation

PARIS, Apr 12: France Telecom workers began a 24-hour warning strike Thursday to protest plans for partial privatisation of the state-owned telephone monopoly, reports AP.

The company's five main unions decided on the walkout following the government's announcement in March that it would begin changing France Telecom into a corporation as a state agency.

Service was not expected to suffer from the daylong job action, though unions have not ruled out new protests as the government prepares the company for European Union deregulation of the industry in 1998.

Prime Minister Alain Juppe promised that the state would retain majority control over the telecommunications giant, that workers would remain civil servants with full benefits and job guarantees, and that France Telecom would still provide universal service.

Despite the premier's assurances, France Telecom unions say they fear even partial privatization will threaten job security.

France's Public Service Minister Dominique Perben dismissed their arguments Thursday.

SAS raises number of non-smoking flights in June

STOCKHOLM, Apr 12: The SAS airline Thursday announced that it was expanding its non-smoking policy to cover most European destinations in June, and promised free nicotine chewing gum to help smokers on the flights, reports AP.

"It's a clear wish from our passengers on those routes that the flights be non-smoking," Vagn Soerensen Vice President of SAS Business System Division, said in a statement.

The new non-smoking destinations will include Germany, France, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria. Smoking will still be allowed on flights to Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, eastern Europe and on intercontinental flights.

S Asian economies to grow 5-6 pc in two years, ADB forecasts

MANILA, Apr 12: South Asian economies are forecast to grow five-to-six per cent in 1996 and 1997 as reforms initiated in the early 1990s begin to bear fruit, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday, reports AFP.

A low savings rate and fragile political conditions in some countries of that sub-region, however, were seen as the main constraints to economic development, the Manila-based bank said in its annual development outlook.

Higher export growth as a result of world trade liberalisation and an increase in the inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) would boost South Asian economies in 1996 and 1997, it said.

The sub-region's economies grew an average four-to-six per

cent in 1995, the Development Bank said.

South Asia is comprised of giants India and Pakistan, the medium-sized economies of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the small island of Maldives and the Himalayan mountain nations of Bhutan and Nepal.

The sub-region is home to a large bulk of the world's poor people.

The bank forecast India's gross domestic product (GDP) would grow 6.4 per cent in 1996 and 6.6 per cent in 1997, "given normal weather conditions," from 6.2 per cent last year.

Growth would continue to be powered by the services sector and industrial production, it said.

Pakistan's GDP was expected to expand by 5.5 per

cent in 1996 and 5.8 per cent in 1997 from 4.7 per cent in 1995, with agriculture "continuing to play a major role in boosting economic growth during that time."

However, the report said the Pakistan government must focus on addressing the inflation rate, balance of payment shortfalls and a high fiscal deficit.

Sri Lanka's GDP growth declined to 5.6 per cent in 1995 from 6.9 per cent in 1993, weighed down by the escalation of the war against separatist Tamil rebels and a major policy shift after national elections in 1994, it said.

Sri Lanka's economy was expected to grow 5.2 per cent in 1996 and 5.5 per cent in 1997, it added.

Nepal's GDP was expected to rise 5.6 per cent in 1996 and 5.2 per cent in 1997 from a low of 2.3 per cent in 1995 due to a decline in agricultural production and slow growth in the industry and services sector.

The outlook for South Asia is clearly less buoyant than it is in South-East Asia," Development Bank said.

"Nevertheless the effect of several years of structural adjustment is beginning to have some positive effects," it added.

"Their savings and investment rates are rising, although these are still low. Their export performance has been creditable but their external payment situations remain weak," the banks said.

EC will give \$ 30m grant to Pakistan for environment

ISLAMABAD, Apr 12: The European Commission announced Thursday it would provide Pakistan with a 30 million dollars grant earmarked for environmental rehabilitation, says AP.

The money will be distributed to Pakistan over the next seven years in allotments of close to 4.5 million dollars said Ambassador Gaspard Dunkelshuhler, the head of the European Commission delegation in Pakistan.

The grant will be used to clean up the environment in Pakistan's Punjab and North-West Frontier provinces. Sustainable rural development and natural resource management are the long term goals of the environmental project, Dunkelshuhler said during ceremony to announce the grant.

The project will be implemented by Pakistan's Forestry Department, the Government of Punjab and the World Conservation Union.

Sejm approves pensions for ex-presidents

WARSAW, Apr 12: The left-dominated parliament on Friday overwhelmingly approved a law to grant pensions to former Polish presidents, reports AP.

The powerful lower house, called the Sejm, voted 268-32, with 63 abstentions, to give pensions to three former presidents, each symbolizing a different stage in the nation's recent history.

The current and future presidents will also be covered by the legislation.

The law, proposed by former communist legislators, provides pensions of some 6,500 zlotys (2600 dollars) a month to Lech Walesa, the Solidarity founder who lost the presidency in an election last year; and to the last communist leader, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, who ordered the 1981 martial law crackdown that outlawed Solidarity and imprisoned Walesa.

In an effort to reconcile different party interests, law also provides a pension to Ryszard Kaczorowski, the last leader of Poland's exile government in London.

That government was established during the Nazi occupation of Poland, and continued to declare itself the rightful government during the years of communism, until Walesa became Poland's first popularly elected president in 1990.

'Mexican inflation may be less than 3 pc'

MEXICO CITY, Apr 12: Treasury Secretary Guillermo Ortiz said he expects April inflation to be less than the 3 per cent projected by analysts and said early indicators this year show the government's economic recuperation plans are succeeding, reports AP.

In a speech Thursday to Mexican businessmen, Ortiz said he expected gross domestic product to meet the goal of a 3 per cent increase this year, with exports responsible for half the growth. GDP is a measurement of the total output of goods and services in Mexico.

The economy contracted by 6.9 per cent in 1995 due to a crisis set off by a devaluation in December 1994.

Ortiz said his latest figures indicate manufacturing production grew by 1.5 per cent in January compared to the same month last year. If that holds for February and March, he said, industrial production for the first quarter will recover to near the level of the first quarter of the 1995.

Ortiz spoke two days after the central bank of Mexico announced inflation had hit 8.35 per cent for the first quarter of 1996. Ortiz said the March figure of 2.2 per cent was "not bad."

The government has set an inflation goal of 20.5 per cent of 1996. Ortiz admitted the gradual improvement was not yet noticeable to many Mexicans, who saw their buying power slide precipitously last year.

Japan's parliament okays budget for '96 fiscal

TOKYO, Apr 12: Japan's Parliament approved the fiscal 1996 budget Thursday, ending a lengthy impasse and sounding a bright note for an economy that is emerging from more than four years of recession, reports AP.

The vote was a clear victory for the three-month-old government of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who wanted to put the budget wrangling behind him before his April 17 summit with President Clinton.

Opposition legislators had demanded that the ruling coalition drop a clause in the budget that calls for 685 billion yen (6.3 billion dollars) in taxpayer money to help clean up after failed housing lenders, or "jusen."

In the end however, the clause stayed in, although the two sides agreed to a vaguely worded proviso that seems likely to delay the actual spending somewhat.

The result left the opposition New Frontier Party little to show for a month of noisy protests during which party leaders declared they would go to any length to stop the taxpayer-funded bailout.



Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

141-143 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000

Marine-Maintenance & Operation Division

Ref No. MS/3-66/12

Dated 31.3.96

Re-Tender Notice

Single sealed tenders as per 'repair schedule' attached with the tender are invited from Govt approved bonafide workshop/dockyard for repairing pontoon No. MP-30 lying at port area of the Authority at Narayanganj. Tenders will be received in the tender box at the office of the undersigned on 22.4.96 up to 12.00 noon and opened on the same day at 12.15 pm in presence (if any) of the tenderers.

Tender schedule and terms & conditions with detailed description of work can be purchased on payment of Tk 1000/- (one thousand) only (non-refundable) from the Authority's Zonal Accounts Office 141-143 Motijheel Commercial Area, 8th floor, Dhaka-1000. No schedule will be sold on the date of opening of tender. Earnest money at the rate 2.5% (two & half per cent) of the tender quoted value should be deposited with the tender through Pay Order/Demand Draft from any scheduled bank in favour of BIWTA.

The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender or reject all tenders without assigning any reason.

PR 42/96

DFP-7097-6/4

G-469

Nazir Hossain Bhuiya
Joint-Director (Navigator)



Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

Dredging Unit, Dhaka

Tender Notice

Sealed tenders in Bangladesh Form No 2911 are invited from first class enlisted contractors of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority for the undermentioned works:

Sl No	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Price of schedule	Time limit for the work
1.	Earth cutting by labours at the loop cutting site of the Kangsha river and closing of channel at upstream & downstream of the old channel in Naogaon Mouza of Netrakona district during 1995-96. [Loop No 1(B)]	Tk 11,62,000/-	Tk 29,050/-	Tk 1,000/-	30 (thirty) days
2.	Earth cutting by labours at the loop cutting site of the Kangsha river and closing of the old channel at upstream & downstream of the old channel in Azampur Mouza of Netrakona district during 1995-96 [Loop No 2]	Tk 16,14,900/-	Tk 40,373/-	Tk 1,000/-	30 (thirty) days

Tenders will be received by the Superintending Engineer (Civil), Dredging Unit, Dhaka at 141-143, Motijheel C/A, BIWTA Building 6th floor, Dhaka; Executive Engineer, Nganj Division, BIWTA, Nganj; Executive Engineer (Civil), Dredging Division, BIWTA, Barisal & Executive Engineer, BIWTA, Aricha up to 12-00 Noon of 21-04-96 and opened on the same day at 12-15 PM in presence (if any) of the tenderers. The above earnest money should be deposited with each tender separately in the form of Bank Draft/Call Deposit/Pay Order from any scheduled bank in favour of BIWTA. Tender papers can be obtained by depositing the above tender price (non-refundable) to the Cashier of Accounts Department of the Authority up to the day before the date of opening tender during office hours from the Accounts Department concerned.

The authority reserves the right to accept any tender or reject all tenders without assigning any reason.

PR-39/96

DFP-7099-6/4

G-473

Md Golam Rabbani
Superintending Engineer (Civil)
Dredging Unit
BIWTA, Dhaka.

Government of Bangladesh

Office of the Divisional Forest Officer,

Dhaka Forest Division, Gulshan Road, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Tender Notice

Tender Notice No. 10

Dated: 6.4.96

Sealed tenders are hereby invited by the undersigned from the bonafide 1st class enlisted contractors of Govt./Semi Govt./Autonomous organisations for construction of residential building under Forest Management Plan & General Support to Forest Department component of Forest Resources Management project as per terms & conditions stated below:

Group No	Name of work & place	Estimated value	Earnest money	Price of schedule	Time of completion
1.	Construction of 2nd story Co-ordinator D.C.F's residential building on the 1st Floor of C.F./D.C.F's residential building at Uttara Model Town, Dhaka.	11,29,683/10	5% of the quoted price.	750/-	30th June, 1996.
2.	Construction of 3rd story A.C.F's/ Research Officer's quarter 2 unit on the 2nd Floor of A.C.F's/Research Officer's quarter at Uttara Model Town, Dhaka.	16,09,835/50	-do-	750/-	30th June, 1996.

Conditions

- Tender must be accompanied by earnest money of 5% of the estimated amount in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank in favour of the Divisional Forest Officer, Dhaka Forest Division.
- Details about the tender document including schedule, items, specification, instruction & conditions etc. can be purchased from the office of the undersigned from 20.4.96 to 23.4.96 during office hours on payment of non-refundable fee of Tk. 750/- (Seven hundred & fifty) only for each set.
- Tenders will be received in the name of the undersigned till 12:00 Noon of 24.4.96 at the office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Dhaka Forest Division & Forest Extension Division, Baily Road, Dhaka & will be opened on the same day in presence of tenderer (if any) at 1:00 P.M.
- If the tender amount quoting more than 5% less of the estimated cost the tender will be rejected.
- Tender must be accompanied with original or attested copies of following documents:
 - Copy of original documents of enlistment renewed up-to-date from PWD/MES/Facilities etc.
 - Experience in work of similar nature & volume of works.
 - Copy of income tax clearance certificate up-to-date the current assessment year 1994-95.
 - Bank solvency certificate to show that the tenderers able to invest a minimum of Tk 10.00 lakh for each group.
 - Trade licence certificate (up-to-date).
 - VAT registration certificate.

Md. Ikil Mondal
Divisional Forest Officer
Dhaka Division

DFP-7477

G-472



Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng (L, standing) and French President (R, standing), attend in the Elysee Palace on Thursday the signature by the President of China's aviation industries Zhou Yuli (L) and the director of the French group Aerospatiale Yves Gallois (R), of an agreement for the construction of 100-seater planes. — AFP/UNB photo

EU threatens retaliation over US action against Cuba

WASHINGTON, Apr 12: Western Europe's chief trade negotiator threatened Thursday to take unspecified measures against the United States over a new US law permitting legal action against non-Americans who deal with Cuba, reports AP.

Sir Leon Brittan, a Vice President of the European Commission, also voiced objections to similar bills pending in Congress. They are aimed at people who do business with Iran and Libya.

"We do think that taking action of an extraterritorial character, as this legislation does, is something which is contrary to the friendly relations between Europe and the United States," he told reporters after a meeting with Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"If your partner tackles a common problem in a way that

is different from yours, the right answer is not to knock him on the head, and we reserve the right to take whatever action we are advised is open to us to do with that legislation," he said.

He did not elaborate on possible action by the European Union, but one option could be a complaint to the World Trade Organization which can impose binding settlements in international trade disputes.

Brittan said he had tried to persuade Christopher that it would not be right to apply the part of the law that permits Americans to sue foreigners in American courts because the non-Americans have bought property confiscated by the government of President Fidel Castro. Parts of the law can be suspended by President Clinton, but the State Department is still analyzing the provisions

to see what powers they give him.

Clinton, who had opposed the bill, decided to sign it after Cuban forces shot down two US civilian planes in February.

In the case of Libya, Brittan pointed out that the United Nations has imposed sanctions on the government there because of its refusal to turn over suspects in the planting of bombs on US and French planes.

"Maybe there is something to be said for seeing ways in which (the sanctions) can be further strengthened," Brittan went on.

"But I think it would be divisive to the partnership that we have in dealing with Libya if legislation was passed which enabled action to be taken against European companies when we have been working with the United States to tackle the evils of the Libyan regime," he said.

Rich nations agree to end tax breaks for business bribes

PARIS, Apr 12: Intent on discouraging companies from bribing their way through foreign red tape, the world's richest nations have agreed to end tax breaks for the practice, reports AP.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development called Thursday on its 26 member nations to fight the corruption by repealing tax deductions for under-the-table payoffs.

Bribing government officials to get approval for a project or speed things up is commonplace in much of the world. Some companies even hire middlemen to do the dirty deed, and euphemisms are used on tax returns to disguise the practice.

But the OECD, led by the United States where bribes are forbidden, has been crusading against it on ethical grounds.

The payment of bribes in international business deals

"raises serious moral and political concerns," the Paris-based OECD said in a statement.

It also "hinders the development of international trade in investment by increasing transaction costs and distorting competitive conditions," the OECD said.

Roughly half of the 26 countries, including most European nations, permit the tax deductions. The United States, which gives no such tax breaks, has been pushing for anti-bribery measures for the past two years.

The US passed an anti-corruption law in the late 1970 prohibiting the tax deductions, and US corporate leaders have been campaigning ever since for an international ban.

"It's really ludicrous that countries have been subsidising bribery," said David Aaron, the US representative to the OECD. "This will level the playing field for international

business."

But the plan to end tax deductions wasn't without controversy. Some smaller countries said the measure could unfairly hinder their trade opportunities.

"There was a feeling that this was just part of the business culture," Aaron said. Bribery was involved in more than 100 major international business deals between 1994 and 1995, according to an OECD study.

The agency has asked its fiscal affairs committee to monitor member governments over the next year. The OECD also will discuss making the bribery deduction a crime and placing an anti-corruption clause in aid agreements.

At an OECD ministerial meeting in May 1997, the agency will review steps taken to combat bribery in member countries, the official said.



Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel recently organised a farewell reception in honor of T Arita, the outgoing General Manager and Mrs Arita of Mitsui & Co Ltd. Arita was handed over with a silver plate as a token of strong friendship between the two organizations by Yoji Hamano, General Manager of Sonargaon Hotel. Yoshio Tani, the new General Manager of Mitsui & Co Ltd, and Mrs Anita, PRM of the hotel, also seen in the picture.