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## Shilpa Bank introduces computer

A separate computer department has been introduced in Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) to make the functioning of this vital financial organisation more dynamic and systematic. BSB press release said here today, reports BSS.

A recent meeting of the Board of Directors of BSB also approved partial administrative reform of this organisation to streamline its various activities and functioning.

With the setting up of the separate computer department all functioning of the bank would, henceforth, be computerised.

The meeting approved creation of one recovery department unifying the existing two recovery departments for strengthening the loan recovery performances. The activities of the two former recovery departments have been placed under two zonal wings of the newly created recovery department.

Besides, one inspection department under the director control and supervision of the Managing Director has been created in order to monitor, control and take follow-up measures against the BSB-financing projects and schemes. Several other departments have also been reconstituted to make BSB functioning dynamic and time-befitting.

## Islamabad to get \$ 2.4 b grant from creditors

PARIS, Apr 24: A group of creditors has agreed to grant Pakistan 2.4 billion dollars in aid on condition that the country continue restructuring reforms begun in October, the World Bank said today, reports AFP.

Three main creditors — Japan, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank — will provide the lion's share of the loan, with 12 other countries and various institutions such as the International Monetary Fund also chipping in.

Jointly organised by

## Bangladesh envoy in Thailand urges int'l community to raise resource flow to LDCs

BANGKOK, Apr 24: Bangladesh Ambassador to Thailand Mohammad Zulmat Ali Khan has urged the international community to increase resource flow, including foreign direct investment, to the LDCs so that they are not further marginalised in the new international economic environment, reports BSS.

Addressing the ministerial-level meeting of the 52nd session of the ESCAP here on Monday, Khan also stressed the importance of the implementation of the Uruguay round of agreements and called all for special compensatory or safety net measures to redress the adverse effects of the agreements on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Khan, who was leading a five-member Bangladesh dele-

gation to the meeting, being held from April 22 to 24, extended Bangladesh's full support to the ESCAP, saying the commission has been contributing positively toward guiding the economies of the Asia-Pacific region.

Bangladesh has been elected one of the members of the Board of Governors of Asia-Pacific Centre of Technology Transfer for a period of three years.

The leader of the Bangladesh delegation in his statement stressed the need for greater co-operation among the developed and LDCs of the region in the fields of trade and investment, technology transfer and regional economic co-operation for sustainable development. He also under-

scored the need for increased assistance to the LDCs of the region to supplement their efforts to reduce the incidence of poverty and foster economic growth.

Khan highlighted the achievement of Bangladesh in the areas of rural credit through Grameen Bank model, population control and immunization, and expressed Bangladesh's willingness to share its experience with other developing nations of the ESCAP region. He drew the attention of the commission concerning Bangladesh's suffering due to the adverse effects of unilateral withdrawal of water in the upper riparian areas and requested for ESCAP assistance to tide over the serious problem.

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## BOU VC opposes uniform application of intellectual property copyright

Bangladesh National Scientific and Technical Documentation Centre (Bansdoc) and Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU) the discussion was held at the Bansdoc auditorium.

It was addressed, among others, by Director General of National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) Prof M Khurshid Alam, Copyright registrar M Maniruddin, Chief of Statistics Division of Banbeis M Elias Ali, National Curriculum and Text Book Board (NCTB) Member Prof Muhammad Ali, Bansdoc Director Dr. M Lutfur Rahman, Librarian of Dhaka University Dr Fazlul Alam, former director of SAARC Agricultural Information Centre M Abdun Noor and M Osman Ali of Bansdoc.

Secretary of BNCU Kazi Reazul Haque presided.

Prof Khurshid Alam said

copyright is the right of controlled use of ownership of a book or intellectual property.

He said observance of World Book and Copyright Day would promote production of quality

books in Bangladesh.

Copyright registrar Maniruddin said Bangladesh inherited copyright laws and it was updated twice in 1972 and in 1978. He said the existing copyright laws would be updated soon.

He emphasised the need for creating public awareness about copyright.

For the first time World Book and Copyright Day is being observed this year in pursuance of a resolution adopted in the UNESCO general conference at its 28th session held in November last.

The aim of celebration of the day is to draw the attention of the government officials and the general public to the fact that book is an indispensable medium of communication.

It also highlights the role of books and copyrights in preserving the spiritual traditions and as instruments for the transmission of ideas leading to a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue.

The objectives of the course were to familiarise the participants with the concept and importance of human resource development and acquaint them with relevant tools and techniques.

Officers from different banks and financial institutions participated in the course.

A H M Nurul Islam Chowdhury, Director General of BIBM, presided over the concluding session of the course and gave away certificates to the participants.

Choudhury, in his speech, observed that sustainable development cannot be achieved if human resources are not developed in a desired manner. He said human resource development means the development of abilities/competencies of the human resources in different working areas. In the present world human resource development is considered an essential component of a comprehensive development programme.

He hoped that the participants, trained in this course, would be able to do their duties in their respective fields with proper knowledge and efficiency.

The course was coordinated by A T M Abdus Shahid and Fahmida Chowdhury, members of the BIBM faculty.

Problems grip industrial sector in N-dists

RAJSHAHI, Apr 24: Industrial sector of northern region of the country cannot flourish due to shortage of raw materials, inadequate supply of power, lack of proper marketing facilities and proper government initiatives, reports UNB.

Recently in a press statement, industrialists and businessmen of northern districts demanded a separate industrial and business policy so that they can take proper initiative smoothly.

They also submitted a seven-point charter of demand, including lowering of bank loan interest, reviewing of value added tax and sanctioning of sufficient working capital.

They said there are bright prospects for establishing rice and flour mills in all the 16 northern districts mainly in Pabna, Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Sirajgonj.

But due to absence of gas, industries are fully dependent on electricity. Recently continuous loadshedding and shortage of power production cost has increased rapidly. The products failed to get competitive market with other areas, they alleged.

They also appealed to the government to take necessary steps to help establish small and medium industries in the region.

US airlines cut ticket prices

WASHINGTON, Apr 24: Low-cost airlines helped Americans save six billion dollars on airfares last year, US Transportation Secretary Federico Pena said Tuesday, reports AP.

No less than 39 new airlines have started up the United States in the last few years, first finding fertile markets in the West and Southwest and now expanding eastward, Pena said.

And he predicted that the low-cost carriers will continue to elbow their way into new cities and may expand to international markets.

The Director of ILO located in Dhaka Paul J Baily called on the Adviser to the Ministries of Labour and Manpower, Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs Dr. Nazma Chowdhury at her office on Tuesday.

## Pepsi Co tries to divest itself of Myanmar joint-venture

NEW YORK, Apr 24: It was the voice of a new generation that helped PepsiCo decide to sell its Myanmar joint-venture, reports AP.

Responding to pressure from students opposed to the military regime in the south-east Asian nation, PepsiCo Inc said Tuesday it is attempting to renegotiate its 40 per cent stake in the five-year-old company into a franchise agreement.

"We're really doing this for two reasons, both driven by business considerations and public sentiment," said Keith Hughes, a spokesman for PepsiCo Co., the company's beverage business.

At campuses nationwide, students have been calling for

## UK Labour Party finds serious lapses in tax advises

LONDON, Apr 24: Britain's opposition Labour Party hit out yesterday at financial consultants who are offering their clients advice on how to shift funds out of the country to avoid potential tax rises under a Labour government, reports Reuter.

In a speech to a conference organised by the opposition for business leaders, Labour's Finance Spokesman Gordon Brown said the advice was in many cases to wrong that people stood a better chance of making money by gambling on the national lottery.

"Some of the recent reports suggest they are not in the business just of avoiding tax but of avoiding the truth. If in any other occupation peddling rumours and lies were the basis of advice, the authors would be sacked," Brown said.

"Some of them are making money under false pretences and with some of their advice selling Britain short."

Brown's speech was part of a concerted drive by Labour to ditch its reputation as a high tax party — blamed for its 1992 election defeat — and focus attention on tax rises under British Prime Minister

John Major.

Brown repeated Labour's pledge to take tax decision on the basis of economic circumstances at the time it takes office, and not to unveil detailed tax plans in advance.

Tax decision must be based on what is good for the economy and must thus take into account the economic circumstances at the day before making final decisions ... that is not Labour being vague but Labour being responsible," Brown said.

The conservatives immediately attacked Labour for trying to hide its real plans. "All labour's instincts are to tax and spend more," said Conservative Party Chairman Brian Mawhinney.

Seizing on a remark by Labour's leader John Prescott that it would be stupid to reveal tax plans in advance, Mawhinney said.

And he predicted that the low-cost carriers will continue to elbow their way into new cities and may expand to international markets.

Brown, who repeated

"The 1996 wheat crop could be 10 per cent below average," he said without giving a specific figure.

In world coffee markets prices soared to their highest levels for three months when London Commodity Exchange (LCE) July future wht 2,040 dollars tonne.

Dean Kleckner, the head of the largest US farm group, the American Farm Bureau, told Reuters in an interview, "I am hearing, reports that two to four million acres of hard red winter production in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas will be destroyed..."

"The 1996 wheat crop could be 10 per cent below average," he said without giving a specific figure.

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