

ASEAN to reject linking social issues to trade

BANGKOK, Apr 25: Southeast Asian leaders should jointly reject any effort by developed countries to limit trade over concerns about child labour and other social issues, a senior Thai official said Wednesday, reports AP.

Labour ministers from the seven-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations might adopt a united stand on the question when they meet in Bangkok Thursday, said Nitasna Theeravit, Deputy Permanent Secretary at Thailand's Labour Ministry.

"We should not accept that kind of linkage, and the ASEAN member countries should join together to express our concern," Nitasna said.

The United and several European countries have tried to make trade with developing nations conditional upon improved standards for workplace safety, labour rights,

Microsoft Corp to inject new product into Windows

NEW YORK, Apr 25: Microsoft Corp, reaching further to influence the way people use the Internet, will soon weave technical specifications of a Sun Microsystems Inc. product into its core Windows operating system, reports AP.

The Sun product, called Java, is a programming language that allows people to add features like animation to electronic documents distributed on the World Wide Web and similarly-designed corporate data networks.

Microsoft plans to modify Java to optimally run with Windows-based computers. In doing so, a portion of Java will be incorporated into a new version of Windows 95. Microsoft's key product for running the basic functions of personal computers.

Microsoft and Sun will announce the plans next week, a source said Wednesday.

Microsoft first licensed Java in December and said then the appropriate technical features would be placed in its "browser" software for finding information on the Web. That "browser" is also going to be part of a new version of Windows 95.

Microsoft's new move goes further, however, putting it in a position to gain influence over software programmers who use Java.

Since nine out of 10 new PCs have Windows 95, programmers may be tempted to write Java programmes that run best with those machines at the expense of Macintosh. Unix-based or simpler systems still to come that run plain Java programmes.

Microsoft's plan allows it to say that developers can choose to create programmes for whatever computer they wish. But if the company succeeds in integrating Java efficiently with Windows, it could persuade developers to devote themselves to Windows-optimized Java because of the size of the Windows market.

That market dominance for several years has given Microsoft considerable sway in how other programmers design PC software. But Java has posed a threat to that influence because it worked equally well with all kinds of computers.

LEGAL NOTICE

Under instructions of my client M/s. NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, 4/6, Block-E, Lalmatia, Dhaka, I hereby give this notice for general information that my said client has entered into an agreement with Mst. Zafree Begum W/o Mr Md Saniullah (S/o Late Alhaj Ahsanullah) of 257/Ka Baghara, Thana-Mirpur, Dist-Dhaka for purchase of the property mentioned in the schedule below:

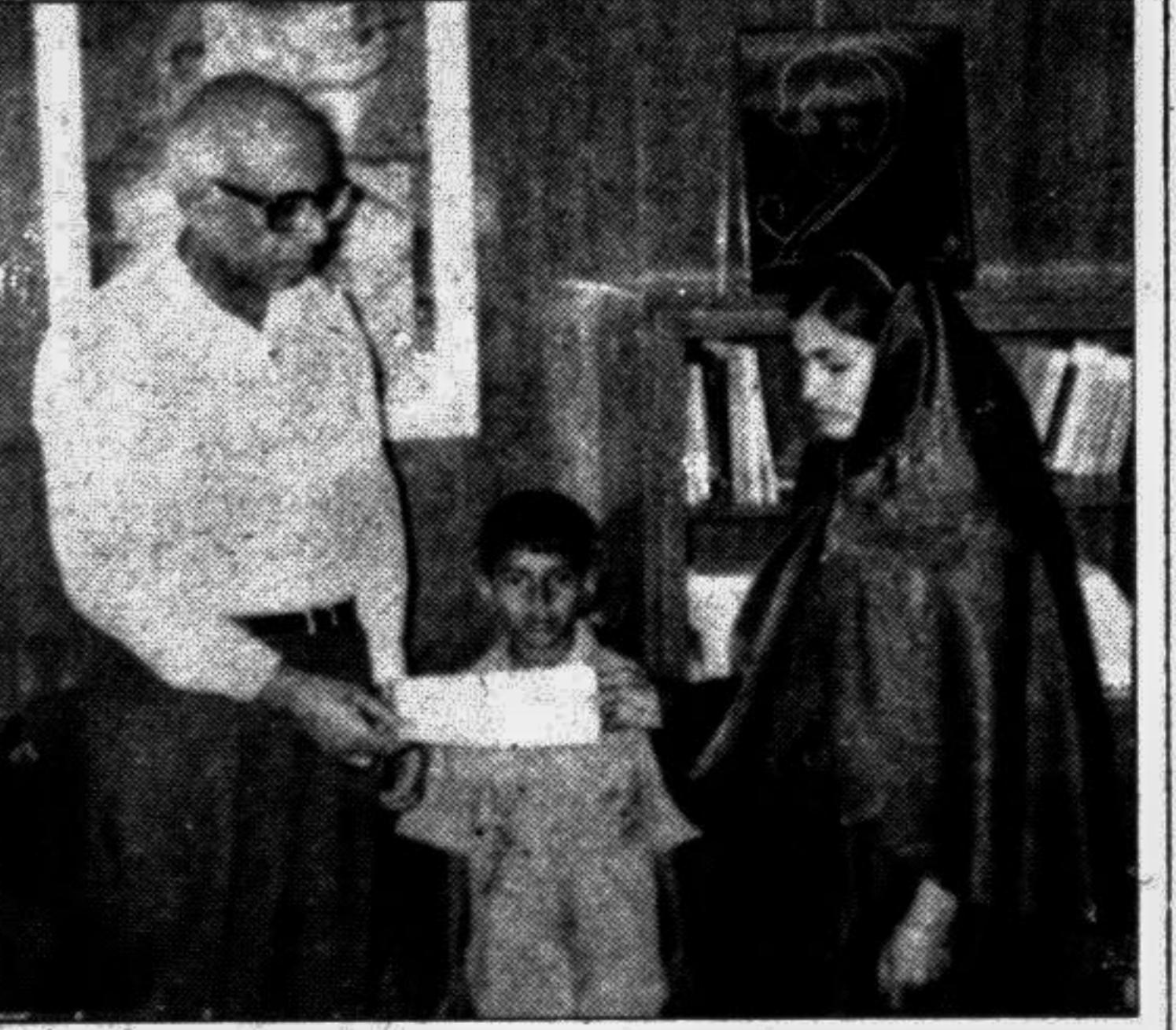
If any person(s) or institution(s) has any right, title, interest, possession or any claim respecting the scheduled property or objection to such sale or transfer of the property he/they may communicate with the undersigned with all the relevant documents respecting there of within 15 (fifteen) days of the publication of this notice. If no such objection/claim whatsoever is received by the undersigned as stated above within the aforementioned period the scheduled property shall be deemed to be free from all encumbrances and no subsequent claim/objection shall be entertained nor shall be binding upon my said client, and my said client shall purchase the scheduled property for value by a registered deed of sale from the said Mst. Zafree Begum.

Schedule

All that piece and parcel of land measuring 615 Sq yards or thereabout equivalent to 7.75 Kathas appertaining to CS Plot No 3 (three) Hal Plot No 4/6, Block-E of Mouza 258 Sari Begumpur, PS Mohammedpur, Dist Dhaka, Lalmatia Co-operative Housing Ltd, Govt Plan No 435/4/12 dated 23-2-1966 along with pucca structures thereon.

MD SAFIUDIN MALLIK
Advocate
Bangladesh Supreme Court
167, Distrillary Road
Gandaria, Dhaka-1204.

Source : AP



Delta Life Insurance Company granted educational allowance to the two children of the deceased Balayet Hossain in addition to his death claim amounting to Taka one lakh under the Wage Earners Welfare Trust of the Bureau of Manpower Employment & Training, recently. Shafat Ahmed Chaudhuri, MD & Actuary of the company handed over the cheque to the widow of Balayet Hossain.

Queen Elizabeth wins press complaint about wealth

LONDON, Apr 25: A complaint by Queen Elizabeth II scored a victory over a business magazine Wednesday when a press watchdog agreed that she's not all that rich. She's just a multi-millionaire, reports AP.

The queen was not amused in September when BusinessAge magazine reported her wealth as 2.2 billion pounds (3.3 billion dollars), a 1400 per cent increase in the 158 million pounds (237 million dollars) they listed as her wealth the year before.

So she made her first protest to the Press Complaints Commission. The self-regulatory body, which has no enforcement powers, gave BusinessAge a sharp rap on the knuckles, accusing it of presenting speculation as fact, and failing to check.

The magazine's annual list of Britain's richest people said the queen had jumped from 72nd place to number one, and included Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, the art treasures that decorate their walls, and royal jewelry

The question is: are we legitimately allowed to interpret what are extremely archaic structures of ownership which are obscured by excessive secrecy?" he said.

The last thing the queen needs now is to be seen as a Queen Croesus, rolling in money.

Swiss Bank Corp acquires Chase Manhattan base

BASEL, SWITZERLAND, Apr 25: Swiss Bank Corporation, one of Switzerland's three largest banking groups, has acquired a private customer base from Chase Manhattan Private Bank, the company announced Tuesday, reports AP.

The investment portfolio has mainly international assets, SBC said, and is worth one billion dollars.

The acquisition aims to "significantly enhance" the bank's North American operation.

"Asset management is one of the most profitable and stable of SBC's core businesses," the bank said. It intends to expand this sector especially outside of Switzerland through internal growth and acquisitions, it added.

The bank, based in Basel, earlier announced it has agreed in principle to acquire the international private banking business of Standard Chartered Bank.

Both deals are part of an effort by SBC to boost its asset management activities.

Poverty alleviation Dozens of Asia, Pacific states to work together

BANGKOK, Apr 25: Dozens of Asian and Pacific nations agreed to work together on the region's most pressing problems, including rural poverty, representatives from a United Nations body said yesterday, reports Reuter.

Developing countries say the criticism is a form of protectionism by governments worried about losing jobs to imports from lower-wage economies.

While acknowledging the need to improve social conditions, Nitasna objected to the Western practice of discussing the so-called "social clauses" on trade in different international forums.

They are significant, but they should be dealt with in a constructive manner. One cannot raise the same issue all over the place," she said.

The International Labour Organization, based in Geneva, is "the most relevant organization

to consider this issue," Nitasna said in a telephone interview. By raising the issue elsewhere, developed countries are distracting rather than helping ASEAN members improve their social and labour conditions, she said.

ASEAN comprises Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, the Philippines and Vietnam. Most of the countries depend heavily on international trade to propel their fast-growing economies.

Labour officials from the group, meeting in Bangkok ahead of the two-day ministers conference, reviewed ways of improving social conditions.

Among other steps, they will recommend setting up training programme and an information centre to share ideas about improving job safety and the environment, Nitasna said.

The Tokyo Stock Exchange's main index started higher on buying by pension funds and investment trusts, but a fall in futures prices in late morning led players to unwind long arbitrage positions.

Meanwhile, the Tokyo Stock Exchange's main index

pushed the dollar higher from its late level in New York overnight, but early trading was dominated by position adjustments ahead of Japan's annual "Golden Week" series of holidays.

In the afternoon, the dollar moved up after Japan's monetary authorities announced that they had concluded bilateral securities repurchase agreements with seven Asian nations or territories.

The agreements, aimed at ensuring continued stability in the foreign exchange market, would allow the central banks to borrow cash using US securities as collateral.

The Tokyo Stock Price Index of all issues listed on the first section was up 2.25 points, or 0.13 per cent, to 1,714.05. It had closed at 1,711.78 points on Wednesday, up 9.17 points, or 0.54 per cent.

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