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HYUNDAI

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Airfreight expert presents findings Horticulture exports from Bangladesh face problem

The country's exporters of horticulture products are facing serious problem due to lack of adequate space on Biman flights, an airfreight expert said yesterday, reports BSS.

Presenting his findings and recommendations at a briefing session on "The potentials of the Bangladesh airfreight industry to support horticulture exports" M A Alim said sometimes it so happened that three-fourths metric tons of horticulture products were off-loaded from the Biman flight due to lack of space.

Held in the conference room of the Export Promotion Bureau, the briefing session was the follow-up of the May 20 conference on "Horticulture export from Bangladesh", jointly organised by the Export Promotion Bureau and Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project.

Alim said the Bangladeshi exporters were very often compelled to send their products by other airlines by paying higher freight charges.

At times, he said, a portion of the off-loaded consignment was put in on sale in local markets at a lower price and the rest was just thrown away.

Alim said had there been storage facilities provided by Bangladesh Biman, off-loaded consignments could have been sent by the next connecting flight.

The airfreight industry expert recommended allocation of more cargo space for the carriage of horticulture products.

Alim said packaging materials meeting international standards were not produced in Bangladesh and so the exporters had to package export consignments in traditional packaging.

He suggested that the packaging materials should be produced and manufactured in Dhaka to ensure packaging of international standard.

Alim said Bangladesh currently exported over 15,000 metric tons of vegetables and fruits per year to cater to the needs of a large number of ethnic population of the South

Asian Sub-Continent residing in Middle East and the United Kingdom.

Referring to trolley crisis at the Zia International Airport he said that the packages were stacked three to four times due to an insufficient number of trolleys.

Alim recommended that the Biman should develop cold storage facilities in the interest of exporting a large quantum of horticulture products. He suggested also included increasing of more trolleys, sanctioning of loans on easy terms to the growers of horticulture products and exporters by the Krishi Bank, developing of export villages in the areas close to the capital Dhaka and maintaining of classification and gradation of horticulture products.

Presided over by Ronald P Black, country chief of International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC), the briefing session was addressed, among others, by Abdur Rahim Khan, Director of Export Promotion Bureau and Oqba, Director of Bangladesh Biman.

British Airways to acquire remaining shares of TAT Airlines

British Airways has confirmed its decision to exercise its option to purchase the remaining 50.1 per cent of the share capital of its French partner TAT European Airlines, says a press release.

British Airways acquired 49.9 per cent of TAT in January 1993 with an agreement to purchase the balance by April 1, 1997.

Bob Ayling, British Airways' Chief Executive, said: "French law now allows us to own 100 per cent of TAT. Accordingly we are acquiring the remaining shares in the airline as originally agreed."

"We intend now to take further steps to improve TAT's profitability and prepare the airline for the changes that are taking place in the French aviation market."

"We wish to express gratitude to Michel and Rodolphe Marchais for their contribution since British Airways first invested in TAT three years ago."

Marc Rochet, previously Chairman of AOM and Aeromatime, is to be appointed Chairman of TAT.

Goal of free trade area on track ASEAN ministers fail to resolve dispute over rice trade

JAKARTA, Sept 11: South-East Asian trade ministers failed Wednesday to resolve a dispute over opening up the rice trade in the region, but said the bigger goal of setting up a free trade area is firmly on track, reports AP.

The row in the Association of South-East Asian Nations is over Indonesia's refusal to lower tariffs on rice and sugar by a deadline of 2010. It aims to protect its market until 2020. The Philippines also has made the same demand for rice.

After two days of fruitless negotiations by their senior officials, the ASEAN trade ministers also failed to find an answer, said ASEAN Secretary-General Ajit Singh.

As an interim solution, Singh said, his office will provide more information on the rice trade, which could help solve the dispute.

A solution will be announced very soon after that information is received, said Indonesian Trade and Industry Minister Tunku Ardowo, refusing to elaborate.

Rice and sugar are the only

bones of contention in ASEAN's goal to create an ASEAN Free Trade Area by 2003.

By then, it wants more than 90 per cent of tariffs in the member nations — Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei and Vietnam — reduced to a maximum of five per cent.

Most members are even willing to advance the target date to 2000.

"The mood is very positive. Everybody wants to see progress made not only by the target date but even earlier," Singh said.

"We definitely are quite happy with the progress achieved," Singapore Trade Minister Yeo Cheow Tong said at a joint news conference. He said 88 per cent of products would be within the five per cent tariff range by 2000.

It is generally acknowledged that the rice and sugar row will have little impact on the progress of AFTA.

Indonesia, ASEAN's biggest member, and the Philippines say cheaper imports will wreck their domestic markets and

jeopardize the livelihoods of millions of farmers.

Philippine Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista said earlier that rice has always been a politically sensitive commodity in many countries.

"In fact it can bring down governments," he said.

"Just like in any other agro sector, too much opening will cause instability," he said, adding that the Philippines must be allowed to "liberalize at a reasonable pace for one commodity and one commodity alone."

Thailand, a major rice exporter, has been the most upset at the Indonesian and Philippine position.

But in line with ASEAN's policy of keeping a united front, the Thai minister said Wednesday he is satisfied with the interim solution.

ASEAN, with a total trade of 700 billion dollars and a population of 400 million, is the world's fourth largest trader after the United States.

EC allocates 75000 tonnes of wheat to Bangladesh

The European Community (EC) has allocated 75,000 tonnes of wheat, worth about Taka 85 crore to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

A shipment of 25,000 tonnes of wheat is expected to reach Chittagong Port by the end of this month while the remaining 50,000 tonnes are to be delivered in October, and November, an EC press release said here yesterday.

These quantities will be divided equally between the Vulnerable Groups Development (VGD) programme and conventional targeted rural-development programme and conventional targeted rural-development programmes.

These programmes are being implemented with the collaboration of ministries of food, relief and disaster management, women and children's affairs, local government, rural development and cooperatives, fisheries and livestock and land.

The world food programme has planned and will supervise and monitor the development activities which this allocation will support.

The EC delivered a total of 225,000 tonnes of wheat to Bangladesh during 1995-96 financial year, the press release added.



Syeda Zakeerun Bakht of Siemens, seen receiving certificate from Paul J Bailey, chief of ILO, Dhaka yesterday on completion of a training programme on industrial relations.

Training programme on industrial relations ends

By Staff Correspondent

A five-day national tripartite training programme on industrial relations for officials of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, employees and trade unions at a local hotel concluded yesterday.

The closing ceremony was addressed by Dauduzzaman Chowdhury, joint secretary, Ministry of Labour and Manpower and ILO Dhaka office Director Paul J Bailey.

The ILO director said that the information provided by the participants would be used to conduct this programme on a more practical level in the next round on training mediators scheduled for mid-level officials in early 1997.

He hoped that some of the participants would be able to use the training manual materials and training methodology to mount similar training programmes for their own constituents.

Earlier, the 5-day training programme was inaugurated by the Minister for Labour and Manpower M A Mannan.

During the training programme, elaborate discussions were held on different industry related issues like "the main elements of industrial relations", lessons from labour relations in other Asian countries, globalisation and industrial relations and "labour disputes and their settlement".

Paul J Bailey director ILO, A Sivanthiran, specialist on industrial relations from New Delhi, Aurot van Heerden, specialist from Geneva, Dauduzzaman Chowdhury, Ministry of Labour and Manpower and Mollah Golam Sarwar were the main resource persons at the programme.

5-yr plan taken up to construct 15 roads in 3 hill districts

BANDARBAN, Sept 12: A five-year plan was taken again in the fiscal 1995-96 to construct 15 roads in three hill districts which were left incomplete during the last 11 years, reports UNB.

An official source said schemes were taken first under a plan for the development of 554.68 km roads in the fiscal 1984-85 and the development works were progressed at the cost of Taka 267.38,28,000 upto the year 1994-95 but was left incomplete.

A five-year plan was taken further in a meeting under the chairmanship of Joint Secretary, Roads and Highways Division, in August 9, 1995 to complete the unfinished works at a cost of Taka 401.92,95,000 by the fiscal 1999-2000.

The 15 roads in three hill districts include Khagrachhari and Dighinala road, Ramu-Nalkhongchhari road, Ghagra-Chandragona road, Panchhari-Tamakparara road, Manikchhari-Luxmichhari road, Ranirhat-Kaukhali road and Aziznagar-Gazalla road.

Tk 11.63 cr remittance received in Aug

Bangladeshi nationals living abroad remitted Pound Sterling 2.90 lakh and US dollar 23.29 lakh through 12,897 foreign money orders in last month, reports UNB.

The exchange value of the money orders in local currency was over Taka 11.63 crore, which was paid to the payees and dependents of the remitters living in different parts of the country.



Mohammad Ali Asgar (R), Managing Director of Rupsha Electronics Limited, addressing a press conference at Hotel Purbani in the city yesterday. It was arranged on the eve of marketing electronics products of Shivaki Japan Home Appliance by Rupsha Electronics Ltd, its sole representative in Bangladesh. Dipankar Banerjee, Marketing Manager, Agiv Gulf Ltd (M) and Hamidul Hasan are also seen in the picture.

FBCCI keen to develop trade links with India

GUWAHATI, Sept 12: The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) has evinced keen interest in developing stronger trade links with India, specially in the cement and power sectors of the north-eastern region, reports PTI.

President of FBCCI, Salman F Rahman said here Tuesday, that the organisation was seriously looking at cement from limestone and was also keen to import power from coal, which was abundant in the region.

Trade in items like granite and bamboo, besides food items could be carried on by the two countries and with the political relations improving, the business community on both sides should take advantage of the situation.

Urging for a more reciprocal trade relation, Rahman said that the current trade imbalance should be corrected and Bangladesh should get free access to the Indian market as was the case of Indian goods in his country.

The trade imbalance, he said, was high with India's exports in Bangladesh worth over 1.2 billion dollars, while the export to this country was a meagre 72 million dollars annually.

Rahman, leading a 32-member delegation of the FBCCI, officials and journalists of the country on a visit to Meghalaya and Assam, emphasised the need for a direct air link be-

tween Dhaka and Guwahati.

He said that the visit was the first high level contact between the business communities of the two countries and provided a chance to know their respective areas of functioning.

The purpose of the visit was to identify the potential area where the two countries could cooperate with each other.

35000 acres of land remain uncultivated in Barguna

PATUAKHALI, Sept 12: About 35,000 acres of land in Barguna district remained uncultivated in the current season due to water-logging, reports UNB.

According to local farmers, they could not prepare seed-beds and produce aman crops as a vast tract of low land was under water for a long time.

Water Development Board and Agriculture officials admitted that aman cultivation in the district suffered set back due to water-logging.

Besides, acute scarcity of fodder has compelled the farmers to sell their cattlehead.

Farmers have urged the authorities to take immediate measures to remove water logging and enhance aman production.

Hyundai plans to relocate its Canada plant to India

SEOUL, Sept 12: South Korea's Hyundai Motor Co plans to relocate its idled auto plant in Canada to India, which it sees as a growing market, reports AP.

"We're in the final stage of resolving financial and other problems related to the relocation," a Hyundai official said Thursday, requesting anonymity.

Hyundai's auto plant in Bromont, Canada, built in 1989 with a rated annual capacity of 100,000 "Sonata" models, has been shut down since 1994 because of a lack of demand in North America.

After trying to sell it for two years, Hyundai has finally decided to relocate the 400 million dollars facility to India, where it plans to build a new auto plant, the official said.

The largest South Korean carmaker announced plans in June to build a 100,000-unit auto plant in India's Tamil Nadu province by the fall of 1998. Work on it is scheduled to begin in October.

Hyundai officials said their India plant will produce mainly subcompact "Accent" cars with an engine size of less than 1,500 cc.

Hyundai Motor is a subsidiary of the giant Hyundai group, South Korea's no. 2 conglomerate.

UCBL executives elected

The United Commercial Bank Ltd has elected Md Jahangir Alam Khan Chairman and Sultana Hashem Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the bank, says a press release.

Haji Younus Ahmed has elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the bank.

They were all elected at a meeting of the Board of Directors held at its office in the city on Tuesday.

Md Jahangir Alam Khan is a renowned industrialist.

He is the Chairman and Managing Director of JK Fabrics Ltd and JK Textiles Ltd.

Sultana Hashem is the Chairman of the Partex Group and a renowned industrialist.

Haji Younus Ahmed is a businessman of repute.

He is the Chairman and Managing Director of Younisco Group of Companies.

Janata Insurance executives

In a recent meeting of the Board of Directors of Janata Insurance Company Limited Aziz Al-Kaiser and Gaurun Nahar were unanimously elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Board of Directors, while Md Nazrul Islam Khan was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of Janata Insurance Co Ltd, says a press release.

Chairman Aziz Al-Kaiser is an industrial entrepreneur and the Managing Director of Danish Condensed Milk (BD) Limited and Deputy Managing Director of Partex Group of Industries. He is also the 1st Vice President of Lions Club of Dhaka Oriental and Member of Dhaka Club and Gulshan Club.

Vice-Chairman Gaurun Nahar, wife of late Humayun Zahar, is the Vice Principal of Dhaka Mahila College. She is also the Managing Director of Ananta Properties Ltd and Bimpey Ltd and associated with various philanthropic organizations.

Executive Committee Chairman Md Nazrul Islam Khan did his MSS in Economics from Chittagong University. Besides a Director of M/s J K Fabrics and J K Textile Mills Ltd he is also the proprietor of M/s Taysier Enterprise.

WTO urged to eye dairy, sugar accords

GENEVA, Sept 12: A global think-tank yesterday urged member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to move towards formal agreements bringing the highly-protected dairy and sugar industries under free trading rules, reports Reuter.

At the same time, European chemical industry chiefs called for the WTO's first ministerial meeting in Singapore in December to keep up the pace of trade liberalisation by adopting clear initiatives like standardisation of customs procedures.

The calls were issued at separate news conferences as the 21-month-old trade body entered the final lap of a debate on what should be on the agenda for the December gathering, which could lead to the launch of a new global trade round.

Presenting separate papers on the world dairy and sugar trade, the Washington-based International Policy Council on agriculture, food and trade (IPC) said reform in both areas was vital before it was forced on the two sectors.

The sugar market is riddled with distortions because of protection, including export subsidies and quotas, and a more rational and liberalised system would bring huge benefit to the world economy," said IPC sugar specialist Sir Michael Franklin.



Agence France Presse (AFP) Chairman and Managing Director, Jean Miot (L), and Michael Bloomberg, President and Founder of Bloomberg, pose for photographers in front of the Palais Brongniart in Paris on Wednesday. AFP joined forces with Bloomberg, the American multimedia company and supplier of financial news, to launch an innovative French-language television channel.



A K M Jahangir Alam DHL Sales Executive receiving a certificate from the chief guest, Anselm A Quiah, Managing Director, Homebound Group after completion of "Focus on yes" training conducted by Showket Hossain, Country Sales & Marketing Manager. Desmond Quiah, DHL Country Manager spoke at the concluding ceremony as a special guest and Md Ashrafuzzman, H R Manager was also present on the occasion.