

Wall-Mounted Split Air Conditioner

SANYO

Transfin Trading Limited

Price: Tk. 80,000

Sub-Distributor in Bangladesh

The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1996

HYUNDAI

CARS THAT MAKE SENSE

Dhaka to receive \$7m loan from Kuwait

Kuwait will provide Bangladesh with seven million Kuwaiti dinar equivalent to 23 million US dollar or over Tk 9.2 crore as loan for a road project, reports UNB.

An agreement to this effect was signed here yesterday between the government of Bangladesh and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED).

Dr AKM Mashur Rahman, Secretary, Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance, signed the agreement on behalf of the government while Deputy Director General of KFAED Hesham Al-Waqayyan signed for the other side.

The loan will be utilised for the implementation of Sylhet-Tamabil-Jalong road-reconstruction project under which 61-kilometre road will be upgraded to national highway standard, an official release said.

Kibria informs IMF of steps to push economy

The Finance Minister has apprised the visiting IMF Executive Director of various measures undertaken by the government to give a nudge to the national economy, reports UNB.

The International Monetary Fund ED, Sivaraman, called on Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria at his Secretariat office Sunday when the discussion was held.

They discussed matters of mutual interest during the meeting, said an official release.

Sivaraman appreciated the measures taken by the government in the economic fields and assured full support of his organisation.

Both his minister and the executive director expressed the hope that cooperation between Bangladesh and the IMF would further strengthen in future.

Dr R Kannan, Adviser of IMF, was present on the occasion.

External trade statistics out

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics has published the 'External Trade Statistics, 1992-93', says UNB.

The publication contains detailed statistics of country-wise and commodity-wise export import related trade, said an official handout on Sunday.

Progress of dev projects of Information ministry reviewed

A meeting held at the conference room of the Ministry of Information has reviewed progress of 24 proposed and under-implementation projects, reports BSS.

The meeting was presided over by State Minister for Information Professor Abu Sayeed on Sunday.

The meeting was informed that Taka 62.49 crore had been earmarked in the current year's Annual Development (ADP) programme for materialising these projects.

The State Minister expressed his dissatisfaction at the slow pace of implementation in the past. He said the present government was determined to implement the development projects speedily. He said negligence would not be acceptable in the implementation process of the projects.

He directed the concerned project directors to identify the obstacles on the way of implementing the projects and take steps to remove them. He also asked them to finish their task within the stipulated time.

Information Secretary Kazi Raquibuddin Ahmed and concerned officials attended the meeting.

Workshop on 'river bank protection' in Bogra from Thursday

A three-day launching workshop on 'river bank protection project' of Bangladesh Water Development Board will begin at Rural Development Academy in Bogra from October 24, says a press release.

Minister for Water Resources Abdur Razzaq will inaugurate the workshop as chief guest.

Minister for Post & Telecommunications Mohammad Nasim and Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Dr. ATM Shamsul Huda, will attend the function as special guests while Chief of World Bank Mission, Pierre Landell Mills will attend the workshop as guest of honour.

The workshop will be presided over by the Chairman of Bangladesh Water Development Board MA Salam.

The workshop jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Water Resources and World Bank, the workshop is being organised by Bangladesh Water Development Board.

Export earnings rise by 12 pc in July-Aug

Country's export earnings during the first two months of the current fiscal year rose by 11.84 per cent to Tk 3220.28 crore, reports UNB.

The export earnings were Tk 2879.34 crore in the same period (July-August) of previous year, according to the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

To the total earnings, raw jute and jute goods contributed Tk 261.84 crore or 8.13 per cent while non-jute items earned Tk 2958.44 crore or 91.87 per cent.

Manufactured commodities fetched Tk 2822.47 crore or 87.65 per cent while primary commodities earned Tk 397.81 crore or 12.35 per cent.

However, according to the MCCI monitoring, the export performance of some major items was not up to the mark.

Export receipts from ready-made garments during the two months rose by 7.10 per cent to Tk 1695.10 crore from Tk 1582.69 crore in the same period of previous fiscal.

Earnings from readymade garments accounted for 52.64 per cent of the total export turnover.

Export earnings from knitwear during the first two months rose by 54.96 per cent to Tk 537.17 crore. Earnings from knitwear accounted for 16.68 per cent of the total.

Export receipts from frozen

food which includes shrimps and fish fell by 4 per cent to Tk 278.25 crore from Tk 289.42 crore in the same months of 1995-96. Its share in the total

FBCCI expresses concern over sugar price hike

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) has expressed its concern over the price hike of an essential item like sugar which affects the common consumers, reports BSS.

The FBCCI in a press release said, the present import price of sugar from Brazil, Malaysia and India does not justify the retail price of sugar at Taka 34 to Taka 36 per kg. It is of the opinion that the persistent high price of sugar is due to distribution and import policy of sugar.

Presently, the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) or Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC) is authorised to import sugar, while the BSFIC controls all the sugar mills in the country and distribution of sugar as well as the sugar mills in the public sector are incurring huge loss year after year, FBCCI said.

Our annual requirement of sugar is 3.6 lakh mt approximately while we produce about 2.00 lakh mt.

export proceeds was 8.99 per cent.

During July-August in the current year, earnings from jute goods amounted to Tk 213.21 crore compared to Tk 198.12 crore in the same period of previous fiscal, showing a growth of 7.62 per cent. Earnings from the item accounted for 6.62 per cent of the total.

Earnings from leather fell by 9.57 per cent to Tk 127.50 crore from Tk 141 crore of the same months of last year. Earnings from leather accounted for 3.96 per cent of the total export proceeds.

Chemical products' earnings also decreased by 24.51 per cent to Tk 65.55 crore from Tk 86.83 crore. It accounted for 2.04 per cent of the total export earnings.

Raw jute fetched Tk 48.62 crore against Tk 52.11 crore in the same months of 1995-96, down by 6.70 per cent. Earnings from the raw jute accounted for 1.15 per cent of the total.

Tea earnings rose by 2.76 per cent to Tk 30.14 crore from Tk 29.33 crore. Export proceeds from tea accounted for 0.94 per cent of the total export earnings.

Earnings from handicrafts during the months fell by 19.66 per cent to Tk 4.66 crore from Tk 5.80 crore in the same period of previous year. This accounted for 0.14 per cent of the total export earnings.



A colourful week-long Bangladesh Food Festival organised by Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel as part of its Tourism Month programme was inaugurated Sunday by Zillur Rahman, Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

Yunus at US symposium on food security Cheap credit for the poor key to rooting out poverty



Muhammad Yunus

DES MOINES, Iowa, Oct 21: Bangladesh economist Muhammad Yunus, who founded a highly successful 'bank of the poor', told international food experts here yesterday that

cheap credit for the poor was the key to rooting out poverty and thereby eliminating hunger worldwide, reports AFP.

Addressing a symposium on 'Food Security: Solutions for the 21st Century', Yunus said his Grameen Bank was now a model duplicated in 56 countries, including Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and even the United States.

The bank's mission is to offer small, non-collateral loans to rural people. Although the average loan is less than 100 dollars, the money almost always provides recipients with a way to increase their incomes.

Borrowers use the loan to plant a crop, buy a cow or chickens or establish a small business.

Yunus, who was awarded the 1994 World Food Prize - dubbed the Nobel Prize for agriculture

— for his credit-for-the poor scheme, said a microcredit summit would be held in Washington next February with the goal of providing cheap credit to 100 million poor people, particularly rural women, by 2006.

Currently seven billion in outstanding loans ranging each between 35 and 150 dollars have been extended to 13 million poor people and the repayment rate is 97 per cent, said World Bank Vice President Ismail Serageldin.

Yunus said that in Bangladesh nearly 50 per cent of those who have used his credit scheme have been able to pull themselves out of poverty.

"I am usually introduced as managing director of the bank of the poor. My dream is to become known as managing director of the bank of the former poor," he added.

16-member British trade team due on Friday

By Staff Correspondent

A 16-member British Trade Mission is expected to arrive in Dhaka Friday on a week-long visit to explore business opportunities between Bangladesh and the UK.

The delegation that includes nine Non-Residential Bangladeshis (NRBs) is led by Ian Jameson, a British businessman with interest in textiles, says a British High Commission press release.

During the visit they will meet key business leaders and government officials in Dhaka and Chittagong. They will also attend a seminar scheduled to be held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on October 27.

This is the first British trade mission to be visiting Bangladesh after the formation of the Awami League government and third in the last three years.

The seminar divided into two 90-minute workshops will feature two British experts who will advise on how Bangladeshi industries can attain and maintain international competitiveness in the world market.

At the seminar, Nigel Wright of the British Standards Institute will speak about how firms can reach world-class standards by attaining ISO 9000.

while Professor Edward Newton, a teacher of fashion and textiles and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Design at Nottingham Trent University will make a presentation on the textile manufacturing process.

It is expected that the visit will strengthen the long historic business link between the two countries, the press release said.

The other members of the delegation are, Trevor Pearson of Hall & Boyden Ltd, Peter Yewell and Dr Fazal Mahmud of Newcom Export and Import Ltd, Fazul Hoque of Concord Video Productions, Quamrul Hassan of Banex Limited, Muquim Ahmed, Milfa Group, Jasim Shah of Hope UK, Haider Naqvi of Sterling Multi Technologies Ltd, Tommy Miah of GOA 1510 Ltd, Azad Ali of White Cliffs International Trading Co, Bajloor Rashid of Curry Garden, John Hales of Vernon Cooper Ltd, Peter Duncan of GFF, M A Rahim of BCC Ltd, Neil Semple and Malcolm A Sewell as mission secretaries.

A number of British companies in Bangladesh have substantially increased their investments in recent years.

British exports in the areas of power generation equipment,

industrial plant and machinery, raw materials, chemicals, transport equipment, paper and paper board have also shown a steady growth.

Some recent major British success stories in Bangladesh include, Cairn Energy signing agreements with Petrobangla for exploration of oil and gas fields and Midlands Power International signing memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources for private power generation projects.

Trade between the two countries grew rapidly and Bangladesh enjoys a trade surplus with Britain. In the first six months of this year, British exports to Bangladesh totalled over Tk 224 crore while Bangladesh's exports to Britain amounted to about Tk 856 crore.

Britain has one of the largest foreign investor presences in Bangladesh with more than 45 companies active in the market. The UK is also Bangladesh's third largest export market, mainly for readymade garments.

Bangladesh received Tk 364 crore as the second largest recipient of British bilateral aid in the year 1994-95.

Delhi urged to phase out agri subsidies WB to scrutinise all its projects in India

NEW DELHI, Oct 21: The World Bank will scrutinise all its projects in India over the next six months to ensure that the bank resources are being utilised properly, World Bank President James Wolfensohn said Sunday, reports AP.

India's utilisation of World Bank assistance is below average, said Wolfensohn at a press conference in New Delhi after a week-long visit to India. He didn't offer precise figures.

We're going to take a look at every single programme we have been operating in this country," he said.

The review would seek to ensure rigorous management control over bank programme, and try to see why much of the money the bank commits to the country is not used.

The World Bank's 1996 annual report shows the bank had undisbursed loan commitments of 9.43 billion dollars at the start of the fiscal year in April.

Wolfensohn said possible explanations for the low utilisation could be high levels of bureaucracy in India and at the World Bank. Other factors included varying speeds of implementation by state governments, the need for Indian borrowers to supply some of their own money and a possible lack of continuing interest in some older projects.

The bank will also deal swiftly with any sign of corruption with its programme, Wolfensohn said. He described corruption as the 'single most inhibiting factor in terms of development.'

"If there is ever any evidence of corruption on our projects, we will close them," he said. AFP says: World Bank President James Wolfensohn urged India to phase out agricultural subsidies in order to be internationally competitive and to end widespread child labour, reports AFP.

The bank chief also told a news conference here that corruption would be fought with a heavy hand for the first time. "If a bank-aided project is tainted with corruption, then we will kill it," he said. "It is a major issue in Africa. If leaders are going to park World Bank

funds in Swiss banks ... then that is the end of aid to that country."

"If India has to be competitive, it should phase out the subsidies," he said. "If you want to be in the international market, you may have to do it."

He said the World Bank was not singling out India on this issue.

Wolfensohn said 80 per cent of Indian farmers were marginal farmers and reforms in the agricultural sector, which employs millions, were a must to end endemic poverty.

The Indian government has in the past refused to cut subsidies in agriculture, while agree-

ing to many other proposals of the World Bank aimed at opening up the economy.

Wolfensohn, who ended today a seven-day visit to the country aimed at studying the progress of the reforms launched five years ago, also demanded a complete eradication of child labour in India.

"I hope efforts will be made to implement the policy of preventing child labour in India," he added. Parliament Speaker Purno Sangma "convinced me that the issue of child labour was high on the government agenda."

India is considered to be one of the largest employers of children in a variety of industries. The number of child workers is estimated by independent sources at between 20 to 50 million most work for a pittance.

Wolfensohn admitted that the World Bank at times pressed countries 'too hard to pursue certain programmes and had even been aggressive,' but denied it served the interests of the United States.

Spokesmen in many developing countries have accused the bank of targeting child labour, corruption and subsidies at the behest of Western nations. Those spokesmen say the Western countries were replete with many evils during their own industrialisation process but are cracking down on them now in order to keep the developing countries perpetually backward.

Moreover, leftists and environmentalists have slammed the bank for funding ecologically hazardous projects which would favour Western donor nations.

"We are an independent organisation and I do not report to the US Treasury," Wolfensohn said. "Whatever similarity in policies ... the World Bank shares with the United States government is only coincidental."

Wolfensohn pledged to protect the flow of soft loans from the bank affiliate, the International Development Association (IDA) to India at current levels, but expressed concern at the dwindling contributions from donor nations.

Air India's new manager for Bangladesh



D Kishore

D Kishore has taken over charge of Air India, Dhaka, as Manager-Bangladesh, says a press release.

He joined Air India in the year 1978.

He was the Customer Relations Manager in Germany and Austria before coming to Bangladesh.

Rotarians urged to help develop skilled manpower

Prof Ahmedullah Mia, Director, Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP), at a weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Jahangirnagar, Dhaka held at Officer's Club, urged the Rotarians to come forward to support the development of skilled manpower, says a press release.

Rotarians Ashraf Rahim, Rezaul Karim, Shafiqur Rahman and Col Sikander Mia took part in the discussion meeting while Rotarian M Nurul Amin presided over the meeting held recently.

Bangkok keen to help Dhaka boost shrimp culture

Thailand has shown interest to assist Bangladesh in shrimp culture development by establishing shrimp hatchery and feed mills, reports UNB.

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand said this when State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy called on him at his Bangkok office yesterday, according to a message received here.

The state minister, now on a visit to Southeast Asian countries, is leading a four-member delegation from the Department of Fisheries and the Fisheries Research Institute.

Prior to his trip to Thailand, Satish also visited Malaysia and the Philippines to see for himself the fisheries planning and development activities in those countries.

137.15 kgs of gold deposited in BB

By Staff Correspondent

The smuggled gold seized by the customs authorities at the Zia International Airport last month was deposited in the Bangladesh Bank (BB).

The BB in a statement yesterday said that a total of 1,175 gold bars weighing 137.15 kgs were deposited by the customs.

The value of the deposited gold is more than Tk 7.10 crore, based on the international market rate.

BB treasury bills auctioned

The 26th auction of the 90-Day Treasury Bill and the 17th auction of the 30-Day and 180-Day Treasury Bills were held on yesterday, says a press release.

22 bids for a total of Taka 192.80 crore 5 bids for a total Taka 126 crore and bid for Taka 10 crore were offered respectively against the 30-Day, 90-Day and 180-Day Bills.

Of these, 5 bids for a total of Taka 62 crore were accepted against the 30-Day Bill.

No bids were accepted against the 90-Day and 180-Day Bills.

The weighted average price against the 30-Day Bill was Taka 99.53 per 100 Taka.

The corresponding yield is 5.68 per cent per annum.

Induction course for AB Bank officers ends

A month-long induction course for the probationary officers of Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd. (ABBL) was concluded yesterday, says a press release.

Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) conducted the course. It stressed on various operational areas of general banking, laws and practices, banker-customer relationship, specific banking legislation, deposit banking, remittance of fund, deployment of bank fund, foreign exchange etc.

Twenty four probationary officers took part in the training course.

Presiding over the concluding function, A H M Nurul Islam Chowdhury, Director General of BIBM, spoke of the importance of training and urged the trainees to practise and properly utilise the skills and knowledge acquired during their training in their respective fields.

Filipino GDP to grow 7 pc this year: Ramos

MANILA, Oct 21: Philippine President Fidel Ramos forecast Monday the country's gross national product (GDP) would grow 7.1 per cent year-on-year in 1996, reports AFP.

The latest reports indicate that economic growth this year is likely to hit 7.1 per cent, up from 5.5 per cent last year and 5.1 per cent the year before, Ramos said.

Economists have predicted 6.5 to 7.5 per cent annual growth in the Philippines' GDP, which climbed 7.06 per cent year-on-year in the first half of 1996.

Ramos attributed the growth forecast to 'efforts at rebuilding relations with ... three major dissident groups,' referring to the country's Muslims, communists and former military rebels.

There is now a greater sense of political stability and a belief among the business community and the people themselves that long-term development may finally be at hand.

Ramos last month signed a peace pact with the main Muslim rebel group, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), ending its 24-year armed struggle for a Muslim homeland.

The MNLF fight for a homeland in parts of the main southern island of Mindanao and nearby islands killed more than 120,000 people, according to the government.

Malaysia for economic aid to Myanmar

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 21: Malaysia believes Myanmar military junta will speed up democratic reforms if other countries help boost its economy and living standards, Malaysian Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said in remarks published today, reports AFP.

Democracy could be difficult for a country when there was widespread poverty and unemployment, Abdullah told Malaysian journalists on his arrival in Yangon late Sunday, his first visit to Myanmar.

"We believe that through ASEAN, we will be able to work with Myanmar and expedite its economic growth," Abdullah was quoted as saying in The Star English-language daily.

"We believe in the 'prosper the neighbour' policy which helps the region as a whole," said Abdullah, who had trav-

elled to Myanmar for a two-day visit after attending the second meeting of the Malaysia-Vietnam joint commission in Hanoi.

Abdullah also defended the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' 'constructive engagement' policy which has been criticised by several western countries.

They have grown impatient with ASEAN's policy on Myanmar and have prodded the grouping to delay Yangon's membership and put more pressure on the government there to respect human rights and democracy.

However, Abdullah, who is the current Chairman of the ASEAN standing committee which sets agendas for group meetings, said the seven-member grouping could 'expedite reforms by engaging Myanmar and working with them.'

Exports of Toyota, Nissan rise

TOKYO, Oct 21: Japan's two biggest car makers, Toyota Motor Corp and Nissan Motor Co Ltd said Friday they had enjoyed gains in sales and exports in September, reports AFP.

Toyota said in a statement that domestic auto sales totalled 183,784 units, up 3.3 per cent from a year earlier. Sales of passenger cars rose 5.4 per cent to 127,571, but sales of commercial vehicles eased 1.2 per cent to 56,213.

Its exports rose 29.1 per cent from a year earlier to 115,614. Shipments of cars jumped 36.3 per cent to 86,989 and exports of trucks and buses were up 11.3 per cent to 28,625.

Toyota's domestic production in the month rose 18.6 per cent year-on-year to 302,621, with car output up 21.2 per cent to 249,825 and production of trucks and buses up 7.9 per cent to 52,796.

Overseas production rose 7.0 per cent year-on-year to 114,645.



Phoenix Leasing Company Ltd signed a lease agreement with M/S Haq's Bay for lease finance of Taka 30 million for marketing of Dong Feng brand trucks of China fitted with world famous Cummins Engine of USA. The agreement was signed by A Quadir Chaudhury, Managing Director of Phoenix Leasing Company Ltd and Abdul Haque, Proprietor of M/S Haq's Bay on behalf of their respective organisations at a simple ceremony held at the head office of Phoenix Leasing Company Ltd yesterday. Deen Mohammad, Chairman, Phoenix Leasing Company Ltd Kazi Emdadul Haque, Asstt. Vice President and other senior officials were also present.