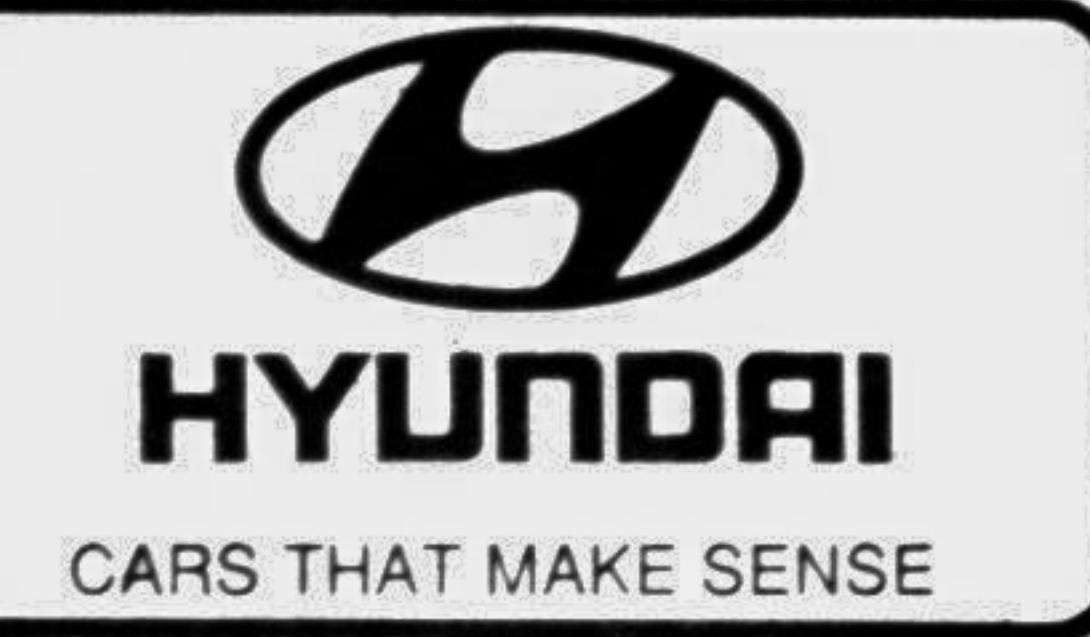




# The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1997



Lanka announces final amnesty to tax evaders

COLOMBO, Feb 14: The Sri Lanka government Thursday announced a "final" six-month amnesty to tax evaders to bring out their undisclosed cash held within the country or abroad, reports AFP.

"No questions will be asked (about) the source of funds and the declarant will be pardoned for past tax evasion and non-compliance with statutory obligations," the government said in a statement.

It said black money held abroad will have to be brought into the country and deposited in a special account with the government's national savings bank and withdrawals for two years will be restricted.

The money can be taken out of the accounts in the first two years only for specified investments in agriculture, industry or infrastructure projects, the statement said.

It did not give an estimate for the amount of black money in the country but said the government's offer of the amnesty was designed to flush out hidden money and help create jobs with it.

At the end of the amnesty, the government will crack down hard against tax dodgers and those who were illegally holding money abroad, the government said.

## Dollar rises against yen

TOKYO, Feb 14: The US dollar rose against the yen on Friday, reports AP.

In late afternoon the dollar was trading at 124.64, up 0.54 yen from late Thursday in Tokyo and also above its late New York overnight rate of 124.35 yen. It ranged between 124.26 yen and 124.82 yen in Friday's trading.

Traders said the dollar advanced on buying by Japanese banks and institutional investors as the growing US economy and continued rallies on Wall Street combined to attract yen-sellers.

The market wants to test the G-7 statement to see whether there will be action or not," said Shinji Imanishi, chief dealer at Sumitomo Trust and Banking.

Finance officials of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, meeting in Berlin last Saturday, agreed that the dollar's surge has gone far enough. They warned against excessive volatility in exchange rates.

The benchmark No. 182 10-year Japanese government bond closed at 104.37 yen, down from Thursday's 104.48 yen close.

Malaysia to sign 'open skies' pact with US

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 14: Malaysia said Friday it will sign an "open skies" agreement with the United States in May, lifting restrictions on flights by each other's airlines between the two countries, reports AP.

Malaysian Airlines, whose US-bound flights are currently limited to Los Angeles, would be allowed to fly to New York, Washington or other cities, said Transport Minister Ling Liang Sik.

US carriers could fly to more Malaysian destinations and compete in the busy Kuala Lumpur-Singapore corridor, Ling said, according to the Bernama news agency. Singapore already has signed an "open skies" agreement with the United States.

The agreement is intended to increase competition and force down prices.

The Malaysian carrier also would be allowed to sell tickets on behalf of US airlines, Ling said in Ipoh, 90 miles (150 kilometres) north of the Malaysian capital.

There was a day when bare necessities of human life used to be met by productions made by crude methods. Such productions were community-based but at domestic levels. The tools of production were manually manoeuvred and nobody bothered about the quality of the end product. There was no notable variation even in the taste of the consumers.

Sooner or later mechanical devices began replacing manual ones. The innovative human being devoted more time on creative thinking and by the end of the seventeenth century during the industrial revolution, machines began replacing men from some of the chores of production. The aspect of efficiency in the industrial world was invariably tied to the output by increased human labour. The advent of machine was one hand, the inevitable product of innovative ideas of men and on the other, had set in a state of competition for marketing larger volume of production. In consequence whereof, the consumers too stood face to face with a number of variables and for exercising wider options.

Initially, the machines saved human labour to some extent but they could not ensure product-sophistication which came gradually from the beginning of the 18th century. Though not compatible because of their respective independent identities, the eventual increased production with the aid of better and better machines.

The mass consumption base was thus, by and large, established as a result of improved

distribution techniques whipping up customer demand. Simultaneously, with growing competition the businessmen started realizing that they would not be able to sustain themselves for long or go for expansion if customer complaints remained unresolved.

Parallel to the phenomenon above, the rapid mechanization created pressures on the methods of production as well so as to ensure retention of a minimum variation in quality. Numerous ancillary industry networks also faced elimination if they failed to strictly adhere to the specifications of the OE plants. Mass production during the second half of 19th century and early 20th century, clearly indicated that it was compatible only with mass consumption. The latter in turn, was considered to be unsustainable without caring for its built quality of the products. It was realized by all those involved in production and distribution that the element of quality was the major catalyst to integrate the interests of both the producer and consumer on an even keel.

The sequence of events led to making both quantitative and qualitative market study with a specific objective of achieving the lowest possible cost level for production and sales.

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satisfaction of the customer.

Following the second World War a significant change in the scale and diversity of industry started taking place rapidly. The process of production was segmented in such a manner that no body wielded control on the end product other than on his/her own assigned part of responsibility. Such integration of the process necessitated detailing inspectors at different work locales who used to examine the work and segregate good from bad for ultimate rectification. This was an inseparable part of the whole process of industry and was naturally not cost effective.

Industrial engineers and economists have recently realized that the process to produce, inspect, accept, reject or rectify that formed the basis of any industry till recently could be summarily changed or avoided. But how? After a thorough examination of the prospects they concluded that a consistent quality at optimal cost could be most potent answer to the problem. They were fully convinced that for the desired and consistent quality it would be necessary to produce it right the first time and every time without any distortion in

the process of replication. The concept of internal customers emanated at this stage wherefrom the operators assumed full responsibility to produce the exact quality goods for meeting customers' satisfaction. And eventually, the rigmarole of sorting out good from bad would be eliminated.

Still then, things could not be so easy as imagined. Starting technological advances and changes in rapidity parallel to the expansion in the size and dimension of the industry after the 2nd World War, the manufacturing operations also became more complex and bewildering practically. This was the time when the entrepreneurs of industries in the Western world, chiefly in the United States of America began loudly feeling the urgent necessity of a standardized quality system. An immediate attempt in the United States saw the emergence of a quality system standard and an inspection system. They were codified as MIL-Q-9858 and MIL-I-45208 respectively which being military standards for all practical purposes, formed the basis for a three standards series designed for use by NATO. They were designated as Allied Qual-

ity Assurance Publications — Codified as AOAP 1,4 & 9.

Great Britain followed suit.

Soon they developed the equivalent Defence Standard like inspection system standards (DEF STAN 05-21), manufacture, inspection and test standards (DEF STAN 05-24) and final inspection standards (DEF STAN 05-29) — all these corresponding to US standards AQAP-1, AQAP-4 and AQAP-9 respectively. The benefits eventually encouraged the proponents in Britain to redesignate them as BS-5750 (Pt I,II & III) in 1979 for use in industry beside defence.

The importance of a standardized quality system needs hardly any over emphasis. However, its global perspective was not so very palpable till late seventies even though the British standards made a remarkable breakthrough in the Indian sub-continent and many of the Commonwealth countries.

Taking cue from the British standards (which not only met the needs of the United Kingdom but also those of other countries) the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Geneva came up with a quality system standards coded as ISO-9000 series standards. In the series there are five specific areas those are taken care of. They are:

In the recently concluded

meeting in Singapore of a few thousand representatives of 182 countries, organised under the aegis of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) one of the major resolutions was for a "World Class Uniform Quality Standard". It was unanimously agreed that by the first decade of the 21st century all companies of the world involved in export-import trade or who shall enter into joint ventures with foreign collaborators must adopt ISO-9000 quality standard norm forthwith or else their chances of survival will be at stake.

ISO-9000 certification will automatically ensure product acceptance from the point of quality throughout the world among the competitors. Besides incorporation of ISO-9000 standard to their system will augment a company's capability at optimising its entire gamut of production, procurement, distribution, sales and marketing, accounts, quest for searching and other related activities at reduced cost with higher profit. It is indeed an effective and important tool for total quality management recognised universally and having direct relevance to its being a manufacturing in industry or a service organisation or even a trading and commercial establishment. In fact, it helps establishing linkage with the quality needs of the customers and for evoking mutual confidence.

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