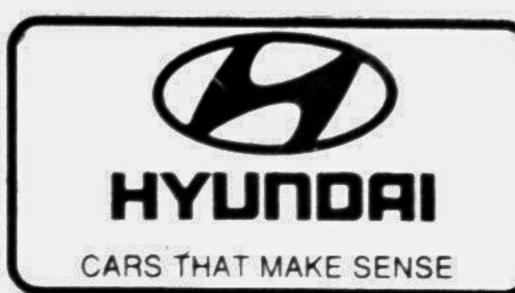
Telephone 815306-09, 819625-29, Fax 813062

# The Baily Star DISINFSS



### Focus on consumer credit-1

# Banks tapping new opportunity, middle-class finding comfort

By Sharier Khan and Inam Ahmed

Consumer credit, an unexplored area for the country's banking sector, is drawing greater attention by the banks in their lending programmes and increasing interest from the middle-class consumers trying to add some little comforts in their life.

Nearly Tk 200 crore have been disbursed by six local and foreign banks under different consumer credit schemes during the last five years catering to some 50,000 clients in the country.

Their credit programmes for consumer goods ranging from microwave oven to cars have been enthusiastically welcomed by the country's growing middle class, with little cash to spare for the luxuries.

Fueled by a reform-driven growth in the nineties, with import liberalisations and rising exports. Bangladesh's middle-class developed its appetite for the hitherto unknown luxuries like microwave oven, washing machines, colour TVs. VCRs, music systems, cameras, videos, cellular phones, computers, cookers, carpets, sofas

Housewives today prefer a

washing machine, instead of hiring a maid for tk 500-700, to pay the money instead to a bank or company offering hire purchase, a marketing execu-

"Dad was 40 plus when he had his first car. But I am in my twenties. I didn't want to wait to reach forties to drive my own car. So the banks are the best friend for me to provide my dream car to drive in affordable installments", a multi-national company executive says.

"Such credit options should have been there long ago," says Taufiq Elahi, a young designer in an advertising firm, "I had been desperately looking for easy loans to buy a computer for long. I came to know about such credits a year ago or so and now I own a computer back at my

"These schemes are a tremendous boost for both the consumers and the local electronics manufacturers says businessman Afzal Hossain who purchased a car, a TV and a VCR under such credit schemes," If the schemes could be popularised by a greater extent, these could clearly help

Consumers feel that the cost of the everyday-electronics items, which are now an essential part of a speedy city life remains much higher than that

of any other country. "For instance, a labourer in Malaysia can afford a 14 inch colour TV which costs his two months minimum wage. A labourer in Bangladesh will have to spend his 14 months salary for the same item," observes businessman Imran Alam. "That is why," says Imran,

"banks should help our people purchase these electronics. The more they would buy the more the electronics companies would be able to cut their costs and in the long run our electronics market would be accessible for the common men." Although the clientele is

mostly urban based, this credit

market is expanding rapidly

because of its success in terms

of recovery, usually in the range of 95 to 99 per cent, bankers The consumer credit scheme was first introduced by Islami Bank in January, 1993, and later other banks including ANZ Grindlays, Prime Bank,

Uttara Bank, Prime Bank,

South East Bank and Social In-

vestment Bank. Islami Bank has so far disbursed Tk 96 crores under consumer credit schemes among some 35,000 clients.

ANZ Gridlays has disbursed Tk 90 crores among some 6000 clients under its planz and miscellaneous schemes since June

Since the Prime Bank introduced consumer credit schemes from April 1995, some 4150 clients were given Tk 18 crore credit till December last year.

The Social Investment Bank

The Uttara Bank, another

provided Tk three crore among some 982 clients since last year. South East Bank disbursed Tk two crore since starting its consumer credit in November, 1995 among some 250 clients.

new comer in the consumer credit field, has disbursed Tk 2.34 crore in three months since starting the programme in October, 1996. Till January it had attracted some 1128 clients, mostly middle class. Uttara's annual target of Tk five crore as consumer credit now looks easily assailable as the scheme has created quite a ripple among its account holders.

### UK trade fair ends on good note

By Rafiq Hasan

The UK Trade Fair '97 at Hotel Sheraton drew attention of the city dwellers where about two dozens of British Multinational companies have set up attractive stalls to sell and display their products.

Beside computers, consumer goods and electronics items, a number of British Multinational companies working in the country since long have put some heavy machinery on display.

BOC Bangladesh Ltd. a famous UK based multinational company, has set up 4 stalls to demonstrate their different machinery and equipment relating to gas, oxygen and medic-

inal use. "As we are already in the mind of the local people for quite some time, we have come here to let the people know what we are doing," said Javed Islam, a representative of the com-

At his stall, set up in the middle of the fair premise. Javed was demonstrating a gas based machine which can produce dry ice within a few minutes. The product is mainly used for preserving food items.

"People who had little knowledge about various products and goods made by British companies acquired a lot of information through this fair." said another representative of a participating company.

Mir Trading Company, a local representative of British "Petbow", decorated its stall with power generating ma-

The company has already set up more than 300 generators for producing electricity at different industrial units including garments, textile and leather factories.

James Finlay Plc, a noted tea producer having 100 years of experience in tea business. was offering free cup of tea to the visitors.

The other reputed British companies which participated in the first UK trade fair in the country were Lever Brothers. British Petroleum, BTS Computer UK Ltd, Mackie International Ltd. Massey-Ferguson. Mott Mac Donald, Crown Agents Duncan Brothers, British Airways. Hong Kong Bank and Tootal Thread Bangladesh Ltd.

A large number of young people specially college students crowded a number of stalls set up by different colleges in the United Kingdom for counselling local students.

Talking to the Daily Star. Carry McClellan of St Andrew's Cambridge College said, "We are getting tremendous response from people about our education programme including admission test, tuition fee and part time job opportunity."

#### Coming AGMs AGM/EGM Book Closure Venue & Time Dividend Proposed 1B:2 20 Hotel Agrabad Ctg 10 am 1R:2(Pre & Tk 1000) 3R:1(Pre: Tk 50) 2R:1 (Pre:Tk 150) 75 1B:2 Padma Oil 60, Motifieel C/A, BCIC Auditorium 10 AM

#### PEREGRINE BANGLADESH INDEX

#### Tuesday's market comment

The PBI bounced back after three consecutive days of sharp losses at it surged 3.84% on strong volume. Market sentiment was very positive with 24 issues advancing over only 1 loser. BTC (+9.61%) and Apex Foods (8.52%) gained on retail demand whilst Beximco Synthetics (+6.35%) and Beximco Pharma (+4.96%) appreciated on institutional buying. Square Pharma and Bangladesh lamps were also amongst the notable winners as they added 7.12% and 6.21% respectively. Chittagong Cement was the only issue to decline as it fell 0.83% under retail selling

### **Exchange Rates**

The following are the Janata Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 11/03/97

Selling			Buying		
Name of Currency	T.T.& O.D.	B.C.	T.T. Clean	O.D.Sight Export Bills	O.D. Transfer
US Dollar	42.9120	42.9650	42.6200	42.4550	42.3438
<b>GB Pound</b>	68.9008	68.9809	67.8942	67.6151	67.4379
D.Mark	25.3483	25.3777	24.9265	24.8241	24.7590
F. Franc	7.5148	7.5235	7.3898	7.3594	7.3401
JP Yen	0.3576	0.3581	0.3492	0.3478	0.3469
C.Dollar	31.4423	31.4788	30.9133	30.7863	30.7056
S.Franc	29.3034	29.3374	28.8014	28.6830	28.6078
Janata Bank	's selling a	and buying ra	ites in cash cu	rrency for publ	ic:
	US DLR	GBP	SRIYAL	UAE DH	KU DINAR
SELLING	43.0000	67.6508	11.7000	11.6500	141.0000
BUYING	42 5000	65 6508	11 3500	11 1500	135 5000

### Shipping Intelligence

**Chittagong Port** 

Berth P	osition and Perfor	mance of Ve	9000		97	114
Berth No	Name of Vessels		L Port Call	Local	The state of the s	Leaving
J/1	Banglar Kiron	Rice(G)	Kara	BSC	6/3	16/3
J/2	Mare	GI (Copra)	Sing	Ipl	19/2	11/3
J/4	Bismihita-La	Wheat(P)	Argen	Owsl	22/2	14/3
J/5	Mariupl	Wheat(G)	P Kel	AASS	19/2	12/3
J/6	La Paiz	CI CI	Pena	AASS	20/2	18/3
1/7	Jin Jiang	'- GI-	Sing	Prog	23/2	- 12/3
J/8	Yi Yang	GI 7	Xing	Prog	15/2	12/3
	(Bangler Hallof	0.00 5732	Name.	<b>DEE</b> 14879	8/3	16/3
J/10	AN DA	C Clink	Sing	MBL	28/2	25/3
J/12	Arktis Fighter	GI(P.Mat)	~ Sing	Sunshine	- R/A	11/3
CCT/1	Consistence	Cont	Sing	RSL	9/3	11/3
CCT/2	Kota Pusaka	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	10/3	13/3
CCT/3	Vanessa	Cont	Mong	RSL	7/3	13/3
RM/14	Al Salma	Idle	Bomb	Assl	7/3	12/3
CCJ	Arcadia-1	C Clink	Bomb	Seacom	4/3	17/3
GSJ	Banglar Robi	Repair	(0)	BSC	R/A	12/3
TSP	Hemlock Whea		Owsl	19/2	14/3	000000
RM/5	Ping Shun	Cement	Qing	Delmure	23/2	25/3
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	Repair		BSC	R/A	11/3
DDJ/1	Tanary Star	Idle	Para	Psal	7/6	TO A CONTROL OF
DDJ/2	Banglar Shobha	Repair	Marc	BSC	11/1	12/3
RM/8	Banglar Asha	Repair	Mong	BSC	6/3	14/3
RM/9	Banglar Doot	Repair	15	BSC	R/A	20/3
Cufli	Blue North	Cement	Qing	Psal	3/6	15/3

ranto Dungan	4565	a see Present	Sharper 121 A		
Cuflj Blue North		Cement	Qing	Psal 3/6	15/3
Kafco(U) Trade Daw	m I	Jrea(G) S	wich Litm	ond 16/2	14/3
Ves	sels du	ie at ou	ter Ancl	norage	
Name of vessels	Date of	Last Port	Local	Cargo	Loading
	Arrival	Call	Agent		Port
An Long Jiang	11/3	Sing	Everett	Urea	
Sea Master-1	11/3	Busa		G	1
Emeral Halo	12/3	Linco	Lams	Wheat(G)	1 E 18 to
Brunei Eagle	11/3	Sing	B.Bay S	Survey Purpose	8 " LF 💱
Ocean Prize	12/3			Wheat(G)	5.74
Tug Veritas	13/3	Col		Empty	E
Padma (Cont) 3/3	12/3	Sing	Rsl	Cont	
Steamers		×.	82 85	45	1000
Future(Cont)/24/2	12/3	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Mong
Fong Lee (2/3	13/3	Col	Bdship	Cont	THE CALLS CONT. IN COSTS
Xing Ye	12/3	P Land	Rainbow	R.Seed(Bulk)	Committee of the Commit
Arcadia Pride	12/3	in and the second of the secon	Rml	Cement	
Al Safi	13/3	10 2	Psal	GI(D.Peas)	
Kota Berjaya 4/3	14/3	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing
Meng Kiat 20/2	13/3	Sing	- Aml	Cont	
Vishva Parag	13/3	Mad	SSL	CI	
Fong Yun 24/2	15/3	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Ultima 6/3	14/3	Col	Baridhi	Cont	
Emeral Venture	15/3		Simni	Scraping	N M
Raffiu	15/3	Adab	Litmond	Fert(BAG)	
Ocean-1	16/3	Cal	Cross	CI CI	
Susak 4/3	16/3	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
			MATERIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR		

Tanker Due:						
Lady Helene	13/3	- Rainbow		Cdso -		
	Vessels	at Kutubdia				
Name fo Vessels	Cargo	Last Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Arrival		
Danat Qatar	C Oil	Rast	USS	10/3		
Banglar Shourabh	C Oil	Periodic division in the second	BSC	R/A		
Ismaya		翼	B Bay	9/1		
Orizont	74	Sing	B Bay	25/2		
Mighty Tide	070	5	B Bay	R/A(9/3)		
Panda	HSD	Rwa	Ecsl	4/3		
Destiny	HSD	□ <del>5</del> .	Ecsl	R/A		
Canopus	HSD	8	Ecsl	R/A		

Everett

16/3

Timber Trader-VI

, V	essels at o	uter Anchor	rage:			
Ready On:						
Fay	CI	Mumb	RSA	7/3		
Banglar Urmi	GL	Mong	BSC	6/3		
Gregory Kovalchuk	CI	Sing	Bdship	8/3		
QC Pintail(Cont)	Cont	Sing	Qcsl	11/3		
Banglar Moni (cont	Cont	Sing	BSC	11/3		
	Vessels	not Read	ly:			

Chelyabinsk	Cement		CCNL	R/A(6/3)
Ve	ssels Awai	ting Inst	ruction:	750
Hydroussa	Ballast	Monr	Otl	21/12
Aegensea-1	Ballast	Tampa	Gel	10/2
Banglar Sampad	0.55	T/	BSC	R/A(17/1)
Peang Xing Ling			Delmure	R/A(9/3)
	Vessels 1	not enter	ing:	
Professor Vuznik	Scraping		GEL.	R/A(1/3)

7/3

Professor Vuznik Scraping Pilees Hoan Scraping Scraping Mong Litmond Sevan Kott New Broikiyn Scraping Ocean Rover Ballast Fairmax

Movement of Vessels for 12-3-97 Shifting Outgoing Incoming J/7 Gregory Kovalchuk J/12 Fay to J/5 J/5 Mariup J/12 Steamers Future GSJ B Robi To J/13 J/7 Jin Jians RM/5 Ping Shun to RM/6 J/8 Yi Yang Doj B Jyoti J/9 B Urmi J/9 B Lallol CCT/1 QC Pintail J/13 B Moni

DDJ/2 B Shobha NB Chelybinsk The above are the shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

J/NB Sea Master-1

J/8 Xing Ye

CCT/1 Consistence

DOJ B. Shourabh

## Commerce Minister tells EPC meet

our economy grow.

### Maintain political stability to help attain economic uplift

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed has called for maintaining political stability in the country to help attain economic development by boosting trade, investment and export, reports UNB. "We have to work unitedly

for it. The ruling and opposition parties will have to reach a national consensus on economic issues," he said at the 29th half-yearly meeting of Bangladesh Export Promotion Council here yesterday. The meeting, organised by

Export Promotion Bureau, (EPB), was participated by leaders of different chambers and trade bodies, exporters, commercially important persons. bankers and officials of concerned ministries and depart-

The Commerce Minister said year. the development of export sec-

BCSIR leases

out wax pencil

production

process

Bangladesh Council of Sci-

entific and Industrial Research

(BCSIR) has leased out a process

for production of quality wax

pencil to a local entrepreneur

for commercial production.

was signed between BCSIR and

M/s. Revive Chemical at BCSIR

the entrepreneur has to go into

commercial production of this

import substitute process

schools, colleges including

other educational institutions

abroad in exchange of foreign

currency every year to meet lo-

low cost high quality wax pencil

to save significant amount of

on gemfibrozil,

enalapril held

organised a scientific seminar

on Delipid (gemfibrozil) & Va-

sopril (enalapril) at Comilla

Diabetic Hospital on Sunday.

of the town were present at the

ing correct amount and propor-

tion of fats in the blood. Vasopril lowers high blood pressure

and is useful in various forms

of BMA, Comilla, presided over

Samir Kanti Saha and Dr

Farzana Jasmine, Manager

and Asstt. Manager respec-

tively. Medical Services de-

partment of the company pre-

sented their papers on the two

ated the therapeutic as well as

economic benefits of managing

patients with coronary artery

disease using lipid lowering

the superiority of enalapril

over other related compounds

in treating hypertension, dia-

betic nephropathy and is-

Dr Jasmine elaborated upon

agents like gemfibrozil.

chemic heart disease.

In his paper Dr Saha reiter-

Dr Hidayat Ullah, President

In the scientific session, Dr

About 40 specialist doctors

Delipid is used for maintain-

Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd

Wax pencil is used in art

This pencil is imported from

BCSIR has developed this

According to the agreement

An agreement to this effect

says a press release.

on Sunday.

within one year

cal demand.

foreign currency.

says a press release.

of heart attacks.

specialised drugs.

the seminar.

meeting.

for drawing purposes.

tor depends on facing successfully the challenges of post-Uruguay round situation. "The government is ready to assist you in this regard... but you have to play the key role." he told the exporters.

Tofael said the National Committee for Exports headed by the Prime Minster in its last meeting took some steps towards solving a number of mafor problems in the export sector. He said the task force

headed by him is also active. flie minister informed that goods worth Taka 10,886.14 crore were exported from Bangladesh during the first seven months of 1996-97 fiscal marking a 12.63 per cent increase over that of the corresponding period of the previous

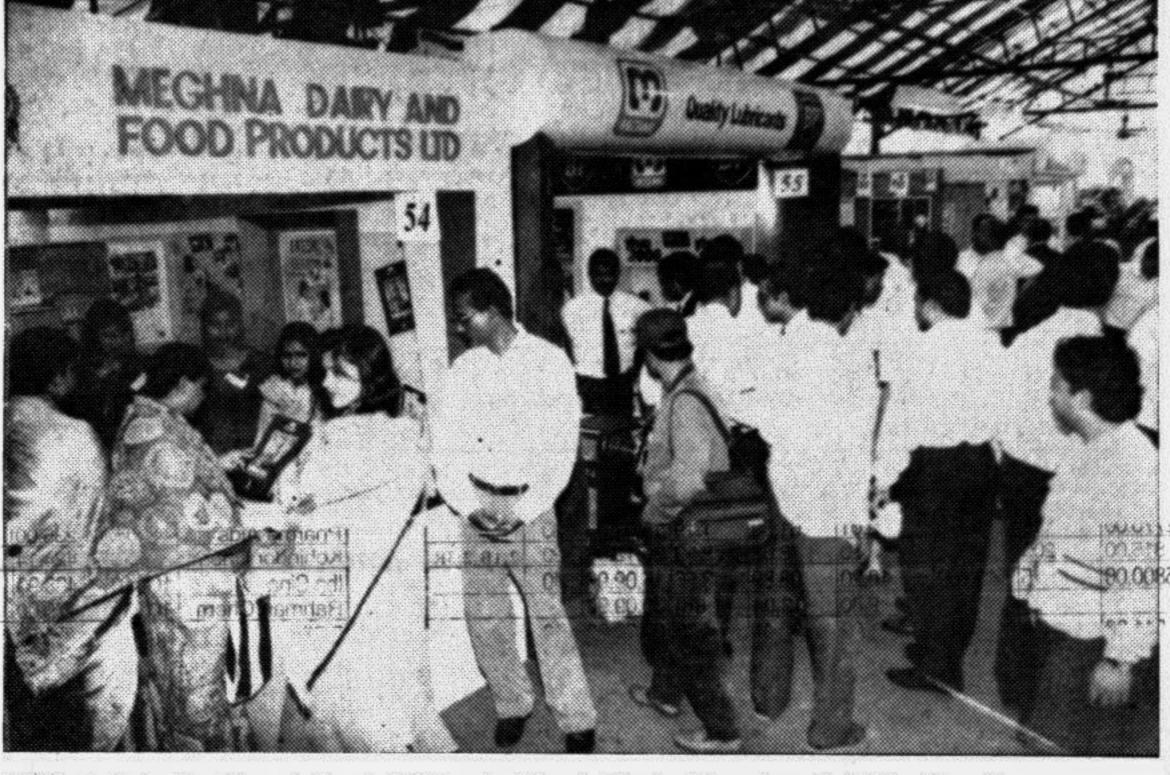
He hoped that if the present

rate continues, the country would be able to exceed the financial year's total export target fixed at Taka 18,396 crore (4.380m US dollars), which is Taka 2,517 crore more than the actual export earnings of the previous year.

During the last eight months, he said, the present government was praised both at home and abroad for its development oriented activities that are leading the country towards advancement." We have a bright future ahead.

Some participants told the meeting that due to frequent loadshedding the industries were suffering huge financial

They demanded a pre-announced loadshedding programme so that they could prepare their production schedule.



Visitors crowding the stalls at UK trade fair at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in the city.

### Minister urges pvt sector managements

### Help ensure social security of workers

Social security of the workers is vital and linked to the overall growth of economy of the country as well as essential for the social well-being of the workforce, a key-note paper of a two-day seminar said here yesterday, reports BSS.

The coverage and feasibility of such system would naturally depend on the country's social, economic and political environment, the paper presented by Abdul Hai Mondal of BIDS

State Minister for Labour and Manpower M A Mannan inaugurated the two-day seminar on "national workers' education seminar on social security," organised by the National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE) and International Labour Organisation (ILO), Dhaka office.

Paul J Bailey, Director of ILO Dhaka area office, Shah Md Abu Zafar, Chairman of NCCWE also spoke at the inaugural session.

Representative of different labour organisations are taking part in the seminar.

The State Minister, in his speech, said that more seminars and workshops should be organised to apprise the country's millions of workforce and managements about the welfare of the people in general.

The government would do whatever possible for the social security of country's workforce. he said, adding that the private sector management must come forward to implement this fundamental right of the workers which would enhance the credibility of employment as well as sustainability of business.

Bailey said social protection scheme, introduced so far in Bangladesh, is inadequate as it has limited coverage and scale of benefits particularly in the private sector.

### BOC adjourned AGM held

BOC Bangladesh held its reconvened annual general meeting at its head office yesterday, says a press release.

The business of the poll demanded earlier by the chairman of the company at the adjourned AGM on March 3 was concluded peacefully. Shareholders representing more than eighty per cent shareholdings of the company attended the meeting, the release added.

Payments of dividend at the rate of Tk 3.00 per share and 20 per cent bonus shares were also approved.

### ROK passes rewritten labour law, unions voice discontent

SEOUL. Mar 11: South Korea's parliament yesterday passed a rewritten labour law after more than one month of radical industrial turmoil, but unions voiced discontent and threatened renewed strikes in May,

says AFP.

The breakthrough, on a standing vote of 192 for to 10 against with seven abstentions, was taken on four bills in an extended late night session of the national assembly, MPs from both sides of the house said.

Witnesses said the voting appeared confused because of the number of bills bundled through at one time, requiring multiple counting. The passage of the labour

bill came after the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) promised to consider rewriting a separate controversial law giving increased powers to security po-

The new bill is to replace the Square's seminar original bill, railroaded through parliament last December, which sparked weeks of industrial unrest and 3.2 billion dollars in lost production and exports for South Korea.

"We hope the new bill will accelerate a sweeping change in our labour environment and help our country enhance in-

dustrial competitiveness," said

Chief Opposition Negotiator Lee

Lee who has chaired weeks of stormy negotiations, urged unions and management to accept the compromise labour bill, which he said conforms to international rules.

The revised bill appears to be weighted in favour of workers who have been protected by the old cradle-to-grave employment ethics. But unions on Monday called it "a change for the worse.'

"Parliament made a change for the worse," the militant Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) said, renewing its earlier threat to launch a general strike in May after its annual wage bargaining from March through April.

The new bill calls for employers to lay off workers on mass only in case of economic emergency. But implementation of the layoff clause will be delayed for two years, meaning that layoffs could not be made before then.

But it allows the immediate formation of multiple umbrella labour groups to legalize the outlawed KCTU, which spearheaded weeks of strikes against the earlier labour law passed together with the controversial national security law.



Hugh E Tweed, Managing Director, Bangladesh Tobacco Company Limited, seen handing over the tickets of Golden Tones Dhaka Dhoom Dha Rakka to Ruhul Amin Majumder, President, Sandhani National Eye Donation Society. All proceeds from ticket sales will benefit Sandhani National Eye Donation Society, which will organise the selling of tickets.

### ICB increases loan margin on investment account

Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) has decided to increase loan margin on its investment account from 1:1 to 1:2 for purchase of securities from both the primary. (IPO) and secondary market with immediate effect, says a press

From December 1996, ICB has transacted securities worth Taka 75 crore in the stock exchanges of which purchase accounts for Taka 60 crore.

#### New Italian restaurant in Sonargaon Hotel

Sonargoan Pan Pacific Hotel is opening a new Italian restaurant CIAO on Thursday, says a press release.

The restaurant is being opened to familiarise delicious Italian food in Bangladesh. The Hotel is giving the Italian cuisine a local blend.

### BTC launches Benson & Hedges in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Mar 11: The Benson and Hedges, familiar to Bangladeshi consumers as a quality and prestigious brand is now available here following the formal launching of the newly imported cigarettes in the market Monday, reports

Benson & Hedges, imported by Bangladesh Tobacco Company (BTC) is aimed at satisfying the consumers and help the government enhance its revenues by curbing smuggling. said BTC and help the government enhance its revenues by curbing smuggling, said BTC Consumers and Regulatory Af-fair Manager Mahmudur Rahman at a press conference. He said Benson & Hedges has

been available in the country

for many years but through il-

prives the government of much

Smuggling of such item de-

legal routes.

needed revenues, he further BIC Brand Marketing Manager Simon Bird, Regional Manager Zubair Ahmed and Brand Manager Sayeed Nasir elaborated various aspects of the launching of the cigarettes.

M Taheruddin, Managing Director of The City Bank

Limited, distributed certificates among the participants of 24th foundation course at a function at the City Bank's Training Institute on Monday.