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DThe Paily Star DUSINESS

HYUNDAI CARS THAT MAKE SENSE

aid drops

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, July 4: Sri Lanka received 548 million dollars in 1996 as official development assistance, with most funds meant for infrastructure projects, the United Nations Development Programme said Thursday, reports

The UNDP report, which was released to the press, said that the aid was slightly lower from last year's 554 million dollars. It noted that Japan continued to be the island nation's biggest donor since 1990, contributing nearly 40 per cent of the total

The major portion of the aid was utilized for transport. communications and social development projects.

The United States, Germany, Britain and the Netherlands were the other major donors. the report added.

The report said that Sri Lanka's total ODA had fallen in recent years, with contributions from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund dropping to 120.7 million dollars last year, down from a high of 181 million dollars in

Gold tumbles to another low in Mumbai

MUMBAI, July 4: Gold prices tumbled to another low of 4400 rupees following persistent fall in international gold prices and increased selling pressure on the bullion market today, says

Today's fall showed a total loss of 130 rupees since Monday when standard gold stood at 4530 rupees.

However, silver, recovered marginally on fresh industrial

Standard gold declined by 35 rupees from the last close of 4435 rupees. Twentytwo carat at gold was also nominally quoted weak at 4070 rupees against yesterday's close of 4100 rupees, while 100-tola gold bar or .999 purity fell sharply by 400 rupees and finished at 51,500 rupees compared to the last level of 51,900 rupees.

On the other hand, silver ready of .999 purity, improved by Rs 5 and closed at Rs 6625 from Rs 6620. Raw silver of .916 purity ended higher at Rs 6525 against yesterday's Rs 6520 and tenderable silver hardened by Rs 5 to Rs 6630 from Rs 6625.

15m phone calls made during HK's return to China

HONG KONG, July 4: More than 15 million phone calls were made during Hong Kong's return to China, most to the mainland itself. Hong Kong Telecom said today, reports

During the five-day public holiday for the handover between June 28 and July 2, the company recorded 7,799,440 outbound calls and 8,069,591 inbound calls, some 30 per cent to and from China. The other top ranked desti-

nations were the Philippines, the United States, Britain, Taiwan and Japan respectively, it

Mobile phone traffic also saw a surge during the holiday with a total of 26,052,181 calls made throughout Hong Kong.

Taekyu Han, Ambassador of South Korea, visited Chittagong Stock Exchange recently. CSE President Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury MP who is also Honorary Consul of Korean embassy received him.

Iraq, UN complete food distribution plans

BAGHDAD, July 4: Iraq and the United Nations have completed their food distribution plans to cover the next six months of oil exports and would soon send them to the UN for approval, Iraq's UN coordinator said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Staffan de Mistura said UN agencies had their plan for the three northern provinces of Dahouk, Arbil and Sulaimaniya, currently outside the control of the central government in Baghdad, ready since June 29.

He said Iraqi authorities told him their plan for the centre and south of Iraq "was also ready but it needed some fine tuning" to incorporate both into a unified national programme before presenting them to the United Nations.

Iraq is permitted to sell oil worth two billion dollars over six months under UN supervision, to alleviate hardship caused by UN trade sanctions imposed on Baghdad for invading Kuwait in 1991.

The oil plan was first started in December last year and the UN Security Council renewed it for another 180 days on June 8. But the exports have been held up pending the completion of the procurement and distribu-

tion plans by the government. In the first six months Iraq earned about 1.3 billion dollars of which 260 million dollars was earmarked for the northern provinces. De Mistura said Iraq would earn a similar amount of money in the next six months.

Lanka's foreign | 11 BJMC units in Khulna incur Tk 41cr loss

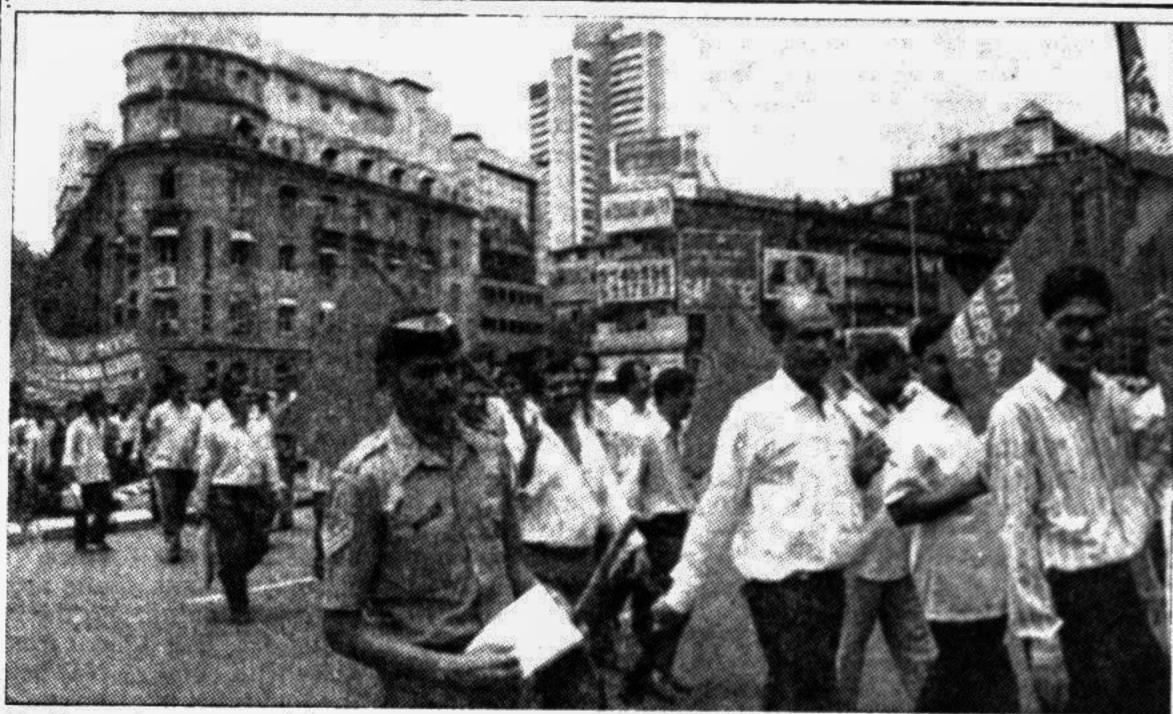
mills under BJMC in Khulna region incurred loss about Tk 40.55 crore during the last fiscal year due to frequent power disruption, reports UNB.

A BJMC official here said production in 11 jute mills of the region fell by 12911.46 met-

KHULNA, June 4: The jute ric tonnes during the period due to persistent loadshedding. causing loss about Tk 40.55 crore to the national economy.

> The millwise break-up of the financial loss: Alim Jute Mills Tk 1,61,40,000, Carpeting Mills Tk. 1,26,31,000, Crescent Jute Mills Tk. 4,87,91,000, Doulat-

pur Jute Mills 1,27,87,000. Eastern Jute Mills Tk 1,67,00,000 Jessore JJI Mills Tk 3,02,68,000, People's Jute Mills Tk 7,89,10,000, Platinum Jute Mills Tk 7,74,42,000, Sirajganj Quomi Jute Mills Tk 2,47,98,000, Rajshahi Jute Mills Tk 1,34,38,000 and Star Jute Mills Tk 7.36,43.000.



Bank employees march in protest in south Bombay against the increased competition from small private banks yesterday following a government announcement that scores of local rural area private banks would be opened. The strike paralysed banking operations throughout India. - AFP/UNB photo

Strike paralyses banking in India

NEW DELHI, July 4: Banking operations were paralysed nationwide Friday because of a one-day strike by all employees of the state-owned banks and some at the Reserve Bank of India, the central bank, reports

In Bombay, the commercial capital the strike by members of various bank unions brought the local foreign currency market to a standstill, dealers said.

The strike by 1.3 million employees was called by a joint forum of all nine bank unions in the country to protest plans to create small neighbourhood banks called local area banks and demand better pension benefits and removal of a ban on recruitment in some stateowned banks.

Operations in foreign and private-sector banks were also affected because most non-executive employees at these banks had ignored the strike because they were members of the unions.

Most of banks in India are and despite six years of liberaltration foreign banks offering more efficient services have been restricted from expanding freely. India has recently allowed domestic private investors to enter the banking industry, creating competition for the once sheltered state-owned banks. Both foreign banks and the Indian private banks pay higher salaries than state banks.

Annan hails econ success in Asia, L America

GENEVA, July 4: United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today hailed the economic success in Asia and parts of Latin America, saying it showed the path to accelerated development lay in better integration with the mainstream of the world economy, reports Xinhua.

"New and dynamic centers of trade and investment have arisen in Asia and parts of Latin America, and they are fast becoming the engines of growth in world output and trade," Annan said.

He was speaking to a highlevel panel here sponsored by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The UN Secretary-General said while he is encouraged by several positive economic trends in the developing world," at the same time, it is distressing that many developing countries and large numbers of

people in all countries have been excluded from the benefits of globalization.

For many African countries and for the least-developed countries, the risk of further marginalization remains alltoo-real.

Annan called on the international community to give greater support to the African countries which are opening up and liberalizing their economies.

African countries are pursuing structural reforms and adjustment programmes, and many have achieved impressive levels of growth, they need increased and sustained official assistance and a comprehensive solution to their external debt burdens, he said.

"Above all, to help them outgrow their dependence on commodities and aid, their exports must be accorded free access to world markets," Annan said.

underway MANILA, July 4: Doing

reports AP.

portfolio funds in the region.

tary-General of Thailand's Board of investment, said the prototype program developed in Thailand now has information on 3,000 companies in Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, with data on those in Brunei, Indonesia and Vietnam in the works.

prise the ASEAN.

Salazar said that the group Cambodia and Laos. The three countries will become members of the regional economic bloc later this month.

"This is one tangible sign ning to turn its vision into reality," said Melito Salazar, under secretary of the Philippines' Department of the Trade and

names of company officials, products addresses, telephone numbers and production capac-

region.

and capital markets.

Doing business with ASEAN thru' Internet

business in Southeast Asia, the world's most economically vibrant region, will be speeded up through an Internet link-up connecting 10 countries in the region, officials said Friday.

Part of a 23-year programme ners of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN. It is aimed at encouraging the flow of capital and

Staporn Kavitanon, Secre-

Those seven countries com-

also has offered to develop home pages for Myanmar.

that ASEAN is already begininvestment. The Internet database will

provide information on the

By forming the investment area, the heads of AIA believe it would be easier to convince non-ASEAN foreign fund managers to invest in specific ASEAN countries or in a sub-

The investment area is expected to offer incentives to investors in specific industries

Residents of Baghdad queue to receive increased food rations on Wednesday. Residents will get two kilos of sugar instead of half a kilo and two kilos of ricc instead of 1.25 kilo. People were supposed to receive 2.5 kilos of rice, but Turkish military operations in the north have led to delays in the arrival of rice shipments. - AFP/UNB photo

SCB offers PRF for Bangladeshis in Singapore

Bangladeshis working in Singapore can effect remittance to their relatives in Bangladesh by utilising the Priority Remittance Facility (PRF) of Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) Singapore through its 20 branches to any branch of Sonali Bank in Bangladesh as per an agreement signed recently in Singapore between SCB and Sonali Bank, says a press release.

SCB Singapore in wellknown for its commitment to excellence.

Its trade and electronic cash management services have been awarded ISO 9002.

Its treasury was recently awarded Best Foreign Exchange Services House (Global)' by 'Asia Risk Manager' publication.

US unemployment rate jumps to 5 pc in June

WASHINGTON, July 4: The US unemployment rate jumped to five per cent in June after falling to its lowest level in a generations. It was the most dramatic evidence yet the economy has slowed sharply from the red-hot pace earlier this year, reports AP.

US joblessness, reported on a seasonally adjusted basis by the Labour Department on Thursday, rose from 4.8 per cent in May and 4.9 per cent in April, rates unseen since late 1973. Most economists weren't looking for the increase. They expected the rate to hold at

May's level. Though unwelcome from the standpoint of American workers, the surprise increase was good news for economy-watchers and financial markets worried an over-robust economy would send inflation creeping higher.

The inflation-sensitive bond market rallied on the figures. pushing down interest rates. Yields on 30-year treasury bonds - a bench mark for long term borrowing costs - fell to 6.63 per cent Thursday morning from 6.71 per cent late Wednes-

Federal reserve policy-makers, who had made a pre-emptive strike against inflation in March by raising short-term interest rates a quarter percentage point; opted Wednitsday

to leave rates unchanged. " They made the decision in the face of earlier evidence, confirmed by Thursday's report, that economic growth slackened to about a two per cent annual rate from a decade-high 5.9 per cent in the first quarter. Despite the deterioration,

market remains quite robust. Employers added a seasonally adjusted 217,000 jobs to their payrolls in June. That was slightly less than the 225,000 predicted by economists and a bit below the 236,000 average

for the first five months of the

analysts said the nation's job

Chinese income rises, but rich-poor gap widens

BEIJING, July 4: Although China's booming economy has raised incomes in all lines of work, the gap between rich and poor has widened too, the staterun Economic Daily reported Friday, says AP.

People working in the finance and insurance industries on average made the most money last year, 9,448 yuan (1,138 dollars). The newspaper said, citing a State Statistical Bureau survey. Industrial workers, at the

bottom of the scale, earned 6,921 yuan (834 dollars). Both financial analysts and

factory workers earned more last year than in 1991, 3.7 times and 3 times more respectively. the newspaper said. But the difference in incomes has grown by 12 per cent in five years. The State Statistical Bureau

survey of 17,000 households found that all incomes rose during the five year period. People working in communications, including telecom munications, scored the biggest rise in incomes, 3.9 times, Geo-

logical prospectors had the lowest increase of 2.4 times. The widening income gap has become a sensitive problem for Chinese leaders. Their No. 1 task is to revive debt-ridden, inefficient state-run industries.

All solutions involve layoffs or wage cuts that will further erode the privileged position industrial workers used to enjoy under the Communist

be held from July 8 in Qingdao in east China's Shandong province, reports Xinhua. Du Shincheng, the Deputy

Hong Kong dollars (3.037 bil-Governor of the province, says that many of the companies will attend the week-long trade fair in joint teams.

Fate of ex-chairman to be decided

DSE Council calls EGM

By Rafiq Hasan

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) Council has called an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on July 10 to decide the fate of its former chairman Imtiyaz Hossain's Councillor-

Hossain was removed from the chairman's post through a no-confidence motion at a board meeting following the share scam. But he is still a member of the 12-member DSE council.

The EGM was called following demand from DSE general members to hold a requisition meeting on the issue of whether Imtiyaz Hossain's council membership would continue or

bers of DSE (Sunday) urged its Chairman Abdul Haq Howlader to arrange voting through secret ballot papers on the issue instead of voting by raising hands, DSE sources said. They said any decision on Hossain's councillorship

A group of influential mem-

should be taken through the same process under which he had been elected. On the other hand DSE Chairman Abdul Haq Howlader who succeeded Imtiyaz said "I would prefer an open voting to

resolution and who are against Though he said that the matter would be placed before the next council meeting on Thursday for final decision he argued

in favour of division vote. The

know who are in favour of the

DSE constitution also supports division vote. Howlader said. He sent leave applications before every meeting citing health reasons, the councillor said.

A member of DSE requesting anonymity, however, said that as the matter was an exceptional one and the DSE never faced such a situation before, it should be done through consen-

"This type of division would not bring any good result, rather it would destroy the stock exchange as well as the country's capital market", he observed.

Imtiyaz Hossain could not be contacted for comments despite repeated attempts over telephone.

Share prices fall over the week

Bearish trend continued at the Dhaka Stock Exchange last

There were only three working days at DSE and the trading could not take place for two days due to bank holiday on Tuesday and hartal called by the main Opposition party in Jatiya Sangsad BNP protesting budget on Thursday.

The DSE All Share Price Index suffered by 30.14 points closing at 1098.35 points on Wednesday from previous week's 1128.49 points.

Market capitalisation of the bourse also lost Tk 252.09 crore

going down to Tk 9186.19 crore

from Tk 9438.28 crore.

A total of 133 issues were traded on an average, of which prices of only 40 issues gained while prices of 88 issues in-

curred loss. As many as 6.99 lakh shares and debentures worth Tk 16.08 crore changed hands during the week. The average volumes were 2.33 lakh shares valued at

Tk5.35 crore. The All Securities Price Index at Chittagong Stock Ex-change also fell during the period ending at 470.81 points from 479.52 points indicating a loss of 8.71 points.

The market capitalisation of the bourse also lost Tk129.94 crore declining to Tk7104.93 crore from Tk7234.87 crore.

Dow Jones Average leaps 100 points

NEW YORK, July 4: The Dow Jones Industrial Average leaped more than 100 points to close at a record high Thursday as the June employment report confirmed the economy in slowing at a pace that would keep the federal reserve from raising in-

terest rates, reports Reuter. Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow ends up 100.43 points, or 1.29 per cent, at 7,895.81, eclipsing its June 20 record close of 7,796.51. In the broader market, advancing issues swamped declines 19.7 on volume of 378 million shares on the New York stock exchange.



Taekyu Han, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, held a courtesy meeting with Amir Khosru Hahmud Chowdhury MP, President of CSE and the Honorary Consul of Korea, during his recent visit to Chittagong Stock Exchange. AK Chowdhury, Vice President and AGM Shamsul Kamal, CEO, are also seen in the picture.

Bangkok agrees to buy electricity from Yangon

Trading under Chinese rule

Share prices fall in HK

HONG KONG, July 4: Hong 27, the market opened weakly

BANGKOK, July 4: Thailand agreed to buy up to 1,500 megawatts of electric power from Myanmar by the year 2010 under a memorandum of understanding signed here today, reports AFP.

The open agreement covers electricity generated from both hydropower plants and natural gas-fueled power plants - the first time hydropower would be included in such an agreement. No specifics were decided. With vast natural gas re-

sources in the Andaman Sea. Myanmar has previously signed two gas supply agreements with Thailand to fire its power-hungry industrial zones in the Gulf of Siam. Thailand agreed to encour-

age the electricity generation authority of Thailand or other designated agencies to buy up to 1,500 MW of electric power from "feasible projects" in Myanmar by the year 2010, a statement

Thai investors would be allowed to participate in implementation of power projects under the programme, the

Kong shares are expected to be

volatile in the week ahead due

to uncertainty over the property

sector, after losing 2.5 per cent in the first two days of trading

under Chinese rule, dealers said

rector with South China Bro-

kerage, said the market would

remain volatile until the new

government cleared up uncer-

tainty over what measures it

will take to cool down specula-

exchange of Hong Kong, the

Ghang Seng Index, lost 373.82

points to close at 14,822.97 on

Monday to Wednesday for pub-

Britain's 156-year rule over

Hong Kong and the territory's

beginning of Chinese rule Tues-

turnover for the two trading

days amounted to 23.51 billion

The average daily value of

The key index of the stock

tion in the property sector.

Howard Gorges, Dealing Di-

today, reports AFP.

shortend week.

statement added. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Piyasvasti Amranand

technical hydropower potential estimated at 100,000 megawatts. "Despite the enormous amount of hydropower resources in the union of Myanmar, there had been no dialogue specifically on the commercial arrangement for the purchase

Secretary General of Thailand's

National Energy Policy Coun-

cil, said that Myanmar had a

of power by Thailand from projects in Myanmar," he said. Under the Memorandum of Understanding, the two countries would cooperate in interconnecting power transmission

The two sides also agreed to prepare a separate memorandum on the supply of water from Myanmar to Thailand, it

added. The agreement was signed by Sompong Amornvivat, Minister in the Thai Prime Minister's Office, and Khin Maung Thein, Myanmar's Energy Minister.

in late afternoon, reports AFP. The dollar declined over-all due to a higher-than-expected US unemployment rate, reducing expectations of monetary tightening by the federal reserve. Sterling was trading in late

afternoon at 2.9538 marks, its

highest level since August 1991,

compared with a mere 2.9251

Sterling reaches

record high

against mark

broke up Thursday afternoon

through the symbolic 2.95-

mark level, its former central

rate in the European Monetary

System (EMS), buoyed by con-

tinuing expectations of higher

UK interest rates, traders said

LONDON, July 4: Sterling

Wednesday evening, and it rose to 1.6886 dollars against 1.6663The dollar eased to 1.7492 marks against 1.7550 Wednesday evening, and to 113. 45 yen

against 114.55.

"The British budget presented Wednesday strengthened expectations of a rate rise in the near future by the Bank of England. This budget does not contain any measures for slowing the economy", said Lehman Brothers Economist Jane Edwards. "Interest rates are the

only remaining instrument". She said the market expects a quarter-point rise in base rate at the July 10-11 meeting of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee. The rate is now 6.50 per cent. "It should reach 8 per cent by mid-1998",

Sales of imported vehicles fall in Japan

TOKYO, July 4: Tightened purse strings as a result of a sales tax rise in April sent sales of imported vehicles in Japan lower in June, the third yearon-year month decline, an industry group said Friday. Sales of cars, trucks and

buses dropped 20.3 per cent in June to 32,176 vehicles from the same month last year, the Japan Automobile Importers Association said. The fall in June followed a

27.0 per cent slip in May and a 30.8 per cent decline in April. Sales of US-made cars were down 31.9 per cent in June from

the same month last year to 7.396 cars, while those of German vehicles slipped by 14.1 per cent.

Sales for General Motors Corp. rose 20.0 per cent from June last year to 2,035 cars, but those for Ford Motor Co. dropped 63.0 per cent to 609. Chrysler Corp sales were up 6.7 per cent at 1,506 vehicles.

Week-long trade fair in China JINAN, July 4: Large multinationals from more than 80 countries and regions have sent in applications for the '97 Qingdao economic and trade fair to

lion US) against the previous week's 29.17 billion dollars. After posting a record closing high of 15,196.79 on June

141.05 points on Thursday. Selling of property shares

with the key barometer losing

amid uncertainty over what measures the new government of the Hong Kong special administrative region would take saw the market losing another 232.77 points on Friday despite a record close on Wall Street.

Dollar falls against yen in Tokyo

Friday during the holiday-TOKYO, July 4: The dollar fell against the yen Friday after the prospects of higher interest The market closed from rates in the United States relic holidays marking the end of ceded, says AP. The US Labour Department

said Thursday the nations' jobless rate rose to 5 per cent in June. The data, coming a day after

the Fed's policy-makers left interest rates unchanged, provided new evidence that the US economy has slowed, further dampening the prospects for rising interest rates anytime