

Evaluation says
Credit helps
hardcore poor
Star Business Report

A donor consortium-supported impact evaluation of credit programme by the Association for Social Advancement (ASA) has found that credit and other human resource development interventions can effectively raise the income of the hardcore poor.

It also found that the borrowers who are in the programme for four years or more have been able to increase their income by 50 per cent.

The evaluation study conducted by Prof Michael Bruntrup of Hoenheim University of Germany also established that new borrowers could increase their income by 20 per cent through credit intervention and various other support services, says a press release of ASA.

The study reported presented at a discussion meeting at the ASA office in the city recently also said about 90 per cent of the borrowers could ensure productive utilisation of credits.

The study was done on 520 households in 52 villages.

On the impact of development education, it found that 100 per cent of ASA members can sign their names, 80 per cent are aware of life centred issues and 70 per cent can practise this knowledge.

OPEC oil price drops slightly

VIENNA, Aug 20: The average price of the OPEC crude slipped to 18.04 US dollars per barrel last week, 52 cents down from the 18.56 dollars in the previous week, the OPEC's secretariat said, reports Xinhua.

The decline ended a five-week recovery of the oil price which started early July that saw 17.86 dollars per barrel, up from June's average 17.37 dollars.

The price began to rally since the end of June after oil ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed to freeze their production quotas for six months to boost prices.

The price had fallen steadily from a peak of 25 dollars per barrel in January because of Iraq's possible reentry into the world oil market and the OPEC members' violation of oil production quotas.

Treasury bill auctions held

The 57th auction of the 90-day treasury bill, the 48th auction of the 30-day and 180-day treasury bills and the 22nd auction of the one-year treasury bill were held here yesterday.

Sixty-four bids for a total of Tk 551.00 crore, 13 bids for a total of Tk 44.50 crore, four bids for a total of Tk five crore and three bids for a total of Tk six crore were offered respectively against the 30-day, 90-day, 180-day and one-year bills.

Of these, 37 bids for a total of Tk 374.30 crore of 30-day bill and one bid for five crore of 90-day bill were accepted.

No bid was accepted against the 180-day and one-year bills.

The weighted average prices of the accepted bids against the 30-day and 90-day bills were Tk 99.31 and Tk 97.92 respectively.

The corresponding yields are 8.30 per cent and 8.50 per cent per annum, Bangladesh Bank said.

ROK economy grows

SEOUL, Aug 20: Propelled by strong exports of heavy-chemical products, South Korea's economy grew by a year-on-year 6.3 per cent in the second quarter, the central Bank of Korea said Wednesday, reports AP.

The growth rate, measured by gross domestic product, was down from the 6.9 per cent increase posted during the same period in 1996, but was higher than the 5.5 per cent growth in this year's first quarter.

In April through June, South Korea's exports of goods and services rose 24 per cent, led by active shipments of petrochemicals, semiconductors and automobiles. Imports rose 7.3 per cent, the bank said.

Bangladeshi banker honoured

Syed AJ Rizvi, a Bangladeshi banker and founder managing director of Union Bank of Zambia Limited was elected Honorary Fellow of the Zambian Institute of Bankers in recognition of his contribution to the banking industry in Zambia, says a press release.

Prior to his joining the Union Bank of Zambia Limited as Managing Director in March 1991, Rizvi was a senior official in the erstwhile BCCI (Overseas) Ltd, Bangladesh and worked in various capacities.

Rizvi was also a part-time teacher of the Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka.

A top exporter manhandled as rival groups generate heat at EGM BGMEA resolves to fight GSP cancellation move

By Govinda Shil

Garments manufacturers and exporters, at an extraordinary general meeting marked by heated debate and manhandling of a senior member, have voted against cancellation of 6,910 GSP certificates objected to by the European Union.

General members of the BGMEA at the EGM adopted strongly-worded resolutions to deal with the current crisis, borne out of the EU's demand to cancel the certificates issued by the Export Promotion Bureau between 1993 and 1995. The EU has also demanded the EPB investigate into another 8,562 certificates in another category.

The BGMEA warned the government must shoulder the responsibility if the certificates were cancelled. The resolution said it should try to obtain a five-year GSP facility with a two-stage transformation for knit and sweater products.

The EGM asked the government that it include BGMEA president in the recently-formed committee headed by the finance minister, compensate financial losses resulting from the ongoing dispute, try to retain GSP facilities for the EU market. The resolution also said the government committee must listen to the exporters before it makes a decision.

The BGMEA leadership called the EGM in the wake of a government move to cancel the Schedule B GSP certificates which "did not comply with the EU's rules of origin" criteria.

Earlier, as the meeting began, Anisul Huq, the owner of Mohammadi Group, was virtually assaulted when he tried to draw the attention of the meeting chairman Mostafa Golam Qudus. Huq only protested a speaker who was condemning Anisul Rahman Sinha and held him responsible for the crisis.

Some members, supporters of the current leadership, stood up to take on Huq physically but retreated as he apologised.

The incident prompted a number of factory owners to leave the meeting. Many others expressed their dissatisfaction. "It's really frustrating," said one member.

"I protested as I felt criticisms against Sinha were unfair and bordered on personal attack," Anisul Huq later told The Daily Star.

As a chaotic situation marked the meeting, a large number of participants were seen talking their problems among themselves in the lounge of the Hotel Sonargaon ballroom, the venue of the EGM.

A BGMEA press release claimed the resolutions were adopted unanimously.

Meanwhile, exporters have already started bearing the brunt. An export told The Daily Star that he had already paid US\$ 8,000 to his German buyer. "I paid my buyer because

paid EU customs," he said.

Khalilur Rahman, owner of Khalil Garments, said the government should not cancel the certificates directly.

"Outright cancellation might raise question of credibility of a major government agency," he said. The officials can initiate talks with the EU to reach an agreement for a compromise package deal."

Many small exporters said they did not know what GSP meant. Abdus Salam Khan, who came from Narayanganj to the meeting, said: "I do not really know how I got into this trouble. I always try to make an honest living."

BGMEA vice president Abul Kashem Haider, first vice president Mahbub Ali, second vice president Nurul Haq Sikder, executive committee member Uzair Afzal, Atiqul Islam, Saiful Islam, Reaz Uddin Ahmed also spoke in the meeting.

Quddus launches crusade against corruption

Star Business Report

BGMEA's Mostafa Golam Qudus yesterday launched a crusade against harassment of garments exporters and manufacturers by government officials, calling upon fellow members not to offer bribes to any fire service, customs or bank officials for a deal.

"Never pay bribes to the fire service personnel for a safety certificate," Qudus told BGMEA members at an extraordinary general meeting when a manufacturer asked to help him get a safety certificate.

He asked members to submit to him the names who tried to take bribes. "I will see if some-

one seeks money from you illegally". The EGM was discussing GSP crisis.

Qudus however called upon the members to comply with the government safety regulations before applying for a clearance.

"You have to maintain international safety rules", he said and added that no manufacturer should try to bribe officials for any kind of clearance. "Contact me personally if any such thing happens."

The BGMEA president also told exporters to refer the matter to him if bank or customs officials suggested any underhand deal.

DSE wants netting system

Exchange Rates

The following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 20/8/97.

	TT Clean	OD Sight Export Bills	OD Transfer
US Dlr	44.4200	44.2545	44.1580
GB Pound	70.8227	70.5588	70.4050
D Mark	23.9815	23.8921	23.8400
F Franc	7.1184	7.0918	7.0764
C Dir	31.6876	31.5696	31.5007
S Franc	29.1543	29.0457	28.9823
JP Yen	0.3714	0.3700	0.3692

Selling

Name of Currency	T.T. & O.D.	B.C.
US Dollar	44.7105	44.7505
GB Pound	71.8456	71.9099
D Mark	24.3875	24.4094
F Franc	7.2404	7.2469
C Dollar	32.2270	32.2558
S Franc	29.6594	29.6860
JP Yen	0.3817	0.3821

TT (DOC) US Dollar Spot Buying

US 44.3372

B) Usance Rate

30	60	90	120	180
Days	Days	Days	Days	Days

43.9635 43.9599 42.2221 42.6530 42.1128

C) US Dollar sight export bill 3 months forward purchase: Same as OD sight export Bill buying rate.

The following are the Janata Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 20/8/97.

Selling

Name of Currency	T.T. & O.D.	B.C.
US Dlr	44.4200	44.2493
GB Pound	70.8112	70.5229
D Mark	24.0050	23.9073
F Franc	7.1238	7.0947
JP Yen	0.3734	0.3719
C Dir	31.6963	31.5672
S Franc	29.1623	29.0435

Buying

US 45.0500

GBP 70.8300

S Riyal 11.9000

UAE Dh 12.0500

Janata Bank's selling and buying rates in cash currency for public:

Selling Buying

US Dlr 45.0500 44.5500

GBP 70.8300 68.8300

S Riyal 11.9000 11.5500

UAE Dh 12.0500 11.5500

Chittagong Port

Berth Position and Performance of Vessels as on 20-8-97

Berth No	Name of Vessels	Cargo	L Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Leaving
J/1	Ping Shun	C Clink	Dali	Ustc	23/7
J/2	Sky Sun	G	Mad	Prog	16/8
J/3	Trust-38	Sugar(G)	Darb	Litmond	4/8
J/4	Joy-D	G	Dumb	Oil	12/8
J/5	Hill Harmony	Wheat(P)	Sing	BASS	1/8
J/6	Ultima	Cont	Col	Bardhi	16/8
J/7</td					