

KDA offers to  
buy Khulna  
Textile Mill

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 12: Khulna Development Authority (KDA) has offered to buy Khulna Textile Mill at Taka five crore as fixed earlier by the government.

The KDA, recently communicated the Privatisation Board to purchase the mill.

The KTM established during British rule was closed down in the early part of 1994 due to financial loss.

Earlier, the government refused to sell the mill for Taka three crore to a party.

According to sources, concerned with KTM and KDA, all the machinery of the mill have become rusty and inoperative. If sold to KDA, the entire mill area would be transformed into a most modern commercial area.

Functioning of  
Mongla Port  
reviewed

KHULNA, Feb 12: The first meeting of Mongla Port Development Committee was held yesterday in the Mongla Port auditorium at Khalishpur with Dhira Kumar Nath, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Port and Shipping, in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting reviewed the functioning of the port and discussed ways and means to streamline its activities and gear up handling of cargo.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of Mongla Port Authority Commodore C. B. B. representatives of port users coordination committee, Mongla Port Stevedores Association, Khulna Divisional Inland Water Transport Owners Association, Mongla Bandar Sramik Sangha and Superintendent of Police, Bagerhat.

The meeting discussed in detail setting up of a modern telecommunication system, separate Mongla Port police station and police outpost in the main port area, customs and immigration offices, construction of road up to Joysongoal under foot work programme and immediate implementation of a separate dredging unit project at a cost of Taka 40 crore for maintaining navigability of the port channel.

A working committee with four members was formed in the meeting to look into the implementation of these planned projects.

New Money Changers  
Name and Address

Kornika Money Changer  
69/7, New Rajdhan Super Market,  
Hatkhola

Exposia Money Exchange  
30, Chamelilab, Dhaka

Total Money Exchange  
Plot # 74/E, Road # 17, Banani C/A,  
Dhaka

Adorn Money Changer  
47, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue,  
Kawran Bazar

Majumdar Money Exchange  
28/8, Murad Road, Avoydas Lane,  
Dhaka

Arka Money Changer  
98/C, Senpara Parnata, Mirpur-1,  
Dhaka

Misa Money Exchange Ltd  
90, New Elephant Road, Dhaka

Green Bengal Money Exchange Ltd  
187/1A, Motijheel, Circular Road,  
Dhaka

Karim Money Changer  
Gulbudan Super Market, 5,  
Moulvibazar

Ananda Money Exchange Ltd  
125/A, Santinagar, Dhaka

Allman Money Exchange  
21, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka

Voyager Money Exchange  
9, Shahajada Market,  
Chawkbazar, Chittagong

Simran Money Changer  
32/2, Hatkhola Road, Dhaka

Jamil Money Changer  
313, Elephant Road, Dhaka

Touch Money Exchange Co Ltd  
2, R K Mission Road, Dhaka

Prima Money Exchange  
H-79, Block A, Airport Road,  
Banani, Dhaka

Ramada Money Exchange Ltd  
156, Kamal Ataturk Avenue,  
Banani, Dhaka

The New Continental Money  
Exchange  
9/A, Toyenbee Circular Road, Dhaka

World Link Money Changing Ltd  
22, Enayet Bazar, Chittagong

Bangladesh Money Exchange  
Cantonment  
82, Kakrail, Dhaka

Sardar Money Changer  
100, Mallabag, Dhaka

Proposed Money Changer  
Name and Address

Broadway Money Exchange Co Ltd  
Room No 10/10A, Eastern Plaza,  
Dhaka

Moushan Money Exchange  
76, Khan E Sabur Road, Khulna

Bhuyian Money Changer  
9/C, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka

Habib Money Exchange  
84, Kallyanpur, Dhaka

Rafa Money Changers  
30 BB Avenue, Dhaka

BD Money Changers Ltd  
Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka

Cosmic Money Changer  
6, Amir Complex, Uttara, Dhaka

Solar Money Exchange  
2, R K Mission Road, Dhaka

To be continued

## SEC asks for clarification from company

Going gets tough for Fu-Wang,  
issue manager and auditor

By M Shamsur Rahman

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has asked for a clarification from tiles manufacturer Fu-Wang based on a Daily Star report which pointed out that the company failed to furnish a vital piece of information in its prospectus for a Tk 5 crore IPO.

A senior SEC official said the regulators would not grant the issue manager, Swadesh Investment Management Limited, the merchant banking license which was at the final stage of approval. "It will not be given the license... it will be banned

from handling any more issues."

The regulators are also thinking of stopping the company from raising the IPO money "until the matter is resolved", the official said, speaking anonymously.

The company's auditor will also not be spared. "We'll lodge a complaint with the ICAB against the firm which audited and approved the company accounts," the SEC official said.

The SEC has asked the company to clarify its position on the issues raised in the Star

story published on Wednesday. "We have asked it to give statements if there was any suppression of facts on tax liability," the official said.

The Star report said the company did not mention in its prospectus that it owed government a big sum in unpaid duties.

The authorities are now looking into the legal aspects "before going for an action" against the company. "They would not be allowed to allot shares, they will have to 'hold' the money," the official added.

Meanwhile, an investor wrote to The Daily Star yesterday seeking advice on how he could get a refund of his money he deposited for Fu-Wang shares.

"I want my money back and I don't know what to do," the investor said, requesting anonymity.

SEC officials, asked what would their advice be, assured that the investors money would be paid back and advised the investors to contact SEC "if anybody wants to withdraw investment from the company".

Japan hands over  
contribution to  
CIRDAP

Japan has handed over its contribution amounting to two lakh US dollars to the Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) for fiscal 1997-98, says UNB.

Charge d'Affaires of Japanese Embassy in Dhaka Shigeharu Maruyama and Director General of CIRDAP AVS Reddy yesterday exchanged letters to this effect on behalf of their respective sides at the Japanese Embassy in Dhaka.

This year's contribution will be utilised for conducting two research and pilot projects by the Centre in Bangladesh and other member countries.

The projects are — impact of increase in household income on the status and activities of rural women within the household and economic impacts of peripheral infrastructure for rural poor.

"Japan played a key role in the establishment of CIRDAP in 1979 and since then has been providing financial support to the Centre for implementing various projects.

The accumulated Japanese contribution to CIRDAP up to this fiscal stands at 41.95 lakh US dollar, said a press release.

3 housing projects for  
garment workers likely

BGMEA is actively considering to undertake three housing projects for the garment workers in Dhaka with the assistance of donor agencies and countries, says UNB.

This was stated by BGMEA president Mostafa Golam Qudus during a meeting with American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisation (AFL-CIO) here yesterday.

Director of International Affairs Director Barbara Shallow, Vice-President Elayola Brown and AFL-CIO's Bangladesh Country Programme Director Max Gregory Scholza were present on behalf of AFL-CIO, ILO, UNICEF, UNDP and

other donor countries are expected to extend help in implementation of the projects, he added.

Mostafa Golam Qudus said "BGMEA is aware of protecting the interests of workers. Considering the welfare of the workers we are planning to construct six garments villages outside Dhaka."

The AFL-CIO delegation lauded the role BGMEA in eradicating child labour from the garments sector.

Rijk Van Haarlem, Manager MOU project of BGMEA, ILO and UNICEF and BGMEA Executive Committee Member Lutfor Rahman were also present during the discussion meeting, says a press release.



Opex Group Chairman Anisur Rahman Sinha receiving the National Export Trophy (Gold) from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday. — Star photo

'Asia is world's best  
place to buy shares'

SINGAPORE, Feb 12: Asia is the best place in the world to buy shares despite its recent stock market rallies, influential fund manager Mark Mobius said yesterday, reports Reuters.

Mobius, who runs the 15 billion dollar emerging markets fund of US Group Templeton Worldwide Inc, said Asian markets could rise very sharply in the short term as large foreign investors poured back into the region.

But he said bear markets usually last a couple of years and there would be much more bad news to come before the end of the Asian financial crisis.

"The best opportunities are now here in Asia," Mobius told reporters after a news conference to launch two new local

unit trusts in Singapore.

Generally, looking at the whole spectrum, Asia as a tremendous opportunity," he said. "The currencies have gone down so far they are severely under-valued at these levels."

"I think what probably is going to happen in the next few months is that the Asian market is going to run away. And (Asian stocks) are going to become expensive again, suddenly."

"Prices can be very volatile and I think caution is required for anyone looking at these markets. To pile in when prices go up 20, 30, 40 per cent in one day does not make much sense."

"The problem is liquidity is not very high and therefore the volatility can be very great."

Opex Garments  
gets National  
Export Trophy

Opex Garments has been awarded National Export Trophy for 1993-94 and 1994-95, said a press release.

The company exported ready-made garments worth 28.45 million US dollars in 1993-94 and 47.86 million US dollars in 1994-95.

Chairman of Opex Group Anisur Rahman Sinha received gold medal from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a function held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium yesterday.

Sinha is a former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

Leo Burnett  
to buy 49pc  
share of BBH

Leo Burnett Co will buy 49 per cent share of Burtel, Bogle, Hegarty (BBH) of London, says a press release.

BBH is known throughout the world as a creative AD agency for clients like Levis, Audi and Coke in Europe.

The stake is roughly 50 million dollars — a premium for a minority stake in an agency with only 350 million dollars in billings and less than 20 million dollars in estimated revenues.

Pubali Bank  
holds workshop

A workshop of the Pubali Bank branch managers on "How can we offer services to our customers to become the number one bank in Bangladesh" was held at the bank's head office auditorium on Wednesday.

EA Chaudhury, Chairman Board of Directors of the bank, inaugurated the workshop while Md Qamrul Huda, Managing Director, presided over the session, says a press release.

About 150 officials and all the general managers of the bank were present. MMH Khan, General Manager, delivered the address of welcome.

Tea sale strong  
at Ctg auction

CHITTAGONG, Feb 12: There was another strong market of the weekly tea sale here yesterday at higher rates with both export and internal buyers lending very useful support, market sources said, reports BSS.

Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sudan were active while Poland was rather selective.

Dusts were also strong and advanced further following active internal buying, the sources said.

Bold buyers were an irregular market, cleaner types tended dearer by up to Tk 3/-, large brokens were again a strong feature advancing by Tk 5/- to Tk 10/-, particularly for the smaller types. All other brokens advanced by Tk 5/- to 10/- following quality.

All fannings were a strong market at dealer levels advancing by Tk 8/- to Tk 10/-, especially the medium types.

A total of 1,917 chests and 854 gunny sacks of burths were on offer once again met with a very strong demand at higher rates. Grades were mostly dearer by Tk 5/-, and the best liquoring is selling at Tk 130/- and more particularly the better liquoring types continued to fetch attractive prices as the internal market was very active.

Flora launches  
Lucent tech

Star Business Report

Flora Limited, a computer company, has formally launched Lucent technologies in Bangladesh yesterday.

On this occasion Flora organised a seminar at a city hotel where different advantages of the technology were presented.

Speaking at the seminar V Natarajan, general manager — SAARC region of Global Private System said that the technology had gone much ahead of other companies in the market.

Describing the various advantages of the technology he said, the Systimax Structured Connectivity Solutions (SCS) offered a single, integrated and mixed-media network that handles all information — traffic-voice, data, video and complex building management system.

Lucent technologies offered three complete end-to-end solutions that alone or in combination meet the needs of the customers, he said.



Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed, US Ambassador John C Holzman, President of American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh Forrest E. Cookson and American Express Bank GM John A Smetanka are seen visiting the bank's booth at the US Trade Show in the city yesterday.



Chairman of Pubali Bank Ltd E A Chaudhury delivering speech at the managers' workshop on Wednesday.

Dollar gains against  
most major units

NEW YORK, Feb 12: The dollar gained against most major currencies Wednesday, while speculation about rising British interest rates strengthened the pound against other European currencies, reports AP.

But with little real news Wednesday, trading was thin as investors kept an eye on upcoming events such as the Group of Seven meeting next week that was to be preceded by the unveiling of a Japanese economic stimulus programme. Traders also kept watch on events regarding Iraq and allegations concerning President Clinton.

"People really don't know quite what to do" even though the US economy remains sound, said John McCarthy, senior vice president for foreign exchange at ING Capital Markets. "We're still in these rather modest (trading) ranges and I don't think we're going to get out of them for a bit."

The dollar edged up to 123.48 Japanese yen in late New York trading from 123.19 yen late Tuesday. The dollar also was changing hands in New York at 1.8187 German marks, up from 1.8073.

Investors had thought there would be no further interest rate increases in England until the release Wednesday of the minutes from the Jan 8 meeting of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, where three of its eight members voted to raise rates.

The mark also fell as economic reports revealed that inflation rose and retail sales fell in Germany.

Other late dollar rates in New York, compared with late Tuesday: 1.4620 Swiss francs, up from 1.4605; 6.0935 French francs, up from 6.0581; 1.794.25 Italian lire, up from 1.785 and 1.4330 Canadian dollars, down from 1.4336.

The British pound was quoted at 1.6327 dollars, up from 1.6252 dollars.

TOKYO, Feb 12: The Asian Tigers are starting to roar again, but don't throw money at them just yet, analysts warn.

It was only a few months ago that the high-flying Asian economies fell to earth. Their stock markets took such a drubbing that many wondered if the Asian miracle hadn't just been a mirage.

Now, those markets are soaring once again, outperforming stock indexes in New York and London.

The resurrection of the Asian miracle?

Not yet, say analysts.

While international aid and domestic reforms have restored a degree of investor confidence to some Asian markets, the nifty-gritty work of reforming these economies still lies ahead.

"The rallies will run out in a few weeks at most," said Jake van der Kamp, investment strategist for ABN Amro Asia in Hong Kong. Turning these economies around "is going to be a long, slow haul."

One thing is certain: the rallies have been spectacular.

Thailand — where the Asian

## Asian economies starting to roar again

By Martin Fackler, AP writer

crisis began in July — has seen its benchmark index skyrocket an astounding 55 per cent since the start of 1998. South Korea's main index, which lost more than half its value last year, is up 40 per cent.

Tokyo — the worst-performing major market in the 1990s — is up 20 per cent since New Years. Even Indonesia has seen shares rebound, and Singapore's market is up 10 per cent.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average, by contrast, has risen only 5 per cent even though it set two new records this week.

Asian markets have gotten a boost from rescue operations led by the International Monetary Fund that have forced local governments to embark on politically painful reforms.

Thailand got dlr 17 billion from the IMF while shutting down 56 ailing finance companies and taking over several more. The IMF offered South Korea 57 billion dollars, but

only after it promised to throw open its doors to foreign investment and force labour unions to accept new laws making layoffs easier.

Ironically, these very reforms could end up undermining the stock market recoveries by squelching economic growth.

As surviving Thai banks cut back on new lending to build up cash reserves, the drying up of funds is likely to send the Thai economy into severe recession, analysts say.

That dismal outlook has limited recent stock rallies mostly to shares of only the strongest companies, such as South Korea's Samsung Electronics.

The future of many of the Tigers is clouded by the mountains of foreign debt they ran up as economies boomed.

Korea, for instance, owes overseas lenders some 153 bil-

lion dollars, more than half of it due within a year or less.

And the drop in Asian currencies has plunged these countries even deeper into debtors' mayhem by making repaying those loans even more expensive.

Worse, much of the borrowed money wasn't used to pay for productive new factories or research, but to speculate in real estate or import cars, electronics and clothes for the new middle class. The result: hemorrhaging trade deficits that triggered Asia's financial crisis in the first place.

Ending this dependence on overseas borrowing means a belt-tightening that will drive many people out of work and force the rest to live within more humble means.

Such austerity runs the risk of political turmoil. Indonesia is seen as most vulnerable to unrest.

The biggest challenge facing

Asian economies is cleaning up shoddy banking practices. Until now, bank lending decisions were based more on whom the borrowers knew than whether they could repay.

Not knowing a risky loan when they saw one has burdened Asian banks with a staggering load of bad debt.

When the Thai government took over ailing Bangkok Metropolitan Bank on Monday, it found that more than 40 per cent of the bank's loans were sour. Korean banks are also in dire straits: at least 29 trillion won (17 billion dollars) in bad loans.

"The banking system in Korea still hasn't turned the corner," said Richard Samuelson, an executive director at SBC Warburg Dillon Read Securities in Seoul. Writing off bad loans has never been easy.

The Tigers have only to look to Japan, Asia's largest economy, to see how difficult writ-

ing off bad debt can be.

Japanese banks still carry 76 trillion yen (610 billion dollars) in non-performing loans on their books — six years after the property market crashed, causing a wave of defaults.

Japan's economy has remained in a slump ever since.

But Japanese stocks have rallied as politicians — spurred to action by a recent string of bankruptcies — have finally promised to help banks write off bad loans with public funds.

Analysts praise countries like Thailand and Indonesia, which have moved more quickly to clean up their banking industry.

While the magnitude of their problems and the relative weakness of their economies promise to make recovery a roller coaster ride, they appear to be moving in the right direction.

"Markets will be volatile," said Neil Saker, head of economic research at Socgen-Cressey Securities in Singapore. "But the long-term trend is upward."

G-7 considering  
creation of \$10b  
Asian trade  
insurance fund

PARIS, Feb 12: The United States and the Group of Seven industrialised nations are considering creation of a 10 billion dollars emergency trade insurance fund to help Asian firms continue manufacturing activities, the International Herald Tribune said yesterday, reports Reuters.

James Harmon, Chairman of the Export-Import Bank, the US agency that provides loan guarantees for US exporters, said the aim was to ensure companies in Asia could continue to import inputs and raw materials to maintain manufacturing, the paper said.

It said the move had the backing of US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and was being coordinated with Asian governments and the International Monetary Fund.

The following are the Janata Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 12/2/98.

Buying			
Name of Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Export Bills	OD Transfer
US Dir	46.1350	45.9462	45.8334
GB Pound	74.9389	74.6239	74.4406
D Mark	25.2405	25.1344	25.0727
Fr Franc	7.2592	7.4975	7.4791
JP Yen	0.3726	7.4975	7.4791
C Dir	31.8930	31.7589	31.6809
S Franc	31.3593	31.2275	31.1508

Selling			
Name of Currency	T.T. & O.D.	B.C.	
US Dollar	46.5104	46.5488	
GB Pound	76.1048	76.1701	
D Mark	25.6874	25.7094	
Fr Franc	7.6642	7.6707	
JP Yen	0.3817	0.3820	
C Dollar	32.4600	32.4878	
S Franc	31.9713	31.9986	

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

S DLR	47.0000	46.5000
GBP	75.1000	73.1000
Riyal	12.5000	12.0500
AE DH	12.5000	12.0500
UW DI	150.5000	145.5000