

India allows foreign cigarette makers to set up firms

NEW DELHI, Aug 28: The Indian government yesterday authorised foreign cigarette makers to set up fully-owned subsidiaries in the country...

Course on improved stove concludes

Star Business Report The week-long 159th training course on improved stove was ended at the Institute of Fuel Research and Development (IFRD)...

Lending rule violations

Three Indonesian bank directors arrested

JAKARTA: Police arrested three directors of banks whose operations were frozen last week on allegations that they violated lending limit regulations...

The government is under international pressure to show it is serious about cleaning up the banking sector...

'Failure of major banks in Japan may hurt world economy'

TOKYO, Aug 28: The failure of major Japanese banks must be avoided because it could touch off a chain reaction around the world...

Study sees a prosperous Bangladesh in 2020

"Bangladesh 2020: A long-run Perspective Study," released yesterday by the World Bank and the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies...

A Roadmap for Prosperity in the 21st Century No prophecy of long-term progress, however, can be realised without devising comprehensive strategies...

Vision for 2020 The authors of the perspective analysis, all Bangladeshi scholars and all respected figures in their special fields, believe that Bangladesh has the ability to achieve in the year 2020:

Spurring growth and job creation To ensure growth and success, this study envisions, it will be crucial to find new ways of creating jobs in activities where Bangladesh commands comparative advantage...

Investing in people Bangladesh now spends about US\$7 per capita on health and population services, much of it inefficiently, the report says.

cutting its population growth rate in order to achieve a replacement fertility rate of 1.8 per cent.

Although Bangladesh spends two per cent of GDP on education (compared to a South Asian average of 3.3 per cent) much of even that modest investment is being wasted...

To give its young people the educational opportunities, the report recommends that Bangladesh increase public outlays for schooling to a level of three per cent of GDP by 2000...

The social rate of return on investments in education — 18 per cent at the primary level, 14 per cent at the secondary — rises even higher when the students are women.

The pressure of rising numbers of people on finite amounts of land, water and other natural resources has already meant mounting deforestation (a reduction from 10 to 6 per cent in forest cover) that may become irreversible within 20 years...

Banning leaded petrol in the short-term and phasing out two-stroke engines rapidly to help alleviate air pollution.

Enforcing environmental controls on tanneries, pulp and paper manufacturers, distilleries, and textile dyers, among others, to improve water quality.

For sound, stand-alone economic reasons, investing not only in the use of Bangladesh's own relatively clean natural gas, but also in the development of renewable energy — especially solar and perhaps wind and bio-mass — as substitutes for polluting and expensive fossil fuels.

Managing Urbanisation and Investing Infrastructure With 13.5 million urban people now living below the country's absolute poverty line, Bangladesh can count on having low wages as an attraction to foreign capital well into the next century...

To meet the enormous costs associated with meeting future demands for services in Bangladesh's cities, the present, ineffective system of central government grants to municipalities must be replaced with mechanisms that require and enable local governments to collect their own revenues to cover the services they provide...

Bangladesh's Urban Challenge By 2020, industry could contribute as much as 40 per cent of GDP — double that of agriculture's 18-20 per cent share, and counteracting a challenging demographic shift from the countryside to the cities.

A very comprehensive long-term programme of investments to modernise Bangladesh's transportation, energy and telecommunications infrastructure represents an essential underpinning of the strategies for growth, the study advocates.

Financing for the 2020 Vision For the ambitious vision for Bangladesh's future to be realistic, there must be evidence that the diverse, projected strategic investments can be financed.

At the governmental level, for instance, considerable savings can be won through prudent fiscal and monetary management, through tax base expansion that does not undercut businesses and by a financial-sector overhaul that aims at creating a sound banking system and a vibrant capital market.

The private sector must provide a significant share of those savings. Efforts to promote thrift at home and, at a minimum, to assure the continued flow of remittances from Bangladeshi workers abroad must include thorough-going reform of ill-managed banks and of the newborn, still poorly regulated capital markets.



Two girls stand in front of a closed shop reading a sign that it's closed in downtown Moscow on Thursday. Many stores were closing down in order to review their price tags to avoid losses because of the rouble's steep dive.

Chernomyrdin claims he has crisis under control

MOSCOW, Aug 28: Russia's acting prime minister struggled to keep the lid on his country's exploding economic and political crisis Friday, claiming the situation was under control as the opposition demanded the government step down...

Parliamentary leaders agreed that lawmakers would meet Monday to consider the confirmation of Acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was appointed by Yeltsin this week to try to stem the country's mounting political and financial crisis.

All Asian stock mkts but HK fall

HONG KONG, Aug 28: Japanese share prices plunged to their worst level in six years, leading a worldwide sell-off in response to domestic and Russian woes...

US commodities down to their lowest in 20 yrs

NEW YORK, Aug 28: Commodity prices fell to their lowest level in more than 20 years yesterday as the economic crisis in Russia added to the gloom haunting the global economy...

Asia's economic woes started in July 1997 in Thailand and the contagion spread to the rest of the Pacific rim region and Russia. Demand for commodities had dried up in the ailing economies and the backup of unwanted supplies have depressed prices.

DHL receives S'pore award

DHL Worldwide Express has become the first air express company to receive the International Trade Award (ITA), special recognition for "Innovative Application of Information Technology," says a press release.

Australian dollar down to new low amid global turmoil

SYDNEY, Australia, Aug 28: The Australian dollar and stocks staged a mild recovery Friday after turmoil on global markets overnight sent the currency tumbling to unprecedented lows...

Moody's downgrades credit rating of another major Japanese bank

TOKYO, Aug 28: Dealing the latest blow to confidence in Japan's financial system, Moody's Investor Service said Friday that it cut the long-term credit rating of Fuji Bank Ltd.