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The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA, THURSDAY MAY 25, 2000

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SEC nominates Investors' Protection Funds chairman

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has nominated former Law Secretary Mohammad Sohul Hussain as Chairman of the Boards of Trustees of Dhaka and Chittagong Stock Exchange Investors' Protection Funds, says a press release.

UNB adds: SEC also nominated Engineer Ali Ahmed of ASTECH Ltd as Trustee of the Board under the provision of regulation 4(2) of the Chittagong Stock Exchange Investors' Protection Fund Regulations, 1999.

SEC nominated Prof Abu Saleh of Dhaka University Management Department as trustee of the Board of Trustees of Dhaka Stock Exchange Investors' Protection Fund under the provision of regulation 5(2) of the Dhaka Stock Exchange Investors' Protection Fund Regulations, 1999.

Tax-free computer import to continue despite smuggling

Kibria says at Daffodil-HP deal launching

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria yesterday said that despite leakage of computer hardware through the borders due to duty-free import into the country, the tax-free status of computers and accessories would continue to bolster the growth of information technology (IT) industry.

The minister, however, sought cooperation of the entrepreneurs to stop the reported cross-border smuggling of computers and hardware and called upon the vendors to maintain a list of the computer hardware buyers in their register.

Kibria was speaking at a function to mark the official

launching of the agreement between a US-based IT company and a local computer firm. As per the agreement, Daffodil Computers Ltd. has been appointed as Hewlett Packard's authorised corporate reseller and service provider in Bangladesh.

The government had withdrawn tax and duty on imported computers and accessories in the last budget.

Terminating the deal as the prelude to a process of the local firms' joint business ventures with internationally-reputed companies, the minister said that there was no scope for the entrepreneurs to just sit back.

He said that the investors need to come up with more and more investments in this thriving sector.

Assuring of reasonable government support, Kibria said the government is committed to removing all hitches to private V-SAT installations for boosting the speed of Internet-related services.

Speaking on the occasion, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) Aftab Ul Islam said that had the government offered tax benefits to the IT industry seven or eight years ago, the earnings of the industry would have easily crossed the earnings of the

readymade garments (RMG) sector by now.

Aftab also said that in the next five to six years, the RMG industry might lose its long-cherished position as the country's biggest foreign exchange earner to IT.

Hewlett Packard Marketing Manager David Ong said they are taking the opportunity of the government's proactive support to bolster growth of the IT industry.

Managing Director of Daffodil Computers Md Sabur Khan and HP Business Development Manager Peter Quek also spoke on the occasion.



Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria, Aftab Ul Islam, President of DCCI, Peter Quek, Business Manager of Hewlett Packard (HP), David Ong, Marketing Manager of HP, and Md Sabur Khan, Managing Director of Daffodil Computers Ltd, are seen at a function organised at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday to mark the new venture of HP and Daffodil Computers.

— Daffodil Computers photo

GMG celebrates completion of 2nd yr operation

GMG Airlines celebrated the successful completion of its 2nd year of operation with a gala programme on Tuesday evening, says a press statement.

The programme included a celebration party at a local hotel, awarding of the raffle draw winners followed by a grand dinner.

Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism Chowdhury M Mohsin and Chairman, CAAB, Air Commodore Iqbal Hossain, were present as the chief guest and special guest respectively. The function was also attended by raffle draw winners as well as other distinguished guests.

On the occasion, GMG thankfully acknowledged the support of its valued passengers and patrons.

As part of the second year celebration, they had a month-long Raffle Draw Promotion. Lucky winners from all over Bangladesh were awarded. Besides, the top sixteen travel agents were awarded crests and certificates.

Express Insurance elects chairman, vice-chairman

The first meeting of the Board of Directors of Express Insurance Limited, a new general insurance company, was held on Monday, says a press release.

The meeting unanimously elected Maj. Gen. Manzur Rashid Khan (Retd) chairman and Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury vice-chairman.

Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury is the Chairman of Khalil Group and a renowned figure in the business community.

S M Shamsul Alam, Managing Director (Current Charge), was also present in the meeting. Directors of the company expressed their firm determination to make the new company an ideal and service-oriented insurance institution.

Weekly Ctg tea sale

Price gap between good and poor types widens

CHITTAGONG, May 24: Liquoring types with good leaf style attracted strong interest from blenders, internal market and export buyers while the plainer varieties were again discounted with quite a fair quantity remaining unsold in the tea auction held here yesterday, reports UNB.

The price difference between better teas and the poorest ones widened further.

Pakistan buyers lent some support, pushing prices up to Tk 51 per kg whilst there was some out-market interest for the best teas on offer at higher prices.

The blenders and internal buyers were active for all good-liquoring teas on offer.

CTC Leaf: 7,592 chests, 5,798 gunny sacks and 184 chests and 675 gunny sacks of old season on offer met with a fair good demand, but there were withdrawals.

CTC Broken: Well-made broken were a strong market and were generally dearer particularly for the improved liquoring types, which appreciated by up to Tk 2 to 3. But all others, especially the plainer varieties, were easier by up to Tk 3 with fair withdrawals.

Large and bold blenders met with slightly better demand and were generally firm. Poorest types on offer met a little inquiry, and where sold, shed up to Tk 4 to Tk 6 per kg.

CTC Fannings: The improved liquoring types were strongly competed for and advanced generally by Tk 2, while mediums were fully firm. Plainer types were mostly easier, easing up to Tk 2 to Tk 3. There were also some withdrawals in this category.

CTC Dust: 769 chests, and 1,988 and 175 gunny sacks of old season on offer met with a good demand.

Operation management of airports to be privatised

Minister at launching of new Air Parabat aircraft

SYLHET, May 24: The government is mulling over the privatisation of some portions of operation management aspects of the airports to ensure international standard services, said Works and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain today, reports BSS.

"Operation management like cargo handling, ground handling and duty-free shop of the airports would be handed over to the private sector for enhancing efficiency," the minister said at a function to mark inauguration of a 40-seater AN-24 aircraft of Air Parabat Limited at Station Club here.

The minister said the operation management side of Sylhet and Chittagong airports would be privatised in the first phase and gradually other airports would be brought under the move. A proposal in this regard would be placed in the Cabinet meeting soon for approval, he added.

Referring to the worldwide privatisation process intended to bring efficiency and reduce passengers' sufferings, the minister said the operation

management side of many international airports like Heathrow has already been privatised.

He said the structure of civil aviation would also be changed soon. Regulatory side of the Civil Aviation Authority would be under government control, while the operation management side of the airports would go to the private sector, he added.

Referring to the private sector-friendly policy of the present government, the minister said a number of private sector operators are now operating aircraft in domestic routes in a profitable way.

The minister called upon the private sector air operators to bring more mini-size cost-effective aircraft to make functional the small and unused airports of Bogra, Ishwardi and Shamsnagar.

A skeleton staff would be deployed in Bogra, Ishwardi and Shamsnagar airports to make them operational soon, the minister said, hoping that the private sector air operators would increase air link with the

remote areas of the country.

Referring to the private sector air operators' efficiency in cargo handling, the minister said a number of aircraft are now carrying fish fry from Cox's Bazar to Jessore, saving time and money.

The minister said the expansion work of the Sylhet airport is expected to be completed by April next year and that would help landing of more London-Sylhet and Dubai-Sylhet flights. Two direct London-Sylhet and one Dubai-Sylhet flights are now operating per week and another flight of London-Sylhet route would operate from next week, he added.

The function was also addressed by Muhibur Rahman Manik MP, Chairman of Air Parabat Limited former Air Vice Marshal AK Khandkar MP, Captain Shamsul Islam and Adviser to Air Parabat Ltd Muhammad Ali Tareq.

Air Parabat Limited, a private sector air operator, added the 40-seater AN-24 aircraft from Uzbekistan to increase its strength of domestic route operation.



Works and Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain is seen with Chairman of Air Parabat Ltd AK Khondokar MP, Muhibur Rahman MP, Nadera Alam, MD, Jainul Karim, Director, Jaglul Karim, Vice Chairman, Md Ali Tareq, adviser to Air Parabat, and others at the launching ceremony of the new AN-24 aircraft (seen in the background) of the airlines in Sylhet yesterday.

— Star photo

EU seeks to help Bangladesh jute sector in post-IJO era

Commerce minister told in Brussels

BRUSSELS, May 24: European Union (EU) would look into the possibilities of helping Bangladesh and other jute producers in the post-International Jute Organisation (IJO) era, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission Poul Nielson told Commerce Minister Mohammad Abdul Jalil when they met here yesterday, reports BSS.

The EU commissioner said that jute deserved to be looked after carefully in view of its eco-friendly nature. He said EU would focus on a more careful approach to jute's market-based activity and research for fresh ideas for the application of jute-based products.

The minister expressed satisfaction at the signing of the EC-Bangladesh Cooperation Agreement which, he pointed out, would ensure continuity in future cooperation between Bangladesh and the European Union.

He thanked Commissioner Nielson and the EU authorities

for the support and assistance provided to Bangladesh since 1971, particularly for the generous assistance provided after the devastating floods in 1998. He said EU assistance had helped Bangladesh in poverty alleviation, education, health and population control and infrastructural development.

The Commerce Minister subsequently requested the commissioner to take necessary steps for arranging an institutional alternative to IJO to help Bangladesh jute and jute products.

He informed him of Bangladesh's commitment to the principles of democracy, rule of law, transparency and accountability, the minister also spoke about Bangladesh's efforts towards population control and women empowerment.

Jalil added that the present government was very keen to boost institutional capacity in the fields of environment and information technology. He sought institutional support

from the EU in this regard. He also requested the commissioner to ensure a more active EU participation in the development cooperation activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. This, he said, was necessary for the success of the implementation of the peace agreement.

In response to the minister's comments, commissioner Nielson informed him of EU efforts to further strengthen its relations with Bangladesh.

He appreciated the manner in which Bangladesh had been able to handle post-flood relief and rehabilitation in 1998. He termed this as a "success story" and said that the EU felt greatly satisfied in being associated with the whole process.

The EU Commissioner appreciated Bangladesh's commitment towards maintenance of international peace and security through its participation in the UN peace-keeping operations.

This, he said was an example for many others to follow.

Boro output may exceed 1.15cr MT

The country's Boro production may exceed 1.15 crore metric tons this year against the target of 98 lakh metric tons, reports BSS.

"The primary statistics we have received so far shows that the Boro production has exceeded the target," said State Minister for Planning Dr Moinuddin Khan Alamgir while inaugurating a seminar on "Impact of several development projects in alleviating poverty," in the city.

Organised by the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of Plan-

ning Commission, the seminar was presided over by IMED Secretary A K M Anisur Rahman.

Director of the Evaluation Unit Dr Mohammad Bazlur Rahman presented an evaluation report on three projects after conducting a survey on it.

Dr Rahman, while reading out the impact of Expanded Rural Social Welfare Project (fourth phase), said the average annual income of a beneficiary of the project has increased to Tk 28,280 against Tk 16,094 before inclusion in the project.

Dr Alamgir said bumper Boro harvest is the outcome of

the government's various steps to increase agricultural production. Describing the achievements of different projects undertaken by the government in the field of education, health, and agriculture to alleviate poverty, the minister said the rate of the number of people living below poverty level has gone down to 44 per cent now from 56 per cent in early 1990.

The government aims at reducing the rate to 32 per cent by the year 2002.

Dr Alamgir said the government has given more em-

phasis on building rural infrastructures to revamp the rural economy that would create scopes for employment generation through expanding trade and commerce.

The minister pointed out weaknesses and lapses of the survey conducted by IMED on several projects that are contributing in alleviating poverty and said the return of administrative expenditure and involvement of local government bodies — the major factors in implementing a project — were not taken into consideration.

UTTARA FINANCE AND INVESTMENTS LIMITED
JBC Tower (6th floor), 10 Dilkusha C. A., Dhaka-1000

Price sensitive information

A. Business information for 1999 (Taka in million)

Leasing and financing business	301.47
Merchant banking operation	51.96
Total	353.43

B. Financial information for 1999 (Taka in million)

Operational revenue	211.45
Operational expenses	181.13
Profit after tax	28.15
Earning per share	23.46

C. Annual General Meeting, Dividend and Book closure

Date of Fifth AGM	Tuesday 20 June, 2000
Venue of Fifth AGM	Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel
Dividend for 1999 as recommended by the Board	Tk 15 as cash dividend for every share of Tk 100
Book closure	From 31-5-2000 to 20-6-2000 (Both days inclusive)

Sd/-
Santanu Saha, Company Secretary

Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of Bangladesh

Strengthening the Office of the C & AG Project
Audit Bhavan
189, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Sarani
Dhaka-1000

Notice for Prequalification

No: STAG/42 Dated: 18 May 2000
Notice for Prequalification of IT Firms for Database Development and Network Solution in the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor-General of Bangladesh

Strengthening the Office of the C&AG (STAG) Project, a project funded by UNDP intends to prepare a panel of prequalified IT firms to develop and install a database and Computer Network in the office of the Comptroller & Auditor-General of Bangladesh and its subordinate audit offices. Applications are invited from reputed local IT firms for being prequalified bidders for this system solution (software development, network installation and hardware supply). Applicants can apply in association with hardware supplier and software developer company.

Minimum eligibility of the firms:

- The applicants who have successfully completed the design and installation of the network of minimum Tk. 75.00 (Taka seventy five lakhs only) lakhs in a single work during last 5 years.
- The applicants who have successfully completed the design, development and installation of the client server-based database of minimum Tk. 5.00 (Taka five lakhs only) lakhs in a single work during last 5 years.
- The applicants must be a distributor/agent of globally well-known vendors supplying brand Computers, Servers, Workstations etc.
- The minimum eligibility as stated above are only the primary qualification to submit application but not the criteria for being short-listed in the panel of prequalified bidders for the project.

Prequalification document can be collected from the office of the undersigned from Room No: 25 of Audit Bhavan (2nd Floor), 189, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Sarani, Dhaka 1000 on all working days up to 8 June 2000 during office hours on payment of Tk 1000.00 (Taka one thousand) only (non-refundable). Applications shall be received in the office of the undersigned up to 1300 hours on 12 June 2000.

The STAG Project reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the applications without assigning any reason whatsoever.

DFP-12528-22/5
G-988

Mohammed Iqbal Hossain
MIS Director.

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Purana Pallan 017-634157, 017-324817; Karwan Bazar 9121053-7 Ext. 202
Fax: 880-2-8117429, 8118429 E-mail: cool@enemomni.com

Biman BANGLADESH AIRLINES

Tender Notice

Quotation for Computerization of GSE and MT Stores Inventory Systems

- Biman Bangladesh Airlines invites offer (Tender) from supplier/developer for supply of software package for Ground Support Equipment (GSE) and Motor Transport (MT) Inventory Systems. Tender to be submitted based on terms and conditions as detailed in the tender schedule.
- The offer to be submitted in two sealed envelopes, one for technical offer and another for financial offer, addressed to Director Administration, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Head Office, Balaka, Kurmitola, Dhaka 1229, Bangladesh latest by 1200 hours BST (0600 hours UTC) on or before 1st July, 2000 and the same will be opened immediately after the closing time in presence of the bidders (if any).
- Tender schedule containing detailed specification and terms and conditions will be available from Cash & Banking Section, Biman Head Office, Balaka, Kurmitola, Dhaka from 25th May, 2000 on all working days during office hours on payment of Tk 500.00 (Five hundred) only.
- Biman Bangladesh Airlines reserves the right to accept/reject any or all of offer(s) partly or wholly at any time or at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and no claim shall be entertained in this regard.

Deputy General Manager
CMIS

GD-480