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The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA, TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2000

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Govt asks missions to help tap new rubber markets

Rainbow Associates' proves an eye-opener

By Mustak Hossain

Encouraged by the first rubber export last week, Bangladesh has asked its missions abroad to gear up the drive for tapping new markets. "We are looking for more buyers of our rubber," said an official of the Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation (BFIDC). "We are capable of doubling our production from the present level of about 8,000 tonnes provided we get prospective buyers."

plan for sending delegations to Pakistan and Russia to explore rubber markets there. Earlier, the Corporation got an order from Pakistan, but the deal tumbled on bureaucratic tangles and was subsequently cancelled. But after another two-and-a-half years of lengthy processing, a private firm—Rainbow Associates—managed to finally export its first 18-tonne consignment of rubber to Russia last week.

"Rainbow struck a deal with Unimax Ltd., a Bangladeshi firm operating in Moscow, to sell 500 tonnes of rubber at US\$ 625 per tonne," said company Managing Director Muhammad Maruf Hossain, adding "Bangladesh can expect to attract more foreign buyers as it produces good quality and cheaper rubber."

cheaper than that of Vietnam and Myanmar. He said the country can easily increase rubber output by introducing high-yielding, high-quality and wind resistant varieties of plants. Bangladesh has a total of 32 plantations in public and private sectors, covering an area of 65,000 acres in the south-eastern and northeastern hilly regions. The sector currently employs about 10,000 people.

Dhaka calls for meaningful access of LDC goods to EU

Bangladesh has urged the European Union to give more meaningful duty-free and quota-free market access to all products of least developed countries, reports UNB. Bangladesh Ambassador Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury made the request while speaking at a review of the European Union's trade policies by the World Trade Organisation's Trade Policy Review Body in Geneva last week, according to a message received here yesterday. The 3-day review meeting ended on Friday. After the meeting, Ambassador Iftakhar Chowdhury said that there was a "wide appreciation among member countries of the leading role of the European Union in the WTO."

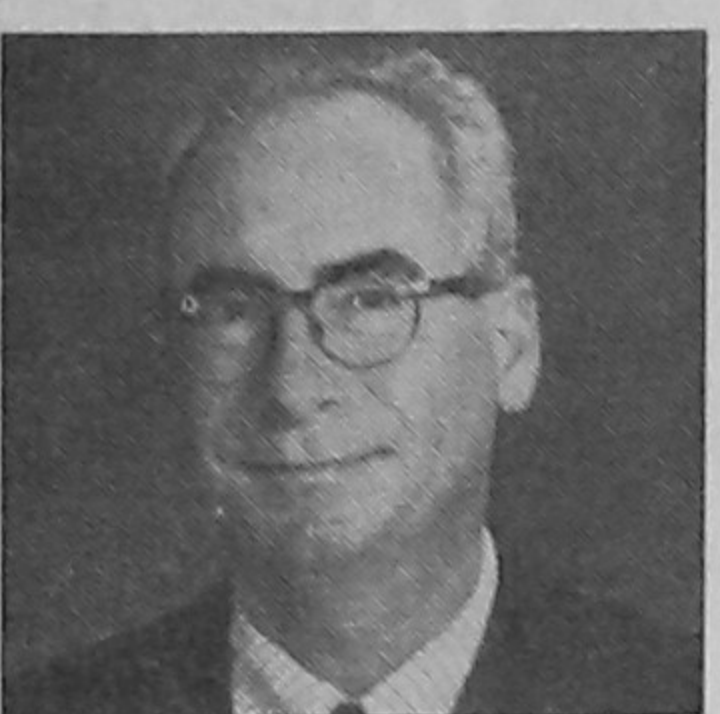
SEC mulls OTC trading system for weak shares

Star Business Report

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is planning to introduce over-the-counter (OTC) trading system for the weak company stocks. In a press conference yesterday, the newly-appointed SEC Chairman Manir Uddin Ahmad said the recently-introduced trade-for-trade settlement system for trading shares of 71 companies on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) by the Commission "includes many issues which are out of business or production for quite a long time beyond the knowledge of the investors."

He said the OTC market will be introduced for further classification of these shares, which is pretty urgent. Ahmad said a number of listed companies have been found to be reluctant to hold annual general meetings (AGMs) for avoiding pressures from their shareholders. "From now on, the SEC will identify these companies and direct them to hold AGMs within four months, failing which they will be separated from A category shares and traded in the OTC market," the chairman said.

He hoped that the measures would encourage the listed companies to improve their management and distribute profits among their shareholders by holding AGMs on a regular basis. Ahmad said if these companies fail to upgrade their respective status, then the Commission will explore chances of mergers and acquisitions for the firms. Regarding the recent surge in share prices, the SEC chairman said that it was mainly due to positive budgetary measures.



New MD of Siemens Bangladesh

Dr Peter E Albrich has taken over the charges of Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens Bangladesh Limited from Soeren Rendal who has been given new assignments within the Siemens Group of companies, says a press release. Prior to this, Dr Albrich was the Senior Vice-President of Siemens Transportation Systems in Singapore and Malaysia. He also worked in other capacities such as management functions for research and development, sales and engineering, and large infrastructure projects for the Energy, Automation and Transportation Systems divisions of Siemens AG. A ceremonial charge handing over was held on Monday at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. The ceremony was attended by Dr Juergen Oberig, Executive Director, Siemens AG, and high officials from the headquarters.



The half-yearly Managers' Conference of Prime Bank Limited was held Thursday. K M Khaled, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Kazi Abdul Mazid, Managing Director, Md Shahadat Hossain, Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee, Naser Bukhtear Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director, M A Wahhab, representative Director, and Syed Sadullah Ahmed, Vice Chairman of the Board, are seen with the managers who achieved their targets in the Customer Service Month. —Prime Bank photo

Prime Bank's 6-month profit Tk 25.22 cr

Star Business Report

Prime Bank Limited earned a profit of Tk 25.22 crore during the first half of the year 2000. This was stated by Managing Director of the bank, Kazi Abdul Mazid, during the two-day half-yearly Managers' Conference which concluded in the city on Sunday, says a press release.

The meeting which began on Saturday was presided over by the Managing Director. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the bank, K M Khaled, was the chief guest at the conference.

Syed Sadullah Ahmed, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, M A Wahhab, representative of the Policy Committee Chairperson, Md Shahadat Hossain, Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Md Shirajul Islam Mollah, Vice Chairman of the Policy Committee, were present at the conference as guests.

Naser Bukhtear Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director, branch managers and several executives of the bank participated in the conference. In his inaugural speech, the chairman emphasised the need for training the officers so that they are able to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

Dwelling on the performance of the bank during the half-year period, the Managing Director stated that Prime Bank earned an operating profit of Tk 25.22 crore upto June 30, 2000 registering a growth of 82 per cent over the same period of last year.

He also informed that during the said period the bank's deposit grew by 47 per cent to Tk 975.33 crore and advance by 69 per cent to Tk 625.09 crore over December 1999.

IMF gives upbeat assessment of euro-zone economy

BRUSSELS, July 17: The euro-zone economy is enjoying its best health in years, with budgets nearing balance, inflation low and unemployment falling, the International Monetary Fund said in a report released Monday, reports AP. "It is hard to remember a period when the fundamentals have been so good," said the report which the IMF presented to European Union finance ministers. "Conditions for a sustained recovery have not been as auspicious in a long time and leave scope ... for the European Union

becoming a high-performing economy." EU ministers welcomed the report. "We're in the best situation for decades," said Spanish Economics Minister Rodrigo Rato. — French Finance Minister Laurent Fabius, who chaired the EU meeting, said the IMF report showed that the euro was "seriously undervalued." The shared currency has fallen some 20 per cent against the dollar since its launch on Jan 1, 1999, and was trading at around 94 cents Monday.

The IMF's rosy assessment of prospects for the 11 nation euro-zone was tempered by a warning that Europe's authorities need to avoid past mistakes such as short-term tax cuts or spending increases that could endanger sustained growth. "A long and strong expansion hinges on policies (that) avoid obstacles that have derailed past recoveries," the report said. Euro-zone nations should aim for balanced budgets by next year, or 2002 at the latest, the report said.

Tashkent assures Dhaka of steps to facilitate exports

TASHKENT, July 17: Uzbekistan foreign minister Abdus Aziz Kamilov today assured Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad of necessary steps to facilitate the entry of Bangladeshi export items to his country, reports BSS. The assurance came when Azad, now on a visit to the Central Asian country, requested Kamilov for providing concessional facilities to Bangladesh products to Uzbekistan during official talks this morning, a member of the Bangladesh delegation said.

He said the Uzbek foreign minister assured Azad that necessary steps would be taken to facilitate the entry of Bangladeshi export items into that country. Azad arrived here yesterday on a five-day visit.

During the talks held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways and means of further strengthening the existing ties. Azad briefed Kamilov and the members of the Uzbek delegation on the political and socio-economic achievements of the Bangladesh government in the last four years. In this context, he particularly highlighted the efforts of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to strengthen and consolidate democracy and to make parliament the focal point of discussion of all national issues. Referring to the economic achievements of the government, the foreign minister cited the successes achieved in the fields of poverty alleviation, elimination of illiteracy and

micro-financing scheme of the government to empower women, the destitute and the elderly people. The "Asravan Project" of the government, particularly featured in the talks. Kamilov informed Azad that Uzbekistan was keenly following the developments in Bangladesh. He said that in appreciation of the government's rational policies and moderate and constructive role in the major regional and international issues, his country supported Bangladesh's candidature for membership of the UN Security Council and UNESCO Governing Board. Azad also requested his counterpart to allow Bangladeshi businessmen to directly purchase cotton from his country.



An agreement was signed yesterday between Ericsson Consumer Products and Navana Ltd for Navana taxi cabs to carry Ericsson signage. The deal was inked in the city by Ericsson Consumer Products General Manager Anwar Hossain and Navana Ltd General Manager J A Nasser. Also present on the occasion were Ericsson Mobile Phone's Service Manager Hafez Al Assad and Ericsson Consumer Product Channel Marketing Coordinator Iftakhar Matin. —Adcomm photo

Conflicts, disasters shot demand for emergency food aid in '99

UNITED NATIONS, July 17: The year 1999 was marked by an unprecedented demand for emergency food aid sparked by a growing number of military conflicts and natural disasters the world over, says IPS. The number of people assisted by the Rome-based world food programme (WFP) increased by about 17 per cent over 1998, to a total of 89 million, the highest number ever assisted in a single year. In its annual report released Thursday, the WFP says that major new emergency situations also demanded the rapid

establishment of entire offices, including staff, equipment and food stocks. At the same time, ongoing large-scale relief operations, particularly in Afghanistan, Angola, the Great Lakes region in sub-Saharan Africa, North Korea, Sierra Leone and Sudan, continued to make significant demands on WFP's resources. "Headlines about major international crises do not capture the pressing need for long-term support for the poor and hungry such as the people of Central America, still struggling in the aftermath of Hurri-

cane Mitch, and the long-term displaced in Colombia," says WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini. Their houses are gone, their fields destroyed and their crops lost, she points out. "These are problems that people will have to live with for many years to come. Even when there is no war, no flood, no drought, there is often hunger, as is well-known to the many millions of people around the world who do not have enough food every day to lead healthy lives." Recipients of relief assistance accounted for nearly 80

per cent of all WFP beneficiaries in 1999, including a large number of people affected by natural disasters in late 1998 (in Bangladesh, China and Central America) who continued to receive emergency assistance in early 1999. Of the 89 million receiving emergency food assistance, 41 million were victims of natural disasters, 18 million victims of wars and civil unrest, 11 million were beneficiaries in protracted relief and rescue operations, and 19 million were people in development programmes.

Govt decides to sign deal with French co for WTC in city

The government Sunday decided on principle to sign a memorandum of understanding with a French company, Buig, for setting up the World Trade Centre in Dhaka, reports UNB. A high-level meeting chaired by Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil in his ministry conference room took the decision.

Senior government officials and business leaders attended the meeting. "The government is very much sincere to establish the WTC to help expand country's trade and business on international market," Jalil said mentioning the importance of a trade centre in a globalised trade regime.



Dhaka Sheraton Management extended a warm welcome to the crew members of Qatar Airways on their arrival at the hotel. General Manager Ian Reid, Executive Assistant Manager K S Alam and Director-Sales Saeed Ahmed greeted them. The crew of Qatar Airways will stay at the Dhaka Sheraton from now on. —Sheraton photo

জাতীয় বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি জাদুঘর
আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা।

"তরুণ ও অপেশাদার বিজ্ঞানীদের উদ্ভাবিত প্রকল্প উন্নয়ন"

বর্ষিক প্রকল্পের আওতায় ২০০০-২০০১ আর্থিক বছরে তরুণ ও অপেশাদার উদ্ভাবকদের সম্ভাবনাময় প্রকল্পসমূহের মান উন্নয়ন করা হবে।

অগ্রহী উদ্ভাবকদের নিকট থেকে নিম্নের তথ্যাদিসহ সাদা কাগজে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

(১) আবেদনকারীর নাম (২) পিতার নাম (৩) ঠিকানা (৪) পেশা (৫) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা (৬) প্রকল্পের নাম ও চিত্রসহ বর্ণনা।

দরখাস্ত আগামী ১২ই আগস্ট ২০০০ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর নিকট পৌঁছাতে হবে।

- নির্বাচিত প্রকল্পসমূহের উদ্ভাবকদেরকে বিশেষজ্ঞ বিজ্ঞানী/প্রযুক্তিবিদের সরাসরি তত্ত্বাবধানে স্ব স্ব প্রকল্প উন্নয়ন করতে হবে।
- তিন মাসের মধ্যে প্রকল্প উন্নয়নের কাজ সমাপ্ত করতে হবে।
- প্রকল্প উন্নয়নকালে উদ্ভাবকদেরকে নিজ ব্যবস্থাপনায় ঢাকায় অবস্থান করতে হবে।
- প্রকল্প উন্নয়নকালে উদ্ভাবকদেরকে প্রতিমাসে ২০০০/- টাকা হারে ভাতা দেয়া হবে।
- প্রাথমিকভাবে বাছাইকৃত আবেদনকারীদেরকে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণের জন্য পত্রের মাধ্যমে আহ্বান করা হবে।

মোঃ হাবিবুর রহমান চৌধুরী
পরিচালক
ফোন: ৯১১২০৮৪, ৯১১৪১২৮

বিজ্ঞান মনস্ক হউন, বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তির চর্চা করুন
সমূহ বাংলাদেশে গড়ে তুলুন

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Sylhet PWD Division, Sylhet

Notice Inviting Tender
Tender No-02/E/M of 2000-2001

Sealed tenders are invited in BD Form No 2911 for the undermentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

- Name of work: Supplying and installation of 20 HP Turbine pump motor at new Ladies Hostel site at MAG Osmani Medical College, Sylhet. (Ch. to Constn. of 5th floor of Ladies Hostel).
- Estimated cost: Tk. 3,85,322/-
- Earned money: Tk. 7,707/-
- Time allowed for completion of work: 30 (Thirty) days from the date of issue of work order.
- Price of tender schedule: Tk. 400/-+25/- =425/- only per set.
- Place of selling & receiving tender: Office of the undersigned & office of all Executive Engineers under PWD Circle, Sylhet.
- Date of selling tender: During office hours up to 23/7/2000.
- Eligibility of contractors/firms to compete in the tender:
 - All classes of approved electrical/mechanical contractors of PWD as per their financial limit (having valid ABC/BC/C contractor's and supervisory licence) for each an every agency.
 - Intending tenderers must VAT registration certificate.
 - Attested copy of VAT registration/TIN Certificate to enclosed along with the tender.
- Date of receiving & opening of tender: Up to 12-00 Noon on 24/7/2000 and will be opened on the same day at 12-15 PM.
- Lottery (Applicable where necessary): Lottery will be held on 31/7/2000 at 12-30 PM in the office of the undersigned in presence of intending tenderers who may like to remain present at the time of lottery.
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

DFP-17322-12/7
G-1311

Executive Engineer
Sylhet PWD Division, Sylhet.