

**DAEWOO**  
ELECTRONICS

Automatic Washing Machine  
with Air Bubble Washing, Spin Rinse  
System & 3 Dimensional Water Flow

**TRINCO LIMITED** — Authorized Distributor of DAEWOO Electronics  
Dhaka : 8115307-10 CTG : 716353, 723578 Khulna : 720304 Bogra : 6215

# The Daily Star

## BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2000

Sweden keen to set up IT industry in Bangladesh

Attracted by the liberal policies of the government, Sweden has shown interest to set up an IT industry along with training facility in Bangladesh, says UNB.

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Anders Johnson gave the hint when he called on Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed at his office yesterday.

The Swedish envoy said the two-way trade between Bangladesh and Sweden has marked a rise alongside increased Swedish investment in Bangladesh.

Johnson told the minister that the liberal investment and other financial policies in Bangladesh have attracted Swedish investors.

But they are discouraged to invest in Bangladesh as they face various problem starting from Dhaka Airport down to bureaucratic bottlenecks," the Ambassador said, urging the government to take appropriate measures to make the attractive policies useful.

In response, the industries minister said the government is trying very hard to ensure all services to the foreign investors right on demand.

"We are improving visa and airport facilities for the genuine investors," he said, adding that Bangladesh is offering highest incentives to the investors.

Tofail said the government's target is to create employment opportunities and that could be achieved through industrial investment.

New Dhaka office MD of Ericsson



Mats Borsrup has joined the Dhaka branch office of Ericsson Radio Systems AB as its Managing Director. He has replaced Jan Campbell, says a press release.

Mats, who obtained Master's degree in Electronics and Computer Engineering from the Institute of Technology, Lund, Sweden, has been working in various departments of Ericsson for eight years.

The new Swedish managing director is committed to provide more business in Bangladesh.

He says, the business is still new here but the achievement is very satisfactory.

In the near future, Ericsson will be introducing new products to the market in Bangladesh. Internet has achieved enormous popularity and the next step is to make Net access available over the mobile network, a technology called WAP.

Pre-handover meet of BTI project held

Building Technology and Ideas Ltd, an ISO 9001-certified real estate developer, recently held a pre-handover meeting of one of its Banani projects 'Zephyr' at the project premises, says a press release.

The meeting, which discussed various aspects of the project, was attended by all the project clients. This is an unique scheme of BTI to build up excellent rapport with their clients, assuring total customer care, service and commitment.

From BTI, the meeting was attended by Deputy Managing Director Engineer F R Khan, Director Construction Engineer J.A. Patwary, Project Coordinator Wallullah, Executive-Sales and Marketing Shahana Rahman, Executive-Customer Service Md. Manikzaman Khan and other officials.

Datapro celebrates 1st anniversary of its inception

Datapro, an India-based computer learning centre, celebrated the first anniversary of its inception on Friday, says a press release.

Datapro has three centres at Mohakali, Santinagar and Elephant Road in Dhaka.

Chairman of Crown System Ltd., the Master Franchisee of Datapro InfoWorld Ltd. (India), Mostafizur Rahman, was the chief guest at the function. Sajedul Haque, Managing Director of NCC Bank, Assistant General Manager of Datapro (India) Debdash Banerjee, Managing Director of Crown Systems Ltd Shakhawat Hossain and Executive Director Sadek Ahmed and Centre Manager Om Prakash Roy attended the function.

## BTTB plans to up local call rate, mobile incoming charge to go

By Abu Saeed Khan

The fixed telephone subscribers of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) would be thinking twice before calling a mobile phone, because they will need to pay for every minute while talking to their counterparts.

Reversely, the mobile users would be careful while receiving calls from BTTB numbers, as they would not have to pay any incoming charges.

On September 18, Director (Wireless) of BTTB notified this development to all mobile operators. The BTTB director's letter states that the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications had revised this tariff on May 24. He requested the mobile operators to keep his office updated about the steps being taken to comply with the government's decision.

BTTB, however, did not indicate from when this new tariff policy will be enforced. The gov-

ernment is also keeping mum on the amount BTTB would be charging its subscribers for calling the mobile numbers.

BTTB's current local call charge is Tk 1.70 for unlimited period. This rate is equally applicable when a BTTB customer calls a mobile number. The revised tariff would require BTTB subscribers pay by minutes while calling mobile users.

The three GSM operators charge nothing for the first minute followed by a Tk 2 charge for each subsequent minute for incoming calls through BTTB's network. Various packages of CityCell charge between Tk 3 and Tk 2 per minute all along while receiving calls through BTTB network. All the mobile users would be exempted from paying these charges under the revised tariff plan.

The mobile operators are yet to

reply to the government on the proposed tariff reform. They met on September 25 to discuss the strategy, but remain tight-lipped on the contents.

The government's tariff revision, however, has technical and regulatory hurdles. BTTB's local and long distance bills are still prepared manually and the subscribers do not get itemised statements.

BTTB is also infested with ungodly call piracy. Lately, it urged all its subscribers to electronically disable the features of making 'per-minute' calls like NWD or ISD. The state telecom monopoly has officially admitted that a group of its corrupt employees is engaged in call piracy.

In the backdrop of such alarming confession coupled with prehistoric billing system, metering of the mobile-bound local calls is to decide who will command whom.

BTTB. Besides, the mobile operators pay BTTB for accessing its fixed network. They additionally pay Tk 1.70 for each call to BTTB network. BTTB, however, pays nothing while calling mobile networks. Lack of bilateral revenue sharing provision has been diminishing the competitive edge of the partially deregulated telecom market.

Meanwhile, the country's four-year-old mobile market has already become half the size of the 40-year-old fixed telephone network of BTTB. Conservatively considering its current growth rate (annually more than 125 per cent), mobile business would be growing with larger clientele than BTTB by the middle of 2002. Time is to decide who will command whom.



Latifur Rahman (Centre), Chairman and Managing Director of Bangladesh Lamps Limited, presides over the company's 39th AGM held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on Monday. Photo also shows (from left) Directors Saifur Rahman, Shamsur Rahman, Shahnaz Rahman, Obaidur Rahman Khan, Atiqur Rahman and Company Secretary A.K.A. Muqtadir at the AGM.

-- BD Lamps photo

## First diamond factory launched in country

Plant to re-export \$13m gems a month

Star Business Report

A joint venture diamond factory, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, expects to export 50,000 stones a month with a turnover of US\$ 13 million, said the sponsors of the new company.

The company, Brilliant Hera Limited, formally came into being yesterday with the signing of an agreement between Asia Global Investment Ltd of Sri Lanka and local partners JW Worldwide Ltd and HRC Bangladesh.

The factory will go into commercial production in January, 2000 and trial production in November 2000, Jaigirdar said.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman of Ceylinco Lalith Kotelawala termed the venture as a historic event.

"Through this venture we will be introducing a new product in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is ideally suited for the industry with skilled and hardworking labour force," he said.

The newly formed company will import rough diamonds from Sri Lanka and use Bangladesh's relatively cheap labour as a low-cost production base to cut and polish the gems for re-export."

Representative of HRC Bangladesh Mirza Ejaz Ahmed was also present in the conference.

39th AGM held

Bangladesh Lamps shareholders to get 15 per cent cash dividend

Bangladesh Lamps Limited, the Official Licensee of Philips Electronics NV Holland for lighting products and manufacturer of PHILIPS electric bulbs, declared a cash dividend of Tk 15 per share at the company's 39th Annual General Meeting held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on Monday.

Latifur Rahman, Chairman and Managing Director of the company, presided over the meeting which was attended by a large number of shareholders.

The meeting approved the annual report and accounts of the company for the year ending December 31, 1999.

The Board of Directors of the company comprises: Latifur Rahman, Shahnaz Rahman, Saifur Rahman, Atiqur Rahman, Shamsur Rahman and Obaidur Rahman Khan.



A press conference of Brilliant Hera Ltd was held at Dhaka Club Ltd. yesterday. Picture shows Lalith Kotelawala, Chairman of Ceylinco Consolidated (2nd L), Ranawera, Ceylinco Consolidated (L), Omu Jaigirdar, Director of JW Worldwide Ltd (2nd R), Mirza Ezaz Ahmed of HRC Bangladesh (R) at the press conference. Brilliant Hera Ltd, a joint venture company of JWW Worldwide Ltd, HRC Bangladesh and Asia Global Investments (L) Ltd of Sri Lanka, is going to be the first company in Bangladesh to cut and polish diamonds.

## Lanka-based investor co mulls local tourism development

Seeing an immense potential in Bangladesh, a Sri Lanka-based global investor is conducting feasibility study to develop tourism facilities in the country, reports UNB.

The company is also planning to invest in information technology (IT) sector here.

"We visited a beautiful spot near the city to develop a tourists resort and the paper work is under process," said Ravi De Silva, Director cum Managing Director of Ceylinco Universal Ltd. The location of the spot was, however, kept undisclosed for business secret.

De Silva was addressing a press conference at a local hotel Wednesday morning following the signing ceremony of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to launch travel and tourism services in Bangladesh from October 15.

The agreement was signed between the Sri Lankan company and All-Trans Aviation Services Ltd, a sister concern of All-Trans Cargo Services Ltd, Bangladesh.

All-Trans Aviation chairman A B Sarker and Ceylinco chairman A Deshmory Lalith Kotelawala signed the MOU for their respective sides.

Under the strategic alliance agreement, Ceylinco will provide technical support to All-Trans Aviation to facilitate travellers with electronic ticketing, first time in Bangladesh, and a complete service package from arrival of the traveller till his departure from a country.

Travellers from the western countries are increasingly depending on the electronic technology, which facilitate easy access to the travellers.

If one buys ticket from as, he will be branded as the Ceylinco

## Bhutan-Bangladesh businessmen for free-trade, transport protocol

From Monjur Mahmud

Thimphu, Sep 27: The Bhutanese and Bangladeshi business leaders yesterday underscored the need for signing a free-trade agreement and said the two countries should sign a transport protocol for border transit to increase trade.

The points were made here at a meeting between the visiting delegation of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the members of the Bhutanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI).

"Both the governments should get the protocol signed first and then negotiate with India to help implement it," said BCCI President Ugen Dorji, who is shortly taking over as Speaker of the Bhutanese National Assembly.

"Signing of the protocol will give both the countries a better position to negotiate with India for direct movement of vehicles, carrying goods to and from Bangladesh and Bhutan" said FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo.

Using Indian corridor will help reduce the cost of business between these two SAARC countries, stated the FBCCI outgoing chief, who is leading a 50-member delegation.

BCCI leaders identified pre-shipment inspection (PSI) as the major

obstacle for export as the PSI company is yet to set up its office in Bhutan. The company is now operating its activities from Calcutta to cover Bhutan for which the exporters are facing serious problems.

"We support the PSI, but procedures need to be simplified," Tshering Dorji, BCCI Secretary General told the FBCCI team. The lengthy process of clearing exportables under PSI are discouraging both Bhutanese exporters and Bangladeshi importers.

Bangladesh Embassy in Bhutan also informed the National Board of Revenue (NBR) regarding some practical problems faced by the Bhutanese exporters due to the absence of PSI agent in Thimpu, an official of the Bangladesh Embassy told The Daily Star yesterday.

The FBCCI team later called on the head of the government and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bhutan, Lyonpo Yeshey Zimbo.

The Bangladeshi businessmen also had meetings with Agriculture and Forest Minister Lyonpo Kinzang Dorji and Minister for Trade and Industry Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk.

The FBCCI delegation members include FBCCI Vice President M A Mumun, Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Major General Amjad Khan Chowdhury, M A Awal.

## WB advocates faster economic reforms in Bangladesh

Star Business Report

so that firms can respond to liberalisation.

He explained that three members of the World Bank group the International Development Assistance (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) play complementary roles in providing assistance to support private sector development in Bangladesh.

Temple gave credit to finance ministry and Bangladesh Bank, which have initiated some measures to curb the 'default culture', reduce insider lending and force defaulting bank directors to repay their loans.

For example, the World Bank country representative said, trade policy reform by itself will not be successful unless other constraining factors are removed

so that firms can respond to liberalisation.

He explained that three members

of the World Bank group the International Development Assistance (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) play complementary roles in providing assistance to support private sector development in Bangladesh.

Temple gave credit to finance

ministry and Bangladesh Bank, which have initiated some measures to curb the 'default culture', reduce insider lending and force defaulting bank directors to repay their loans.

For example, the World Bank

country representative said, trade

policy reform by itself will not be successful unless other

constraining factors are removed

so that firms can respond to

liberalisation.

He explained that three members

of the World Bank group the

International Development Assis-

tance (IDA), the International

Finance Corporation (IFC) and

the Multilateral Investment Guaran-

tee Agency (MIGA) play comple-

mentary roles in providing assis-

tance to support private sector

development in Bangladesh.

Temple gave credit to finance

ministry and Bangladesh Bank,

which have initiated some

measures to curb the 'default

culture', reduce insider lend-

ing and force defaulting bank

directors to repay their loans.

For example, the World Bank

country representative said, trade

policy reform by itself will not be

successful unless other

constraining factors are removed

so that firms can respond to

liberalisation.

He explained that three members