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The Daily Star BUSINESS

DHAKA, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2001

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Country joins international e-commerce network

Scopes open up for local SMEs' access to info

Star Business Report

With a view to providing the latest information on business opportunities worldwide, Bangladesh has formally joined an e-commerce network connecting itself with 43 developing countries and 15 nations of the European Union (EU).

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) has set up an office for the SMEs and established the Technology and Trade Information and Promotion System (TIPS), Bangladesh Bureau in cooperation with Devnet, a Rome-based non-government organisation.

The network will enable 350 enrolled Bangladesh small and medium enterprises to exchange the latest information on business opportunities all over the world, particularly in

relation to export, import, technology etc., with some 2,50,000 foreign companies.

TIPS is set to cater to the information needs of the Bangladesh business community looking for opportunities in trade and business cooperation with the European Union, said the head of delegation of the European Commission in Bangladesh Antonio De Souza Menezes, while addressing the launching ceremony of the system at DCCI yesterday.

He termed the TIPS project as 'a stone in the mosaic of the European Union's support to Bangladesh's efforts to achieve a real impact on its poverty.'

He said that substantive economic growth is needed to effectively bring about a sharp decline in acute poverty, which

necessitates economic development. He also assured that the EU would increasingly put an emphasis on its development cooperation with Bangladesh on these issues.

Speaking on the occasion, DCCI President Benajir Ahmed informed that the SMEs constitute seventy per cent of the total DCCI membership. "In Bangladesh, the SMEs account for about 82 per cent of the industrial employment and 90 per cent of the export earnings of the country."

While dwelling upon the Bangladesh-EU trade relations, Ahmed termed EU a leading partner of Bangladesh's progress and its largest export market, absorbing about 44 per cent of the total exports.

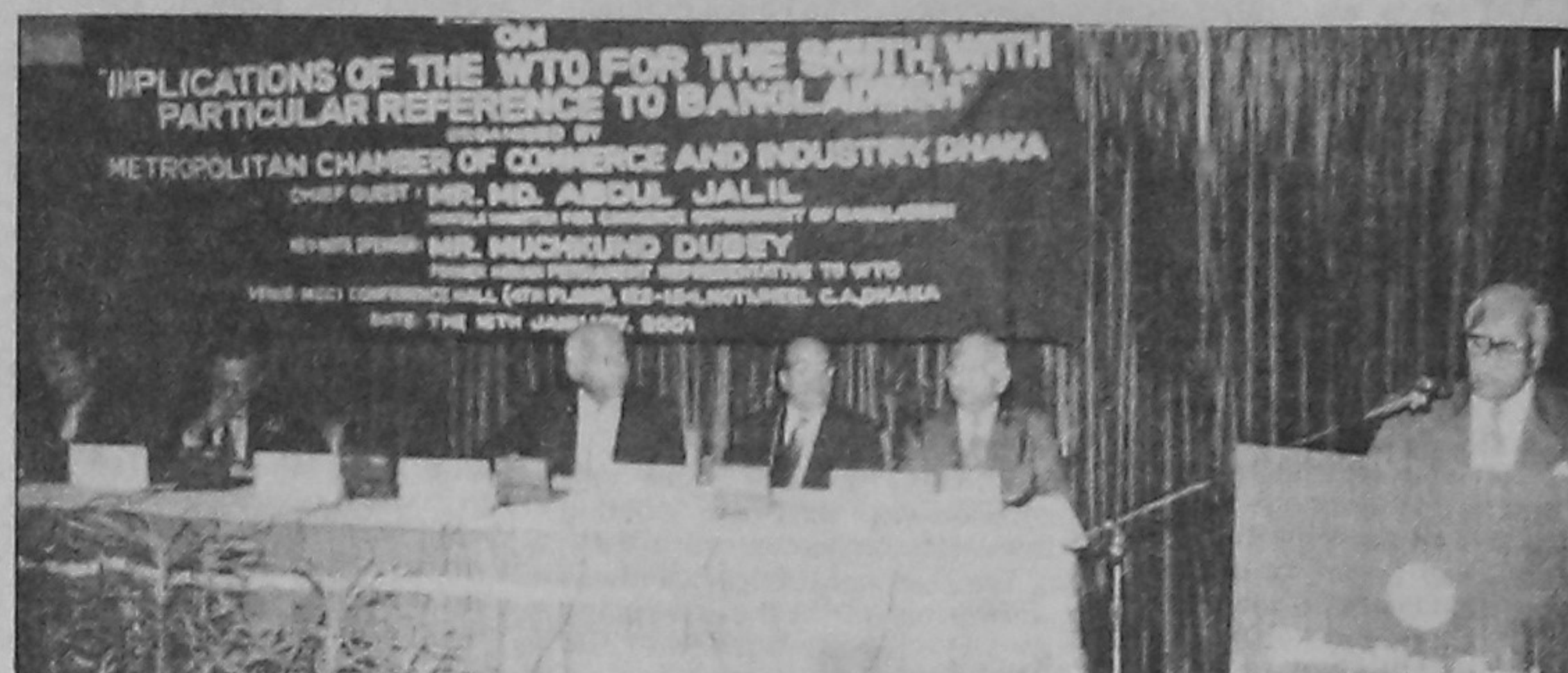
The DCCI president said

that the Bangladesh TIPS Bureau could serve as a catalyst to expand and strengthen investment cooperation by electronically providing trade, technology and business opportunity-related information.

Speaking on the occasion, Commerce Minister Md Abdul Jalil said that the project was a timely one and would strengthen the existing EU-Bangladesh relationship.

He requested the EU to provide all necessary cooperation to the TIPS Bangladesh Bureau and assured that the government would extend all support for the project's development.

Dil Afroze, National Director of the TIPS project, explained the multifarious sides and services offered through the project.



Commerce Minister Md Abdul Jalil inaugurates the discussion meeting on 'Implications of the WTO for the South, with Particular Reference to Bangladesh' organised by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) at its conference room yesterday. Also seen in the picture (from the left) are Mahbubur Rahman, President, ICC-Bangladesh, Golam Rahman, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Latifur Rahman, President, MCCI, Muchkund Dubey, key-note speaker, Tapan Chowdhury, Vice-President, MCCI.

— MCCI photo

Central banks set
global rules for
payment system

BBCC keen to set up power plant, IT village

The Bangladesh-British Chamber of Commerce (BBCC) is interested in setting up power plant and IT village in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The BBCC, a forum of non-resident Bangladeshi businessmen living in the UK, sought government cooperation free from bureaucratic complexities.

A 16-member delegation of BBCC met Commerce Minister M Abdul Jalil in the city yesterday and evinced keen interest to invest in Bangladesh.

The delegation members said they have already visited different places of the country including Sylhet and are interested to invest there because of its investment-friendly environment.

They said BBCC would take initiatives to open new website and create networking among the investors.

The non-resident businessmen also expressed their keen interest in setting up education and training institute here under joint venture, said an official handout.

The BBCC members told the minister that they had come to Bangladesh to do the groundwork for investment and identify potential projects.

Welcoming the BBCC initiative, the minister said that the main objective of the present government was to develop the country by increasing local and foreign investment.

"You should come forward to invest here after identifying the potential projects as it is your duty to develop the country,"

Jalil told the non-resident Bangladeshis.

He said the government has decided to reduce cargo airfare for encouraging export of vegetables and other agricultural products and to introduce cargo flights soon.

Referring to the demand for declaring the non-resident Bangladeshis as CIPs, the minister said the government would take proper steps if there is no legal complexity.

Commerce Secretary Golam Rahman was also present in the meeting.

Protishabda made
regular Nestle'
ad agency

Nestle has appointed Protishabda Communications its regular advertising agency, says a press release.

From now on, Protishabda will handle all the advertising requirements for the Maggi culinary range - Maggi 2 Minutes Noodles, Maggi Family Noodles, Maggi Crack-a-Snack and other brand extensions.

The Protishabda team gauges this achievement as a milestone in its journey towards excellence. Protishabda commits its full to build solid market base for Nestle' brands in Bangladesh.

Malaysian move
to boost port
business
against S'pore

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 16: Seeking to better compete with Singapore for shipping, Malaysia will exempt container trucks ferrying goods between Singapore and the Malaysian port of Tanjung Pelepas from paying levies, the Malaysian Finance Ministry confirmed Tuesday, says AP.

The exemption applies only to Malaysia's port of Tanjung Pelepas and to no other Malaysian port, a ministry official told Dow Jones Newswires on customary condition of anonymity.

Singapore's Business Times newspaper reported Tuesday that Malaysia had stepped up measures to encourage Singaporean importers and exporters to use the country's newest port.

Before the measures were taken, laden container trucks from Singapore paid 2000 ringgit (\$52) a trip and 100 ringgit (\$26) was collected for empties.

**Manufacturing
sales up**

Another report says, Malaysia's manufacturing sales rose 23 per cent in November to 29.4 billion ringgit (\$7.7 billion) compared to the same months in 1999, but shrank 0.3 per cent from October, the government's statistics agency said Tuesday, reports AP.

The data pointed to a decline in manufacturing sales growth in the latter part of 2000, but underscored Malaysia's rebound from the deep recession of the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98.

Malaysian industries are currently bracing for a drop in exports because of the economic slowdown in the United States, where high demand for electronic products and components had been a key factor in Malaysia's rapid recovery from recession. The United States is Malaysia's largest trading partner.

US bank lowers growth forecast for Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 16: US investment bank Salomon Smith Barney said today it expects Malaysia's economy to grow 4.7 per cent in 2001, slower than its previous forecast of six per cent, reports Reuters.

Donald Hanna, the bank's head of Asia-Pacific economics and market analysis, said the revision followed expectations of sharply slower exports due to the softening US economy.

He put Malaysia's 2000 gross domestic product (GDP)

growth at 8.4 per cent, well above an official government projection of 7.5 per cent.

Hanna said weak imports by the United States, where the national economy may contract by one per cent in the quarter from January to March, would hit major Asian exporters, including Malaysia.

"There's a little bit of revision of the strength of domestic demand (in Malaysia) but much of the lower growth rate is essentially because of weaker external performance," he told re-

porters at an investors' conference in the Malaysian capital.

Hanna said US import growth would slow to 2.9 per cent in 2001 from Salomon's earlier forecast of 9.4 per cent, which translates into a fall of \$78 billion in Asian exports to the United States.

Malaysia's Deputy Finance Minister Chan Kong Choy said in a speech prepared for the same conference that he was "cautiously optimistic" that Malaysian GDP could grow by 5.8 per cent in 2001.

15-day SIBL
foundation
course begins

A 15-day intensive Foundation Course for the residency, junior and assistant officers of Social Investment Bank Ltd. (SIBL) began at the training academy of the bank on Monday, says a press release.

The course is being organised by the University School of Social Economics and Management.

Managing Director of the bank, Golam Mustafa, inaugurated the course as chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, the Managing Director said no organisation can operate its programmes and act smoothly unless the officers are fully equipped with working knowledge of the bank.

M Shahjahan Mantu, Deputy Managing Director of the bank, also spoke at the course.

At the end, the Academic Consultant and In-charge of USSEM, M Hedayetullah Haque, thanked all for participating in the training course.

OECD head sees
no oil price
threat to world
economy

DUBAI, Jan 16: OECD Secretary-General Donald Johnston said yesterday that an increase in the price of crude oil would have a minimal effect on world economic growth, says Reuters.

He said that unlike in the 1980s, the world economy has learned how to absorb oil price volatility.

"If prices go down to \$16 per barrel or up to \$30 per barrel, this will have a dampening effect on the economy but would not affect economic growth," Johnston said.

"The rise in oil prices is not catastrophic as there is no indication of wage demand rise because of higher prices. What we see is headline inflation not core inflation," he added.

Johnston, who is in Dubai to chair an OECD conference on e-commerce which opens on Tuesday was responding to a question on a likely move by OPEC producers to cut production by up to 1.5 billion barrels per day to stabilise oil prices.

BAGHDAD, Jan 16: Iraq's trade minister yesterday gave the strongest signal yet that Iraq was smuggling oil to neighbouring countries outside the terms of its oil-for-food deal with the United Nations, says Reuters.

But Mohammad Mehdi Saleh said the scope and impact of any smuggling was limited.

Asked at a news conference about reports that Iraq was smuggling oil illegally outside the UN deal, Saleh said: "The illegal (act) is to restrict Iraq from exporting oil in normal cases."

"Our right is to export any commodity, whatever we could and to buy any commodity that Iraqi citizens require," he said in English.

Saleh said no country could control smuggling across its

borders, citing smuggling from Mexico to the United States as an example.

International oil traders suspect that Syria has been selling crude on behalf of Iraq via a pipeline between the two countries since late last year, Iraq has also been said to smuggle crude on tankers to Iran.

"There is a will from other countries to lessen and reduce the impact of sanctions and restrictions on Iraq by exporting for Iraq without adopting these aggressive resolutions," Saleh said.

Iraq, under economic sanctions for invading Kuwait in 1990, is allowed to sell oil to buy food, medicine and other essential goods, under the close supervision of the United Nations.

Saleh reiterated that the

programme adopted in 1996 had failed to alleviate the suffering of Iraq's 23 million people.

He said Iraq had sold oil worth \$40 billion in the past four years within the oil-for-food programme, but had received goods worth only \$9.6 billion. Contracts for goods on hold and not received were worth \$15.6 billion, he said.

He said the goods received amounted to only seven dollars per capita for every month since 1996.

Saleh said the United Nations had deducted a total of \$13.6 billion for its expenses and for a fund to pay compensation for losses incurred during Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

The United Nations says Iraq must agree to let weapons inspectors in to verify its claims before the UN will suspend the embargo.

The minister said companies doing trade with Iraq under the programme were paying a small percentage directly to Iraq, with the knowledge of the United Nations, to cover local expenses.

Saleh said businessmen from all countries which oppose sanctions on Iraq are welcome to seek deals in Baghdad.

An AFP report says: Iraq Trade Minister Mohammad Mahdi Saleh charged Monday that the tax levied by the UN on Iraq's oil revenue was greater than the funds used to finance humanitarian aid to the country.

Saleh explained at a news conference that Iraq had exported 40 billion dollars worth of crude since the "oil-for-food" programme was launched.

Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (A Company of Petrobangla) Court Road Brahmanbaria

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Tender Notice

Dated: 07-01-2001

Sealed quotation in the respective letter head/prescribed form is hereby invited from the bonafide Business Organisation/Manufacturers/Importers for supply of the following materials:

Item No	Group	Tender No	Description of materials	Cost of schedule (non-refundable)
1.	'A'	PT/LP-27/2000-2001	On Line Un-Interruptable Power Supply Unit	Tk 500.00
2.	'B'	PT/LP-28/2000-2001	Photocopy Machine	Tk 1,000.00
3.	'C'	PT/LP-29/2000-2001	Perforated Steel Plate	Tk 500.00
4.	'D'	PT/LP-30/2000-2001	Nickel Cadmium Battery	Tk 500.00
5.	'E'	PT/LP-31/2000-2001	Chain Link Fence	Tk 500.00
6.	'F'	PT/LP-32/2000-2001	Sodium Lamp, Choke & Ignitor	Tk 250.00
7.	'G'	PT/LP-33/2000-2001	Printed Materials	Tk 150.00
8.	'H'	PT/LP-34/2000-2001	Tyre & Tube	Tk 700.00

Tender schedule incorporating terms & conditions of the supply will be available from our offices at (1) Court Road, Brahmanbaria and (2) 97, Purana Paltan (Bijoynagar), Dhaka between 09.00 am to 03.00 pm on all working days Sunday to Thursday from 22-01-2001 to 11-02-2001. No tender schedule will be sold on the day of opening of the tenders.

Tender shall be dropped in the tender box placed in our above offices till 11.00 hr on 12.02.2001 and shall be opened on the same day at 11.15 hr in presence of the tenderers (if any). In case of any unavoidable circumstances such as strike, civil commotion, govt. declared holiday, etc bids will be received & opened on the following working day at the same place & time. The company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

PRS-9/02(TS)/2001
DFP-820-11/1
G-137

General Manager (Technical Services)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Health Directorate
Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Memo No HD/ME/MATS-99/467

Dated: 4-1-2001

Notice

Subject: Regarding admission of students from waiting list on merit basis in 1st phase in the Medical Assistant Training School (MATS) during the year 1999-2000.

62 (sixty-two) candidates from waiting list of 100 (one hundred) as published have been selected provisionally in 1st phase for admission into 5 Medical Assistant Training Schools (MATS) during 1999-2000 academic session following the seats fell vacant after the expiry of the specific period and on the basis of option of students as mentioned in application forms through automation. The school for admission has been fixed on the basis of position of the candidates in merit list and option of school as given by them. Candidates selected provisionally will have to complete the task of admission by contacting the offices of the principals of the respective schools by 25-1-2001. Other terms and conditions as mentioned in admission notice of the Memo No: HD/ME/MATS-99/334, dated 19-10-99 of this Directorate will remain unchanged.

Detailed information regarding automation can be known from respective MATS.

Professor Shah Monir Hossain
Director (Medical Education)
& Health Manpower Development
Health Directorate, Mohakhali
Dhaka.

List of Candidates Selected from Waiting List for Admission to the Medical Assistants' Training Schools (MATS) after Automation (1st) for the Year 1999-2000.

Medical Assistants' Training School, Tangail		Medical Assistants' Training School, Bagerhat		Medical Assistants' Training School, Kushtia		Medical Assistants' Training School, Noakhali		Medical Assistants' Training School, Sirajganj	
T 0652	T 0916	B 0006	K 0115	K 0019	T 0446	N 0025	N 0660	K 0068	T 0572
B 0021	K 0095	B 0021	B 0159	K 0055	K 0517	N 0029	N 0704	T 0082	T 0675
								S 0156	T 0732
								T 0229	T 0767
								B 0264	S 0839
									T 0914

DFP-740-10/1
G-139