

TIBET

The leader in a robe

ENRAM KABIR

HE may call himself a simple monk, but his life has been more than that of a friar. The Dalai Lama, the religious and political leader of the Tibetan people, is a living symbol of struggle against Chinese occupation. And China has been angered by the Dalai Lama's recent 10-day visit to Taiwan, because China has been accusing Lama of trying to whip up anti-China sentiments during his trip to Taiwan, which Beijing considers to be a breakaway province.

But the Dalai Lama has repeatedly said that he went there to lecture about Buddhism and spirituality - not to cause problems for China. Large crowds turned out to hear him speak. According to wire agencies, about 30,000 people - Taiwanese citizens and Tibetans in exile - bought tickets to attend the event at the Linkou stadium in Taiwanese capital, Taipei. Taiwan's Vice-President, Annette Lu, shared a stage with the Dalai Lama and appealed for peace and understanding from Beijing. Lu, whom China has condemned for describing Taiwan and China as "close neighbours but distant relatives", thanked the Dalai Lama for braving China's disapproval and showing concern for Taiwan.

Born in Tenzin Gyatso in north-eastern Tibet on July 6, 1935, the Dalai Lama was recognised at the age of two as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama and brought up in the Potala Palace in the capital, Lhasa. In 1950, the 15-year-old assumed full responsibility as the head of the Tibetan state - the same year that 80,000 Chinese troops poured into the mountain kingdom.

Since China invaded Tibet in 1950, Beijing has sought to control all religious activities there, and banned all references to the Dalai Lama. Human rights groups have accused China of the systematic destruction of Tibetan Buddhist culture and persecution of monks loyal to the Dalai Lama. After a failed uprising against Chinese rule in 1959, the Dalai Lama fled across the border to India. Tens of thousands of his people followed him.

As Beijing sees it, both Tibet and Taiwan are part of China, and the Dalai Lama's aim is to promote separatism. Beijing routinely tries to discourage countries from receiving

the Tibetan spiritual leader and Nobel Peace Prizewinner. And Taiwan is a destination that clearly arouses its concern like few others.

In these circumstances, China's doubts about the purpose of the Dalai's Taiwan tour cannot be ignored because it coincides with the increasingly rampant "independence activities" in Taiwan.

Ever since the leader of the

Republic of Taiwan, and apply for a UN seat under the name of the Republic of Taiwan.

With such a political backdrop, China simply couldn't consider Dalai's trip to be a pure 'religious tour'. To make a comparison, critics in China recalled the Dalai's first Taiwan journey from March 22 to 27, 1997. Although the Dalai said his trip was aimed at spreading Buddhism

of great political importance, and that Dalai's visit had "won acquiescence from the government of the Republic of China on the status of the Tibetan government-in-exile."

Meanwhile, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* newspaper of Japan pointed out that the aim of the Dalai's visit was to probe how to play the "Taiwan card" in his dialogue with Beijing. In talks with a delega-

tion of the DPP, a Hong Kong-based daily. The DPP supported the Dalai's independent views and his proposal to open up a "representative office" in Taiwan, *Sing Tao Jih Pao* reported.

On March 28, 1997, a Hong Kong-based newspaper *Wen Wei Po* commented on the nature of the Dalai's trip, exposing a series of collaborations and exchanges between the Dalai and the then Taiwan authorities headed by Lee Teng-hui.

According to a recent article, published by the *Xinhua News Agency*, there were three political purposes behind the Dalai's first Taiwan tour: a. to collaborate with separatist forces in Taiwan and use the issue of Taiwan for the purpose of "Tibet independence"; b. to abolish Taiwan's "Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission" which had been advocating "Tibet is part of China" to make way for the setting-up of a "representative office" of the Dalai clique in Taiwan; and c. to raise funds for separatist activities.

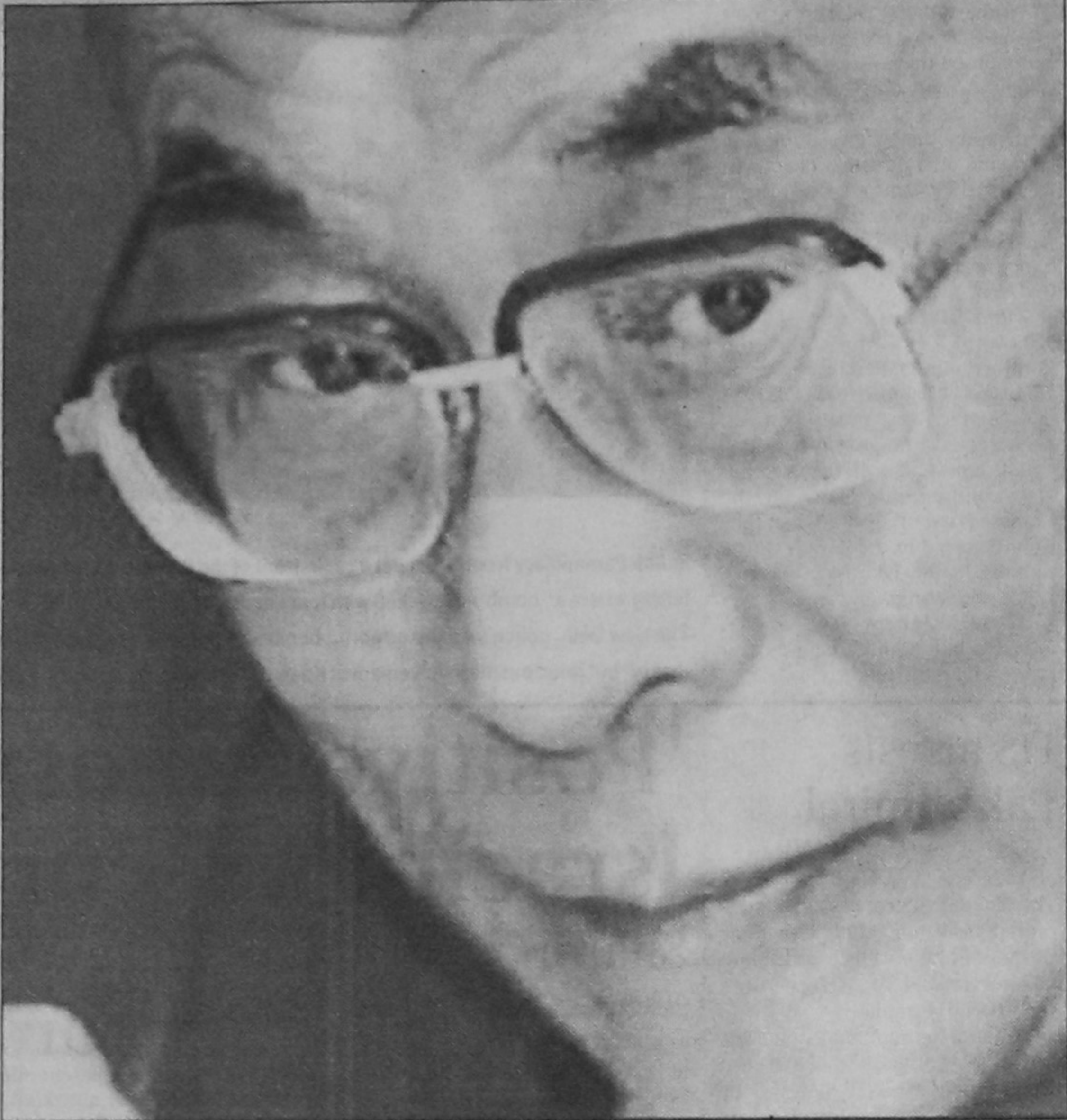
Again, the refusal to meet with the Dalai Lama by several Buddhist leaders in Taiwan showed that his Taiwan trip was never a "pure religious tour" but a tour with distinct political and economic purposes. According to the article, for the past four decades, the Dalai Lama has continued to make political deals in a religious robe. His preachings were always coupled with meetings with the press and political leaders to advocate "Tibet independence", the article claimed.

While preaching on Buddhist ideas to deliver all living creatures from torment, the Dalai Lama has been collecting funds for the purpose of splitting the motherland, alleged the Chinese critique.

Since the Dalai's first Taiwan visit four years ago, the Tibetan office has been set up in Taiwan and the collaborations between Taiwan independence forces and Tibet independence forces are no longer furtive, it further stated, stressing that the Dalai's second Taiwan trip was certainly a political visit, regardless of the 10-day schedule which included many preachings and religious ceremonies.

Now the question is: what steps China may take if it finds its allegations to be true?

Ekram is a Daily Star staffer.



Taiwan authorities took office last year, activities of Taiwan independence forces have been causing clamours, with the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and other stubborn separatists advocating to make a "new constitution", estab-

lish the Republic of Taiwan, and apply for a UN seat under the name of the Republic of Taiwan.

tion of the DPP, the Dalai claimed that Tibet had been an independent state since ancient times and he accused Taiwan's "Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission" of splitting up the "Tibetan government-in-exile", according to *Sing*

tao Jih Pao, a Hong Kong-based daily. The DPP supported the Dalai's independent views and his proposal to open up a "representative office" in Taiwan, *Sing Tao Jih Pao* reported.

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MALAYSIA

Prevention is better than cure

LORIE HOLLAND IN KUALA LUMPUR

CRUNCH TIME IS COMING again to Asia. Just as crisis-hit economies are getting back on their feet, fresh winds of recession are blowing through the region. Malaysia's central banker says the nation is ready for the onslaught. And it needs to be: Two key industries - crude palm oil, or CPO, and electronics - that were riding high during the Asian financial crisis and helped Malaysia make its recovery are now in the doldrums. Along with corporate restructuring and boosting domestic consumption, these two industries must be revived if Malaysia is to pull through the obstacles ahead.

The good news is that Malaysia has the capacity to address these problems. On one side the government has already started to address oversupply in the CPO market and is looking at ways to restructure landholding in rural areas. In electronics, the Penang Development Corporation is promoting new-generation photonics technology (see article on page 46). The bad news is that politics and market sentiment may get in the way of efforts to fend off recession. Malaysia went into the last economic crisis with a strong and unchallenged government. This time economic uncertainty could fan the fires of dissent within the United Malays National Organization, the leading party in the ruling coalition, at the grassroots level. The race is on to see whether good policies and nimble entrepreneurs can beat the onset of recession and deprive the squabbling politicians of a focus of discontent.

In 1998, when most urban Malaysians were reeling from the effects of the Asian financial crisis, Khairul Hashim was bringing home an unparalleled 2,000 ringgit (\$526) a month from his small oil-palm plantation to the north of Kuala Lumpur. "I put an extension on the house. I bought a small car, almost anything I wanted I could afford," says the 38-year-old. But since world CPO prices came crashing down from their historic highs, Hashim and his four small children have to make do with 400 ringgit a month. And because he didn't save when he could, there is little to cushion his fall. "We've had to tighten our belts, we only spend on the very basics now," he says with a wry smile.

Malaysia has around 800,000 smallholders similarly dependent on export markets, making up around one-tenth of the workforce. High global commodity prices in 1998 and 1999 ensured that palm-oil and rubber exports made a small but significant contribution to the country's balance sheets, and a large contribution to social stability. At the other end of the economic scale, Malaysia's electronics industry also experienced a boom, largely led by United States demand for hi-tech components. Last year exports made up one-fifth of GDP growth, which was a healthy 8.5%.

But as in the 1997 crisis, Malaysia's government is not sitting idle. Last week it unveiled a 3 billion ringgit (\$789.5 million) pump-priming package to spur domestic demand and counter the global downturn by creating an additional 1.1 percentage points of growth. And it left the door open for additional measures should the global economy deteriorate further. "It wouldn't be prudent to allow negative expectations to gather momentum and become self-fulfilling," says Zeti Akhtar Aziz, governor of Bank Negara, the central bank.

Both foreign and local analysts welcomed the measures as a sign that the government is preparing Malaysia for hard times ahead. But Kuala Lumpur-based iCapital, an independent investment adviser, warned that the

measures would only be effective if monetary growth is sufficient to accommodate growth in domestic demand. "We need to urgently attract more foreign direct investment and to ensure that more export earnings are being repatriated and not hoarded abroad," it said in a recent report.

However, the stockmarket, which has been making a steady descent through the mid-600 range, did not react positively to the news, with many analysts fearing that the package was too little, too late. The cut in EPF contributions, for example, will only add an extra 40 ringgit to the average monthly pay package, leading to concerns that the government's forecast of a 12.3% hike in domestic consumption (compared with 1.7% last year) is too high. "We feel this is short-term gain for long-term pain; the feel-good factor will wear off after a while," says Nicholas Tan of Merrill Lynch Securities in Kuala Lumpur.

But the package includes a 600 million ringgit injection of funds to reduce oil-palm-planted areas and plans to burn oil for electricity to reduce stockpiles. In the long run this management of CPO prices could prove more significant to Malaysia's economic health than school building or consumer-spending incentives, as it affects such a wide swathe of the rural population.

The government put its stock-management plans into operation after CPO prices fell to a low of 650 ringgit per tonne in February, below the average 800 ringgit per tonne production cost for smallholders. With grants of 1,000 ringgit per acre to replant old trees and shave off current production levels, prices have recovered to 850 ringgit, but question marks remain over the second part of the management plan, which involves burning CPO along with medium fuel oil to generate electricity. Lim says tests have proved successful, and the current high prices of petroleum and low prices of CPO make it economically viable.

For all Lim's confidence, the plans leave analysts appalled. While the price difference between CPO and petroleum has fallen, there is still a 100 ringgit per tonne premium on CPO, which adds up if Tenaga Nasional, the nation's state-owned utility, is to buy 500,000 tonnes this year. The government will likely provide a subsidy for this, but going forward, it isn't clear how much Tenaga will have to pay to refurbish its plants after prolonged burning of less-efficient vegetable oils. One estimate, from ABN-Amro in Singapore, puts it at 200 million-300 million ringgit, a considerable cost for an already loss-making company. Even without CPO, Teh Chi-Cheng, a utility analyst at SG Securities in Kuala Lumpur, estimates that Tenaga will be "at least 2 billion ringgit negative for the next three years," because of infrastructure and fuel costs. The rescue of the palm-oil industry, say others, would be better served if the government directly handed its subsidies to the smallholders.

Still, burning CPO looks likely to go ahead. The government hopes farmers like Hashim can earn enough, not only to keep afloat but also to spend, and take Malaysia a step closer to fending off recession. If not, there could be big repercussions ahead, especially as the ruling coalition's lead in many smallholder constituencies has already been reduced, and support for the opposition is growing. "Part of our political problem is that rural Malays don't feel the government has done enough to lift them out of poverty," says Lim.

This piece first appeared in this week's Far Eastern Economic Review.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority
Office of the Executive Engineer, Aricha

Auction Notice

It is hereby notified for general information that sealed tenders are invited for auction sale of the undermentioned goods on "as it is where it is basis". The auction bid will be received in tender box kept at the office of the undersigned upto 12:00 Noon of 24-4-2001 and opened on the same day at 12:15 hours in presence (if any) of the tenderers. The auction bid papers will be available from Accounts Section, BIWTA, Aricha on deposit of Tk 400/= (four hundred) only (non-refundable) every day during office hours on all working days.

The Authority reserves overall right to accept or reject any tender/all tenders without assigning any reason.

Description of goods

Various materials of various semi-pucca & tin-wooden made old installations like staff barrack, restaurant, toilet complex, VIP room, SSB room etc, of BIWTA's Old Ferry Terminal at Nagarbari viz wall, foundation, floor, shed trash, tin, timber, CI sheet, fence, door, window, ceiling, post, pipe post etc as it is where it is now.

Terms & conditions of auction

- Total amount of quoted rate for whole materials should be written distinctly in figures & words.
- 25% (twenty-five per cent) of the tender quoted amount should be submitted as earnest money with the tender in the form of Bank Draft/Pay-Order from approved scheduled bank in favour of "BIWTA", failing which tender will be treated as cancelled.
- On acceptance of the highest bid, the remaining 75% (seventy-five per cent) of the amount besides the deposited 25% (twenty-five per cent) should be deposited in cash/in Bank Draft after approval of auction bid, failing which the earnest money will be forfeited and treated as cancelled.
- The successful bidder in the tender shall have pay 3% (three per cent) on the quoted rate as income tax in the form of Bank Draft separately with the tender and also pay other taxes if so fixed.
- Earnest money/Bank Draft of unsuccessful tenderers will be refunded on the spot at the site of auction.
- On acceptance of the highest bid all materials should be removed from the site of the Authority within 15 (fifteen) days of delivery order. Otherwise the deposited money will be forfeited and the bidder will cease to have any claim on the materials.
- After receiving the delivery order till the above mentioned time for remaining the materials the responsibility of guarding/maintenance of the materials will be on the tenderer receiving the delivery order. The Authority will not bear any liability for any theft/loss of materials during that period.
- Persons intending to participate in the tender may inspect the materials on the spot by contacting the office of the undersigned during office hours.
- Successful bidder shall have to deposit all kinds of licence fee, income tax, VAT etc to respective offices as per existing acts and rules.

Md. Saiful Islam
Executive Engineer
BIWTA, Aricha

DFP-9149-8/4
G-683

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Education
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka

No. S 13/1-3 (Graduate)/99/85 Dated: 8-4-2001

Notice

Sub: Regarding Government of Japan's Monbusho Graduate Scholarship: 2002

Applications are invited from Bangladesh nationals for offering scholarship on merit basis under Government of Japan's graduate level scholarship for study in the undermentioned subjects during 2002-2003 academic year:

Sl. No.	Humanities & Social Sciences	Educational qualification
1.	Law, Politics, Economics, Business Administration, Pedagogy, Sociology, Literature, History, Japanese Language and others.	Should possess aggregate marks 80% in Science group & 75% in Humanities group with 1st Division in SSC & HSC examinations.
2.	Natural Science - A Science (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry), Electric & Electronic Studies (Electronics, Electrical Engineering, Information Engineering), Mechanical Studies (Mechanical Engineering, Naval Architecture, Agricultural Engineering), Civil Engineering and Architecture (Civil Engineering, Architecture, Environmental Engineering), Chemical Studies (Applied Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Industrial Chemistry, Textile Engineering), and other fields (Metallurgical Engineering, Mining Engineering, Mercantile Marine, Biotechnology).	
	Natural Science - B Agricultural Studies (Agriculture, Agricultural Chemistry, Animal Science, Veterinary Medicine, Forestry, Food Science, Fisheries), Hygienic Studies, (Pharmacy, Hygienics, Nursing), Science (Biology).	
	Natural Science - C Medicine, Dentistry.	

- Age of candidate should be between 17 and 21 years as of 1-4-2002 (those who have born between 2-4-1980 and 1-4-1985).
- Candidates earlier finally selected for any other scholarship by the Ministry of Education need not apply. Their applications will be treated as cancelled.
- One candidate cannot apply for more than one subject.
- Legal action will be taken against any one intentionally furnishing false statement/information.
- Any one selected for scholarship of one country is not considered as candidate for scholarship of any other country. Such candidate as actually not interested to enjoy this scholarship is advised to refrain from applying.
- One copy application in plain paper as per the under mentioned proforma in English should be submitted. Candidate's all examinations passed certificates & marksheets and passport size photograph, attested by 1st class gazetted officer should be enclosed with the application.
- The proforma of application shall be as follows:
Application for Government of Japan's Monbusho Graduate Scholarship-2001
Name of subject prayed for:
A) Name of candidate:
B) Father's name:
C) Present address:
D) Permanent address:
E) Date of birth:
F) Age:
G) Nationality:
H) Present address (telephone No. if any):
I) (j) Results of SSC & HSC examinations:

Name of examination	Board	Year	Roll No	Total marks secured	percentage
SSC					
HSC					
Total of marks & percentage secured in SSC & HSC examinations					

Signature of applicant

- Application should reach the wooden box at the office of the undersigned within 20-4-2001. Incomplete application shall be treated as cancelled. "Monbusho Graduate Scholarship", name of branch/subject and total marks secured in SSC & HSC examinations should be distinctly scribed on the application envelope.
- Name of candidates primarily selected for nomination shall be announced. Candidate will be selected on the basis of total marks secured in SSC & HSC examinations. Candidates nominated by the Ministry of Education shall have to take part in written examination & viva voce arranged by the Japanese embassy in Dhaka. Date of examination will be informed later on. For this constant contact with the Ministry should be maintained.
- In matters of selection of candidates, the decision of the authority shall be treated as final.

Syed Salma Jafri
Assistant Secretary
Bldg. No. 6 Room No. 1706
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
Phone: 8615032

DFP-9335-9/4
G-682

Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Comilla Road Division, Comilla

Notice Inviting Tender

- Tender Notice No. : 99/EE of RHD, Road Division, Comilla, during the year 2000-2001.
- Name of work : Construction of Flexible pavement work of different KM of different Road, under Road Division, Comilla, during the year 2000-2001 in 5 (five) groups.
- Estimated cost : Tk. as per group list.
- Earnest money : Tk. as per group list in BD/Pay Order in favour of EE RHD, Comilla.
- Name of office where tender bids will be received : Addl. Chief Engineer, RHD, Comilla Zone, Comilla, Superintending Engineer, RHD, Road Circle, Comilla/Procurement & Maint. Circle, Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka, office of the undersigned & Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong.
- Name of office of the availability of tender bids : Office of the undersigned/EE RHD, Road Division, Baria, Chandpur/Planning & Design Divn., Comilla/Planning Divn. I. (P&D), Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka/Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong & CDE's office under this Division.
- Time allowed : As per group list.
- Last date of selling of tender bids : 17-4-2001 up to office hours.
- Last date of dropping of tender bids : 18-4-2001 up to 12-30 PM.
- Date, place of opening of tender bids : 19-4-2001 in the office of the EE RHD, Comilla.
- Date of lottery : 24-4-2001.
- Charge to : As per group list.
- Eligibility of contractor : As per group list.

NB: Work order will be issued on the basis of availability of fund.

Group List

Name of work : Const of Flexible pavement work at diff. KM of diff. Road, under Road Division, Comilla, during the year 2000-2001, in 5 (five) groups.

Tender Notice No	Group No	Name of work with location	Estimated cost Tk	Earnest money Tk	Time allowed	Ch. to	Eligibility of contractor
99/EE	01	Construction of Flexible pavt. work at 5th KM of Bizrd-Rahimnagar Road under Road Divn., Comilla, during the year 2000-2001	28,78,417/-	57,568/-	30 days	266-CA	"A" to "C" general category of RHD contractor
	02	-Do- -Do- (work at 4th (P) (700) & 5th KM (800M) of Nimshar College-Chitoshi Railway Station Road via Barura Poulashapa-Poulgacha College-Nalua Chandpur Road -Do-	43,28,109/-	86,562/-	40 days	-Do-	-Do-
	03	-Do- -Do- work at 8th (500M), 9th & 10th (500M) of Bijoypur Bazar-Bataichari-Kushumi-Halia-Chiandda-Nababpur Road, -Do-	57,47,823/-	1,24,956/-	40 days	-Do-	-Do-
	04	-Do- -Do- work at 3rd (500M) & 4th (500M) of Chaddagram-Laksham-Mudaffarganj-Chitoshi Road -Do-	29,79,440/-	59,549/-	30 days	-Do-	-Do-
	05	-Do- -Do- -Do- -Do- at 4th(P) (500M) & 5th (P) (500M) -Do- Road -Do-	30,38,380/-	60,768/-	30 days	-Do-	-Do-

Md. Rafiqul Islam
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Comilla

DFP-8764-3/4
G-674