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# Star BUSINESS

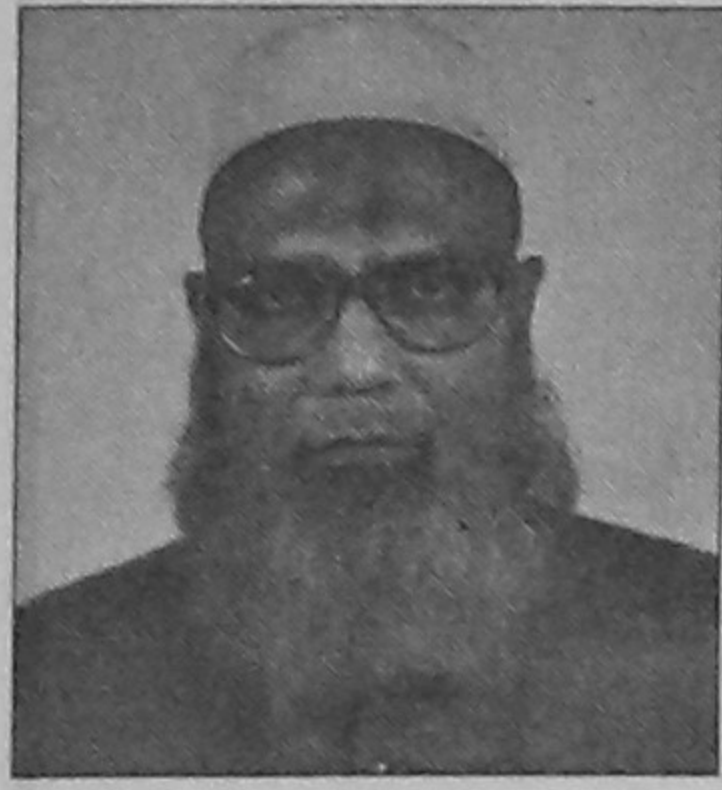
DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 17, 2002

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## New Chairman of BTTB

SATM Badrul Hoque was appointed new chairman of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) on Monday, says a press release.

Earlier he was member (planning and development) of BTTB and before that he was managing director of Bangladesh Telephone Shilpa Sangstha Ltd. He is a member of BCS (telecom) cadre.

Badrul Hoque completed his graduation in 1966 from Engineering University in Electrical Engineering.

In 1969, he joined the then T&T Department as Assistant Divisional Engineer.

Highly trained in home and abroad and having long and diversified experience on telecommunications, Badrul Hoque earned rare honour of joining International Telecommunication Union (ITU) as an expert.

Besides, he attended many international seminar, workshop, meeting, conference on telecommunications representing Bangladesh in different countries of the world.

## Khaleda lays foundation stone of Tk 5cr motel at Bogra

BSS, Bogra

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia laid the foundation stone of a tourism motel at Banani in the suburb of the town.

Begum Zia unveiled the plaque of the Tk 5 crore tourism motel to be constructed on one acre of land in Banani by June next year.

The motel will have 22 rooms, two suites and eight air-conditioned rooms, besides dining room and other modern facilities.

On her arrival at the project site, Begum Zia was received by State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Meer Mohammad Nasiruddin and a host of MPs.

When completed, the tourism centre will attract tourists from home and abroad as a number of resorts, including Mahasthangarh, are located in Bogra district and its adjoining areas, organisers said.

## Singer distributes anniversary contest prizes

Singer Bangladesh Ltd has distributed prizes among the winners of Singer Sajano Sangsar Competition-2001, says a press release.

Singer organised the competition to celebrate its 150th founding anniversary. Singer Bangladesh management along with other managements around the world arranged different programmes to celebrate the anniversary.

Singer announced three awards for the three highest possessors of Singer products. Aurongjob of Postagola Dhaka became the first with 15 products, Jamalul Haque (Manu) of Pirojpur was adjudged second with 12 products while Kamrul Hasan of Comilla was named third with 10 products.

Mahub Jamil, Chairman and Managing Director of Singer Bangladesh Limited, handed over the prizes and certificates to the winners at a simple ceremony held at IDB Bhaban in the city on Monday.

First prize winner Aurongjob received a Singer refrigerator, second prize winner Jamalul Haque won a 20" colour television and third prize winner received a microwave oven.

## New DMD of Sonali Bank

Mohammad Farhad Hossain has been promoted to the post of Deputy Managing Director of Sonali Bank recently, says a press release.

He worked as General Manager in Sonali Bank, Rajshahi Krishi Bank and Bangladesh Krishi Bank.

Farhad Hossain started his banking career as Faculty Member of Bangladesh Krishi Bank in 1980.

# Insurance association wants withdrawal of commission

## Policyholders skimming off funds in name of commission: BIA chief

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Leaders of Bangladesh Insurance Association (BIA) yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of agents commission system currently allowed for procuring business for general insurance companies.

They said the insurance companies are losing their ability to settle claims and are also at a risk of becoming bankrupt due to unhealthy competition. The companies offer high and unjust commission to their clients, which is generating huge black money.

"We want withdrawal of commission system mainly to avoid unhealthy competition among the insurance companies. Besides, it has become essential for our survival. Until and unless we are secured how we can cover security of others," said Nasir A Choudhury, Chairman of BIA and Managing Director of Green Delta Insurance Company Limited, at a press conference in the city yesterday.

AKM Rafiqul Islam, MD of Pragati Insurance Ltd, Md Aliuzzaman Khan, MD of Karnaphuli Insurance Co Ltd, ABM Nurul Haq, MD of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Ltd, also attended the press conference.

The BIA leaders said a coterie of policyholders are demanding high commission and taking out funds in the name of agents' commission.

"There are fake lists of agents but the commission is actually taken by the

policyholders often beyond the allowable limits," BIA president said.

"As a result, such unofficial payment is generating huge black money and the government is deprived of tax. This is forcing the companies to spend huge money and the companies are failing to earn good profit," the BIA Chairman added.

He mentioned corruption and irregularities are rampant in the insurance sector mainly due to the commission system, hampering the interest of the policyholders and also the companies.

"How the new companies will bear such high commission when companies doing business for the last 15 years having strong reserves and assets are unable to pay," Choudhury said.

AKM Rafiqul Islam said commission system is pushing management expenses even up to 18 per cent which should not exceed more than 11 to 12 per cent of the income.

"In this case, punitive action should be taken. But companies in our country are being fined with negligible amount in case of major irregularities," he mentioned.

ABM Nurul Haq termed the problem as a virus for the sector saying it was not only harmful for the companies but also for the clients.

Presently, there are 43 general and 19 life insurance companies in the private sector.

# Convention begins tomorrow to help share technologies

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A three-day convention aiming to bring investors and experts from home and abroad to share technologies kick-starts in the city tomorrow. The convention titled "Tech Transfer-2002: Bangladesh" has been organised by TechBangla, a social welfare trust, at city's Sonargaon Hotel. The convention will continue until January 20.

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), UN-APCCT, Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), Bangladesh Computer Society (BCS) and JOBS/IBIS are the co-organisers of the event.

"The convention is formed with a view to making a platform for technology sharing between the entrepreneurs of home and abroad," said Dr. Shaikh Mijan, coordinator of TechBangla while speaking at a press conference in the city yesterday.

He said such interactions will help in integration of modern technologies help develop skills.

Dr. Mijan said the representatives of industrial sector, residents and non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs), technologists, investors and entrepreneurs will take part in the convention.

Besides, a number of institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government organisations will also participate.

He said a number of seminars have been organised in order to bring the experts of relevant fields to share their technologies.

There will be four seminars on information and communication technology, four on technologies other than IT, and another four seminars on investment and entrepreneurship will be held during the three-day convention, said Dr. Mijan.

**PRESS CONFERENCE**

**TRANSFER-2002: BANGLADESH**

**VENUE: REPORTERS UNITY, DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002**

**ORGANIZER: TECHBANGLA**

**MANAGERS & CO-SPONSORS: DCCI, UN-APCCT, EPB, BASIS & BCS**



Dr. Shaikh Mijan, Coordinator of TechBangla, speaks yesterday at a press conference organised in connection with a three-day convention titled "Tech Transfer-2002: Bangladesh" that begins tomorrow.

# Government planning incentives to increase remittance

## Ministry to build complex for expatriates

UNB, Dhaka

Fixing a target to earn the highest amount of remittances from the expatriates, the government is taking a comprehensive package programme providing the NRBs fabulous facilities, including CIP status.

The steps include safety and security of the expatriates in Bangladesh, hazard-free entry and departure, sound management for sending remittances and their safe accommodation during stay back in Dhaka in a modern complex furnished with all necessary facilities.

"We have taken various steps to secure the interests of the expatriates," Major (rd) Kamrul Islam, state minister for the newly introduced Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment, told UNB yesterday.

"From now on, remittances will reach the families of the expatriates in maximum two or three days," the minister said explaining the package programme. He said the new mechanism would be in place shortly.

Not only that, the government will declare Commercially Important Person (CIP) those who

will send remittances regularly through proper channel. And the declared CIPs among the Non Resident Bangladeshis will get the opportunity of 10 per cent discount for using government facilities in Bangladesh.

For encouraging the expatriates to use legal channels shirking illegal conduits like hundi, the government has established more banks in different countries, including Italy, and reduced bank charges so that NRBs could send remittances smoothly.

The minister said not only were they thinking about remittances from the NRBs but also trying to explore new jobs abroad for fresh manpower through an aggressive drive. "Demand for skill manpower still remained abroad and so we have taken steps to make people educated."

The minister is going to Malaysia, one of the biggest destinations for Bangladesh workers, to explore new fields there and solve the problems of those who are already there.

As a databank is being developed at the ministry, the minister asked the officials of its 48 district manpower employment offices to list the names of skilled hands who want to

go abroad with jobs.

"We also sent letters to our embassy officials to inform us the updated job requirements abroad and we are expecting to receive all the information soon," he said.

On the basis of demand, labour-market exploration is being geared up especially in some Middle-eastern countries, Italy, Singapore, Korea, Brunei, Cyprus and South America.

"In some countries where we have no embassy we are trying to appoint honorary consul general or form association with the Bangladesh expatriates to explore labour market and look after Bangladesh's interests," said Major Kamrul.

In view of widespread allegations of NRBs about unnecessary harassment at the Zia International Airport, a separate channel is going to be set up at the ZIA only for them within a couple of months.

Ending all sorts of hassles and harassment, safe and secure arrival and departure of NRBs will be ensured through this measure, the expatriate welfare minister said.

Two buses have been fixed for NRBs to reach them to their capital's destinations safely from the ZIA so

that none falls victim of robberies or snatching on the way.

"And in the near future, bus will be kept ready for them to reach them to their destinations across the country," he said about the comprehensive measures under way as part of government step to enhance foreign-exchange earnings from manpower sector.

In yet another major step, the government is going to construct a complex along with "one stop service system" where the NRBs can complete all airport formalities and avail other facilities.

The NRBs will be able to stay in the complex besides having one-stop service for completing immigration, customs and other formalities rapidly.

"We would like to develop the Complex in such manner so that an expatriate can go to airport completing all documents from the complex smoothly," said the minister, who is busy working on the package of incentives.

The minister said the government also is going to construct 180 modern flats for the NRBs in the capital's posh Baridhara area, which will be sold to them.



Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury addresses a seminar titled E-commerce - A Business Link organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) in the city yesterday. DCCI President Matur Rahman, Senior Vice-President Shabbir Ahmed Khan, President of AmCham Aftab-ul-Islam, former DCCI President M Yunus and keynote speaker SM Kamal are also seen in the picture.

# Extended service requires expanded govt size: Khasru

## Private sector demands termed self-contradictory

UNB, Dhaka

The Commerce Minister yesterday criticised the private sector's double standard, saying they put pressure to cut the government size but seek extended government services for doing business.

"Extended service requires expanded government size," said Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury referring to the government's policy decision taken in principle to cut the size that is contrary to the private sector's demand for expanded services.

The minister was addressing a seminar on "E-commerce a business link" organised by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) at its conference room with its president Matur Rahman in the chair.

Business leaders took part in the discussion portraying barriers to adopting e-technology in business.

They, however, found a good sign that 25 per cent of the local companies have internet access compared to world average of 60 per cent.

Assuring government support on policy issues, the commerce minister called upon the private entrepreneurs to solve problems of respective sectors on their own.

Khasru made the remarks when a participant said that a software developed by local professionals can promote exports if a portal is attached to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) web-site at a cost of around Tk 40 lakh.

The portal is to project local products in separate pavilions of different enterprises.

"Trade bodies like the BGMEA should have their own portals," the minister said urging them to go for a venture capital, if necessary, kept with Bangladesh Bank to develop their own portals. "If you fail to avail the fund support then come back to

me."

The minister expressed his confidence that the country's export would boost to a great extent if the private enterprises and trade bodies open web portals to project their respective products.

"We could not yet cross the threshold in the sector. If we can not cross it, it would not be possible for us to boost export," he said, stressing the need for addressing the barriers to information technology.

Explaining advantages of e-commerce, he said it cuts out all the middlemen in business to reduce transaction cost and it's a system of real time buying-selling online.

"It's a global order in the present day context. It does not matter if we want it or not," said the minister.

# First performance audit report next month: CAG

BSS, Dhaka

Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh Syed Yusuf Hossain has said reports of the first performance audit on health, education and energy sectors, undertaken by own resources, will be submitted to the government next month.

He was addressing the inaugural function of a national seminar on "Performance Audit" which began here yesterday to help concerned officers and staff improve their professional skills to ensure best use of available resources for good governance.

The CAG said, a cell on performance audit at his office, has been turned into a dicteratorate now, and a survey was undertaken on internal control systems in important public sector offices.

The seminar was organised under the "Strengthening the Office of the CAG (STAG) Project," funded by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Inaugurating the seminar at a city hotel, Industries Minister M K

Anwar said everybody irrespective of position and profession must come under the purview of accountability to establish good governance.

Unlike the traditional financial and regulatory auditing, performance audit is a new approach and an important toll in overall programme assessment and the most critical innovation in modern public sector auditing, participants of the seminar opined.

The CAG and UNDP Resident Representative in Dhaka Jorgen Lissner addressed the seminar as the special guests.

National Project Director of STAG, Mahmud Hassan Mansur, gave the welcome address.

The industries minister urged the UNDP to compare the systems of other countries with a view to give more institutional freedom to the office of the CAG.

He stressed the need for accommodating more members in the Public Accounts Committee who are knowledgeable about functioning of the government.

The minister said the CAG could launch efforts in this regard through consultations with whips of political parties.

The CAG said with the shift of the accountability regime, there is a widely held view that investment alone cannot ensure development, a climate of good governance is essential to help it flourish.

The developments in public administration and the state of economy, efficiency and effectiveness have led to the development of a new approach to audit through which audit can indeed add materiality and values in public financial management, he said.

Addressing the function, UNDP Representative Jorgen Lissner underscored the need for performance audit to get the real picture of functioning of an organisation.

In this regard, he referred to the recent crumbling of a huge multinational organisation in the USA for what he said the company management did not feel the necessity of auditing.



Chairman and Managing Director of Singer Bangladesh Ltd., Mahub Jamil is seen along with the winners of Singer Sajano Sangsar contest at the prize giving ceremony held in the city on Monday.