

UN adopts micro-finance roadmap for Asia, Pacific

AFP, Bangkok

The United Nations announced Monday it has adopted a micro-finance road map aimed at economic empowerment for the Asia Pacific region's 800 million poor.

Under the Bangkok Forward Looking Declaration on Microfinance, 25 countries have agreed to strengthen microfinance institutions as well as partnerships between developing and donor countries, the UN said in a statement.

The conference, organised by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), focused on promoting microfinance as a powerful force for self-sustaining grassroots economic programs.

Microfinance programs often involve small community-based loans to individuals, and in particular women, eager to set up businesses or enterprises that pull them and their families out of poverty.

"The Declaration also recognised that the 800 million poor in the region need to improve their livelihoods in the immediate future," said UN-ESCAP deputy executive secretary Keiko Okaido.

"In order to do this the declaration considered that a strong partnership between developing and donor countries for the social and economic upliftment of the poorest of the poor is essential," Okaido said.

The regulatory mechanisms that promote and control microfinance service institutions are also to be strengthened as a result of the declaration.

"It is also very heartening to see that microfinance, after years of being considered the domain of NGOs and development agencies, is now becoming priority matter of government policy," Okaido added.

The March 6-8 conference was attended by more than 120 participants, with 25 countries represented.

Trade Services, PHP Group sign MoU

Trade Services International, distributor of ELF brand lubricants, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with PHP Group of Industries in Chittagong recently.

Under the arrangement PHP Group will use technical support from TOTALFINAELF for application of lubricant, grease, specifically required for the equipment and machineries of different Industrial units of the Group.

ONE Bank chairman reelected

The Board of Directors of ONE Bank Limited reelected Sayeed H Chowdhury its chairman for one-year term, says a press release.

Chowdhury has also been reelected chairman of the bank's Executive Committee.

The Board has also reelected Zahur Ullah and Asoke Das Gupta its first and second vice-chairman respectively.

In March 1991, Chowdhury founded HRC Group, which is now a leading conglomerate consisting of sixteen member companies.

Zahur Ullah is the Chairman of Apparel Fair (Pvt) Ltd & Everest Embroidery Limited and is involved in the buying, manufacturing and exporting ready-made garments and allied products.

Asoke Das Gupta is the Chief Executive of IMTREX and the Managing Director of Uniroyal Trade Ltd and Business Capital Shares & Securities Ltd.



PHOTO: UNITREND

Mizanur Rahman, Chairman of PHP Group, exchanging an MOU with Syed Mahmudul Huq, Managing Director of Trade Services International, in Chittagong recently after conclusion of a seminar on privatisation of marketing lubricant. Among others, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, Salman Ispahani, President of Chittagong Stock Exchange, Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Rashed Maskud Khan, former President Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and Sam Chang, Area Sales Manager of TOTALFINAELF-Singapore, are also seen in the picture.



PHOTO: UNITREND

Anwar Ahmed, Managing Director of National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited, inaugurates Niagara Textiles Ltd, a composite knit project financed by NCC Bank recently, at Kaliakoir in Gazipur.

Singer sewing instructors meet in Comilla ends

The 4-day Singer Swing-instructors meet at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) in Comilla ended Thursday, says a press release.

About 60 sewing instructors from different parts of Bangladesh participated in the meet.

Mahbub Jamil, Chairman & Managing director of Singer Bangladesh Limited, inaugurated the meet.

Best teachers from different Groups were awarded for successfully conducting Sewing activities throughout the year. Maya Rani Saha of Khulna was adjudged the best teacher from group A while Hasnot Ara from Dhaka received the best teacher award from group B and Panna Chowdhury from Dhaka achieved best teacher award from Group C. In addition, Tahmina Begum of Dhaka was rewarded for her outstanding contribution to Sewing teaching activities.

The awards include substantial amount of cash money, an appreciation letter and a crest.

During the meet, the instructors participated in the in-house cultural programme, indoor games and visited the eighth centuries ancient monument of Buddha regimes. Salban Bhihar, Koti Mura, museum and war semetary of Second World War at Moinamoti.

Dhaka Bank's new Board Secretariat inaugurated

The new premises of the Board Secretariat of Dhaka Bank Limited (DBL) was jointly inaugurated by DBL Chairman ATM Hayatuzzaman Khan and the former chairman Abdul Hai Sarker recently, says a press release.

The new Boardroom was opened in presence of almost all members of the Board of Directors, Managing Director Mokhlesur Rahman and senior executives of the Bank.

Following the inauguration, a board meeting was also held where dividends, bonus shares and rights shares for the year 2001 were recommended.



PHOTO: ISLAMI INSURANCE

Managing Director of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Limited ABM Nurul Haq addresses a press conference organised in the city on Thursday in connection with the ensuing international summit on Takaful (Islamic Insurance), Dhaka-2002 scheduled to be held on March 16-17 at Sonargaon Hotel. Shamsul Huda, Senior Vice-President (Public Relation) of Islami Insurance Bangladesh Limited, is also seen in the picture.



PHOTO: SINGER

Mahbub Jamil, Chairman and Managing Director of Singer Bangladesh Limited, addresses the inaugural session of Singer Instructors Meet-2002 at BARD in Comilla recently.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank.

Selling	Buying	TT/OD					
		BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer	
58.5500	58.5800	USD	67.4000	57.2314	57.1629		
51.6762	51.7027	EUR	49.7141	49.5681	49.5088		
83.9548	83.9979	GBP	81.1292	80.8909	80.7940		
30.9554	30.9712	AUD	29.4003	29.3139	29.2788		
0.4568	0.4570	JPY	0.4425	0.4412	0.4407		
34.8948	34.9127	CHF	33.9043	33.8047	33.7643		
5.6792	5.6821	SEK	5.4859	5.4698	5.4632		
37.0968	37.1159	CAD	35.9807	35.8750	35.8321		
7.5142	7.5181	HKD	7.3520	7.3304	7.3216		
32.2554	32.2719	SGD	31.3627	31.2706	31.2331		
16.0724	16.0806	AED	15.5026	15.4571	15.4386		
15.7376	15.7456	SAR	15.1852	15.1406	15.1225		
Usance export bills							
		TT/OD	30 days	60 days	90 days	120 days	180 days
USD	57.2817	56.9282	56.4564	55.9139	55.3242	54.0032	
EUR	49.6116	49.3055	48.8969	48.4270	47.9163	46.7722	
GBP	80.9619	80.4623	79.7955	79.0287	78.1952	76.3281	

The local interbank foreign exchange market was active Monday. Demand for dollar was steady. Demand for BDT for overnight borrowing at call was steady and the call rate ranged between 11 and 13 per cent for the day.

In the international market, yen nudged lower, driven by talk of intervention from Japanese monetary authorities. The yen's recent surge to 128 levels has not been taken in a good spirit by Japanese officials fearing loss of competitiveness in the export segment. Euro remained subdued after it fell from the key level of 0.88 due to a report showing US jobless rate fell for the first time in seven months.

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STOCK

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 11.3.2002.

Berth No.	Name of Vessels	Cargo	L Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Leaving	Impt Disc
J1	A She Kyae	GI (SI C)	Yang	Everett	10/3	12/3	1235
J2	AA Venture	GI	Col	CLA	-	13/3	884
J3	San-1	C Clinic	Sing	PSAL	6/3	15/3	1339
J4	Ever Gain	GI (Log)	Mipi	CCNL	6/3	11/3	1618
J5	Jeon Jin	C Clinic	Sing	OLM	25/2	-	392
J6	Jovanna	Urea (BCIC)	B Qas	Uniship	20/2	15/3	1193
J7	Kaghan	Urea (BCIC)	Juba	Atlantic	1/3	15/3	1083
J8	Achiever	Cont	P Kel	RSL	10/3	13/3	234/48
J9	QC Dignity	Cont	P Kel	QCSL	9/3	12/3	287/7
J10	Bangla Robi	Cont	Sing	BSC	9/3	11/3	-
J11	Banga Bijoy	Cont	Col	Bardhi	9/3	13/3	88/47
J12	Bangla Marmata	Idle	Viza	BSC	13/2	14/3	-
JM13	Doha Sun	Idle	P Kel	Rainbow	8/3	12/3	-
JM14	Jaladoot	HSD	Ruwa	ECSL	6/3	11/3	-
DD	Sara Star	Repair	Panji	Royal	6/3	14/3	-
DDJ1	Sonali	Repair	Yang	Angelic	31/10	12/3	-
DDJ2	Bangla Moni	Repair	Mong	BSC	17/1	12/3	-
DDJ3	Bangla Kakoli	Repair	Chinmy	BSC	24/2	12/3	-
RM/10	Bangla Shourabh	Repair	BSC	RML	R/A	18/3	-

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Arvl	L Port Call	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Pioneer Sun	11/3	Kant	OLM	C Clink (Royal)	-
Tzanetis	11/3	Kant	OLM	C Clinks (S Cir)	-
Togo Charm	11/3	Lang	SSA	C Clink (CCJ)	-
Jaami (Cont) 28/2	12/3	Haldia	Everbest	Cont	Col
Valverde	11/3	Sing	OTBL	-	-
QC Honour (Cont) 28/2	11/3	P Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Jin Cheng (Liner)	12/3	Busan	BDShip	GI	-
Sinhai (Cont) 2/3	12/3	-	BSC	Cont	Sing
Nand Srishti	12/3	-	Unique	C Clink	-
Kota Berjaya (Cont) 28/2	12/3	Sing	Pil (BD)	Cont	Sing
Boxer Cap Cook (Cont) 28/2	13/3	P Kel	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Majulah-I	12/				