

## Haq's Bay to assemble light transport vehicle

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Haq's Bay, an automobile dealer, will assemble light transport vehicles with the assistance of Chinese company Dong Feng Motor Corporation (DFM).

"In the past, we were able to successfully market superior quality Dongfeng trucks. Now we are proud to be associated with assembling process," said Abdul Haque, managing director of Haq's Bay Automobiles Ltd, at the launching ceremony of DFM light transport vehicles to be assembled in Bangladesh in the city yesterday.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda attended the function as chief guest while State Minister for Energy A K M Mosharrar Hossain, Zhu Jinfu, economic and commercial counsellor of Chinese Embassy in Dhaka, and Zhou Yi, general manager of Dongfeng Motors Industry Import & Export Corporation, were present as special guests.

Abdul Haque said Dong Feng Motor is a modern automaker and the largest producer of medium sized trucks, cars, minibuses, heavy trucks, light trucks, dump trucks and military vehicles.

## BB T- bill auction held

UNB, Dhaka

The 214th auction of the 28-day, 91-day, 182-day, 364-day, 2-year and 5-year treasury bills were held here yesterday.

Tk 2494.50 crore, Tk 25.00 crore, Tk 17.00 crore, Tk 61.00 crore and Tk 346.00 crore were offered respectively for the 28-day, 91-day, 182-day, 364-day and 5-year bills.

Of these, Tk 2474.50 crore, Tk 12.00 crore, Tk 10.00 crore, Tk 50.00 crore and Tk 282.00 crore in total of Tk 2828.50 crore of 28-day, 91-day, 182-day, 364-day and 5-year bills were accepted respectively.

The rates of implicit yields of the bills were 6.30-6.75 per cent, 6.95-7.00 per cent, 7.15 per cent, 7.40-7.50 per cent and 10.49-10.60 per cent per annum respectively.

No bid was offered for the 2-year bill.

The bills worth Tk 3019.00 crore will retire in the current week and the net issuance would amount to Tk 190.50 (Tk 2828.50-Tk 3019.00 crore) during this week, said a Bangladesh Bank press release.

## Promotion at Sheraton

Dhaka Sheraton Hotel recently announced the promotion of ATM Hafizullah as its director of sales and a member of the executive committee of the hotel, says a press release.

Prior to the new responsibilities, Hafizullah was working as sales manager of the hotel.

Hafizullah, an MBA in Marketing, has twenty years of experience in the hospitality industry.

## 12th AGM of Serve The People held

The 12th annual general meeting of Serve The People (STP) was held on Thursday, says a press release.

Presided over by STP Chairperson Begum Shahzadi, the meeting was addressed, among others, by STP Secretary General Syed Ahmad Faruque, Treasurer Mirza M Eyahia and A K M Farook, former ambassador to China.

Fazle Hasan Abed, Chairperson of BRAC, sent a message on the occasion.

Begum Shahzadi requested the affluent people of the society to come forward to help the under privileged segment of the society.

Syed Ahmad Faruque, announced a mega plan for the Students Support Programme to help the poor and meritorious students pursue their education.

A committee for the year 2002-2004 was elected with Begum Shahzadi as chairperson and Syed Ahmad Faruque as secretary general. The other members of the committee are A K Labibul Huq Vice President, Mirza M Eyahia -- Treasurer, Nilufar Faisal -- Joint Secy, Syeda Samina Mirza -- Joint Secy, Md Rizwanul Amin -- Publication Secy, Nargis Labib -- Office Secy, Syed Salman Habib -- Organizing Secy and Mirza M Zakaria -- Member.

# IT fair gains momentum

## Youngsters form most of crowd

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The 11-day CityIT Computer Fair 2002 that began at the IDB Bhaban at Agargaon in the city on Thursday is gaining momentum, drawing mostly young IT enthusiasts.

Many youngsters are accompanied by their parents, who also visit the stalls to get first-hand knowledge about what the fast moving IT sector has in offer.

The guardians are very eager to introduce their children with computer, said Syed Kamrul Hasan, marketing executive of Hitech Professionals at the fair venue.

Azimuddin Ahmed, convener of CityIT 2002, said this computer

fair was organised to expand awareness about computer among the public.

The computer firms that are housed at the IDB Bhaban are participating in the fair. Companies like Ryans Computer, Onix Computer System, TCL Computers Ltd are providing 15 to 20 per cent discounts on different items.

"We are offering a full multimedia PC at only Tk19, 900 and also offering free modem with 150 minutes free online browsing," said Emran Ali, junior officer of Ryans Computer.

Children were large in number among the visitors at the fair. About three hundred students from

Combined International School and Bangladesh Computer Institute visited the fair yesterday.

"I like computer because I can play games with this. Besides, listening music and painting can be done with the computer," said Nafis, a six-year-old child who came at the fair with his parents.

Some famous software firms were also offering discounts on their products like Barnasoft, Proshika Shabda and Natural Bangla.

Several computer firms are also offering gifts like watches, T-shirts to the customer on their purchasing of different items.

NetStar Private Limited has imported computer tables from

Taiwan that are made of wood and fibre, which attracted many visitors.

Some educational institutes are also participating in the fair to inform the students about their activities. They also offer discounts on different courses.

"I came here with my husband to buy a computer for my child," said Ishrat Jahan, a housewife who lives in the city's Mohammadpur area.

"Here in the fair I have found the CD of famous 'The Three Stooges' comedy series," said Sharmin Sultana, a NSU student.

A discussion on 'software and carrier building' will be held today in the fair premises.

The fair will continue from 10 am to 8pm everyday till October 20.



Members of a joint mission of the World Bank and the IMF -- Shamsuddin Ahmad, Warren Coats, Carlos E Cuevas and Philip F Bartholomew -- exchange views with the members of the Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) on the state of the banking sector in Bangladesh at a meeting held at the conference room of BAB yesterday. Among others, Syed Manzur Elahi, chairman, and Manzurul Islam, vice chairman of BAB, are also seen in the picture.

# Holcim launches service to address customer queries

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Holcim, the country's leading cement company, has launched customer care centre for its premium dealers for the first time under which Holcim will address queries from the clients round the clock.

"The Holcim Customer Care Center (HCCC) will primarily be a virtual 24-hour live centre taking care of queries of its premium dealers," said Zeeshan Kingshuk Huq, deputy general manager (Marketing) of Holcim an ISO 9002 certified company.

"We are launching it for our premium dealers as a beginning, but we envisage to cater to all our customers in the near future," he said.

The company has engaged

dedicated people for the service, he said mentioning that after receiving queries from the dealers, the company would take all initiatives to inform the dealers concerned about their queries.

The HCCC was launched at the company's fourth quarter dealer meet at Holcim's corporate office in the city yesterday. Most of the major premium dealers, who are the company's major distributors, were present in the meet.

"This is something that we have promised in the last dealer meeting, and we have actualized in this meet. Our premium dealers are our customers as well as our partners. Our vision is to offer solutions to our customers, and this center will be geared towards that spirit," Ramit Budhraja, chief executive officer of

Holcim told the dealers. Bangladesh Standard Testing Institutions (BSTI) test found that cement produced by Holcim is one of the best quality cement in the country, he informed the dealers.

The customer care center will be a 24 hours live center receiving premium dealers' calls and will get back with solutions within a minimum two hours. The center, headed by Shankar Roy, is backed up with well-trained people and software for tracking all queries and ensuring answer within promised time, company officials said.

Similar care centers have been running in other industries. But Holcim was the first to initiate this in the cement industry. Dealers are hopeful to have higher level of satisfaction after the introduction of this service, they added.



Communications Minister Nazmul Huda inaugurates the launching ceremony of DFM light transport vehicles of China to be assembled in Bangladesh in the city yesterday.

# ADB aid for Sirajganj traffic system

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The traffic management in Sirajganj is expected to experience significant improvement, thanks to a Tk 381 crore Secondary Towns Infrastructure Development Project-II of Asian Development Bank (ADB) for improving the infrastructure of the town.

The project features include construction and re-construction of roads and drains, slum upgrading, purchasing of some equipment like concrete mixture machine, concrete vibrator, tar boiler and hydraulic beam lifter.

A visit to the town reflected enthusiasm among local people, who had faced with troubled road communication and bus terminal at the heart of the city.

"But it is all going to change in a matter of few months, we are going to have a new bus terminal with capacity to house 150 buses at a time," said Sirajganj municipality Chairman Abu Mohammad Golam Qibria.

He said the tax collection system is also expected to be more dynamic as twenty staff engaged with tax collection at the pourashava are getting training from this project.

"This will certainly improve the quality of our officials to collect the tax rightly," said Golam Qibria.

The project also improved condition of slums in the municipality that benefited about 495 households. Under the sanitation programme of the project, two public toilets, 657 twin-pit latrines, 27 tube-wells, 132 latrines, 1192-metre footpath, 796-metre drains and six dustbins have been constructed while 11 streetlights have been installed.

Micro-credit facilities for poverty alleviation, training programme for skill development, health advice and schools for irregular school

goers have also been incorporated in the project that mostly benefited the slum dwellers.

"Political pressure and some corruption by the project contractors were main barrier to the hundred per cent success of the project. And that's why I couldn't be fully satisfied," he added.

He was talking with a group of journalists of various national dailies who went to see the project implementation work from Dhaka at his pourashava office on Saturday.

The project executing agency was the Local Government Engineering Department of the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development (LGRD) and Co-operatives.

The total project cost was Tk 381.22 crore in which Tk 291.4 crore was provided by the ADB and Tk 9 crore was contributed by the government.

Has given Tk 291.4 crore to the government as loan which is interest free and repayable in 40 years. The project objectives were capacity building of local authorities

## GMG Holidays introduces two umrah packages

GMG Holidays, a leading tour operator of Bangladesh, has introduced two economical and attractive umrah packages -- Rahmat and Salam, says a press release.

Rahmat is a six-night/seven-day package starting from as low as US\$ 1,355 per person on quad sharing accommodation basis while Salam is a 15-night/16-day package starting from as low as US\$ 1,537 per person on quad sharing basis.

Both packages include accommodation, complete visa assistance to Saudi Arabia, Economy Class, air ticket of Saudi Airlines Jeddah-Makkah-Medinah-Jeddah surface transport along with 'meet-and-assist' services at these places.

The packages have four sub-options -- Standard, Deluxe, Executive 'B' and Executive 'A' wherein accommodation in different category of hotels is offered to suit the budget of all pilgrims.

In Makkah, GMG Holidays is offering accommodations in 10 different hotels like Hilton, Sheraton Makkah, Sofitel Elaf Kindah, Makkah Tower, Al Massa and Aziz Khogeer.

In Medinah, GMG is offering 12 hotels including Hilton, Oberoi, Dar Al Iman, Sofitel Elaf, Andalus Plaza, Al-Wissam and Orient.

## Prime Bank launches savings scheme for factory workers

Prime Bank Limited in cooperation with Population Council has launched a savings scheme for factory workers to promote savings habit especially among the garment workers, says a press release.

An agreement to this effect has been initiated recently.

The Population Council, a US-based research organization specializing in reproductive health, has been involved in Bangladesh since 1990.

Shah Md Nural Alam, managing director of Prime Bank Limited, and Dr Ubaidur Rob, country director of the Population Council, signed the contract on behalf of their respective organizations.

M Shahjahan Bhuiyan, additional managing director, Shafiqul Alam, EVP, Raihan Uddin Amin, SVP of Prime Bank Limited, and Dr Sharif Md Ismail Hossain, project director of the Population Council, were also present on the occasion.

The reception was accorded to BESO Council member Ben Chapman MP and visiting members of Commonwealth Parliamentary delegation -- Thomas Cox MP, Dr. Roger Berry MP, David Drew MP, Gareth Thoms MP, assistant secretary, CPA, Paul Jackson, Maureen Chapman and Ms. Jo Warlow.

Chapman said, BESO is extend-



Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmood Chowdhury inaugurates the newly built cereal plant of Nestle Bangladesh at the company's Sripur factory yesterday.

# Nestle vows more investment

## Khosru inaugurates newly built cereal plant

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Nestle Bangladesh Limited will continue to invest in the country.

The possible investment area includes not only the physical infrastructure such as machinery and buildings but also the country's human resources, the company officials said yesterday at the inauguration of a newly built cereal plant at Sripur in Gazipur.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmood Chowdhury yesterday inaugurated the plant as chief guest. With the implementation of the project with the annual production capacity of 3,000 metric tons, the Nestle's total investment in Bangladesh rose to Tk 110 crore.

Speaking at the function, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru mentioned Nestle products have already become popular in the

country, urging the company to use more local raw materials in the products and increase value addition.

"Nestle is one of the leading multinational food processing companies. We like to see the company expand its production capacity and generate more employment," he added urging local people to extend their cooperation to Nestle.

Mahmudur Rahman, executive chairman of the Board of Investment (BOI), and Juerg Casserini, charge d' affaires, Embassy of Switzerland, attended the function as special guests. Gerry Bes, managing director of Nestle, also spoke on the occasion.

In his speech, Mahmud Rahman said he would be happy if Nestle takes initiatives to export its products to other countries.

Juerg Casserini said Nestle has become one of the leading food-processing companies today, although it starts as a chocolate producing company.

Gerry Bes said the company would continue its expansion trend in future and mentioned Nestle's long-term commitment regarding its activities in Bangladesh.

Nestle, a fully owned subsidiary of Nestle SA, Switzerland, produces instant noodles, chocolate drinks, milks, infant nutrition products, and culinary products.

The company is working with local farmers and suppliers as it develops quality local raw and packaging materials to be used in Nestle products, said a statement issued by the company. With Nestle's support, local suppliers have improved their quality standards to ensure that they meet the high standards of Nestle.



Ben Chapman MP, a member of British Executive Service Overseas (BESO) Council, speaks at a function organised by BESO Bangladesh Chapter at a local hotel on Saturday.

# UK expertise service provider plans office in Bangladesh

British Executive Service Overseas (BESO), a development agency that provides expertise service worldwide, is working on opening an office in Bangladesh, says a press release.

This was expressed by the visiting Commonwealth Parliamentary delegation member and member of BESO Council Ben Chapman MP while he was speaking at a reception accorded by BESO Bangladesh Chapter at a local hotel on Saturday.

The reception was accorded to BESO Council member Ben Chapman MP and visiting members of Commonwealth Parliamentary delegation -- Thomas Cox MP, Dr. Roger Berry MP, David Drew MP, Gareth Thoms MP, assistant secretary, CPA, Paul Jackson, Maureen Chapman and Ms. Jo Warlow.

Chapman said, BESO is extend-

ing its work in Bangladesh very fast to meet the local demand.

In consideration of BESO, Bangladesh is a top priority country to receive technical support and professional expertise and we are trying to establish an office in Bangladesh to increase our support and service here," he said.

He mentioned, BESO needs the support cooperation from DFID, British High Commission in Dhaka, private and public sectors and also from Bangladesh government to carry out its free experts service in Bangladesh.

The reception was also addressed, among others, by the Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, Chairman of Editorial Board of New Nation and Ittefaq Barrister Mainul Hossain as chief guest and

special guest respectively. Among others Paul Ackroyd, head of DFID in Bangladesh, were present.

Resident Representative of BESO M S Shaki Chowdhury conducted the reception.

Among others, American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AMCham) President Aftab ul Islam, Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) President Dr Q K Ahmed and Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation (BPC) Chairman Abdur Razzaque, also spoke on the occasion.

Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui urged the delegation to recruit Bangladeshi doctors, nurses and other skilled manpower in different fields in the United Kingdom.



Prime Bank Limited launched a savings scheme for factory workers in cooperation with the US research organisation Population Council recently. An agreement to this effect was signed on Thursday at the bank's head office. Picture shows Shah Md. Nurul Alam, managing director of the bank, and Ubaidur Rob, country director of the Population Council, exchanging the documents of the agreement. M Shahjahan Bhuiyan, additional managing director, and Shafiqul Alam, EVP, of Prime Bank Limited, are also seen.