DHAKA MONDAY MAY 31, 2004 E-mail: dsbusins@gononet.com

CSE launches internet trading system

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

In a major development in the country's capital market, Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) yesterday formally launched Internet Trading System (ITS) enabling people to make online share transactions from anywhere in the world.

Through the system the investors from their own premises can place order and receive buy or sale confirmation on the web. They can also watch current market movement for selected stocks and lodge compliant to the CSE for any irregu-

"Investors have to log on the www.bangladeshstockmarket.com site to open an account by contacting a licensed broker for such trading," Wali-ul Maroof Matin, CEO of ITS at a hotel in Dhaka.

He said the ITS will especially encourage non-resident Bangladeshis to participate in the capital market as they will be able to participate in trading from their own

Initially, the transactions can be made through nine brokers. The investors will have to choose a broker from the list of eligible brokers. It is the responsibility to settle the transaction on behalf of the

The CSE first introduced automated trading with a nationwide network and started trading in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet through wide area network. With the introduction of ITS, the coverage expanded worldwide

Muhammad Abul Hossain was present at the inaugural function, which was addressed by Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chairman Mirza

Azizul Islam, CSE President

Habibullah Khan and Vice-

president Syed Mahmudul Huq. In his welcome speech, CSE President Habibullah Khan suggested corporatising the large infrastructural projects like Jamuna Bridge and getting them enlisted with the stock exchanges to raise fund from the market.

"By doing so, a significant volume of foreign loans against these projects could be repaid as the process will help raise a large amount. It will also help implement

new projects like the third bridge over Karnaphuli river," he said.

Khan urged the government to widen tax gap between the listed and non-listed companies saying, "This will not reduce the total tax collection as the listed companies are well scrutinised by the stock exchanges and the SEC."

The CSE president called upon multinational companies to get enlistment with the capital market. "Major multinationals operating in Bangladesh are listed in their home countries but not in Bangladesh," Khan regretted.

Speaking at the function, SEC Chairman Mirza Azizul Islam said at present there is a little chance of incidents like 1996 share scam as several regulatory measures have been taken to protect the market.

he Imperatives of Readiness Among Stakeholders and Concerned Parties Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Annisul Huq speaks at a view exchange meeting with stakeholders on

"Post-MFA and Bangladesh: The Imperatives of Readiness" in Dhaka yesterday. BGMEA First Vice President Md A Salam, Second Vice President Alamgir Rahman are, among others, seen (left). Michel Lummaux, French ambassador to Bangladesh, Sjef Ijzermans, Dutch ambassador, Anil Sinha, general manager of SouthAsia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF), among others, are seen in the audience (right).

with Bangladesh

to cut rate by 1 percentage point from July UNB, Dhaka

Private Commercial Banks (PCBs) yesterday decided to cut their respective interest rates on loans by one percentage point with effect

Private banks

ost-MFA & Bangladesh

They would formally announce the lending rate-cut decision at the monthly bankers' meeting with Bangladesh Bank next month.

The decision, taken at a meeting of the Bandladesh Association of Bankers at its office in the Dilkusha Commercial Area, was to follow the central bank's repeated instructions to lower the lending rates, said a meeting source.

Average lending rate now stood at 12.40 percent.

The meeting also formed a threemember committee to recommend the central bank to simplify the KYC (know your client) form introduced earlier under the Money Laundering Prevention Act

The yesterday's meeting observed that the banks use different types of forms to report clients' information to the central bank, but those are complex ones and sometimes cause harassment to the

the visiting foreign minister and business delegation accompanying her at Sonargaon hotel yester-FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo chaired the meeting attended by Philippine

Filipino Foreign Minister Delia

Domingo Albert felt the need of a

trade agreement between

Bangladesh and the Philippines to

exploit the opportunity of widening

Addressing a luncheon meeting

with the business leaders, she also

nity to explore the Philippines as a

viable market for Bangladeshi

body, the Federation of

Bangladesh Chambers of

Commerce and Industry (FBCCI),

hosted the luncheon meeting for

The country's apex business

urged Dhaka's business commu-

UNB, Dhaka

bilateral trade

products.

Guerrero, envoys of other Asean countries and senior government The Philippine foreign minister

categorically mentioned that one of

Ambassador Jose Lino B

the three key agendas of her visit is fostering business ties between the two countries and expediting economic co-operation

Filipino FM for trade deal

Delia called upon the businesspeople to re-examine how Philippine products, which are not produced in Bangladesh, can be tapped by Bangladeshi importers for the local market.

The visiting minister told the meet that despite having so much room for improvement, the bilateral trade remained embarrassingly

"Total trade (between Dhaka and Manila) in 2003 was only \$ 9,649,254 or the average price of a house in Beverly Hills," she said repeatedly asking the business community to strengthen the bilateral trade.

The top five exports and imports between Bangladesh and the Philippines were industrial manufactures, resource-based products, consumer manufacturers, special transactions, food and food preparations.

To expedite the bilateral trade. Delia invited FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo to visit Manila

She also praised Bangladesh's women entrepreneurs and suggested them to exploit the hilippine market

Addressing the meeting, Mintoo emphasised reactivating the joint co-operation agreement between the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the FBCCI signed on December 15,

While terming Dhaka-Manila bilateral trade insignificant, she said there are huge opportunities to augment the trade volume between the two countries who have excellent political relations.

"Bangladesh is virtually located at a mid-point between emerging markets of South Asia and fastestgrowing markets of Southeast Asia and Asean countries. Bangladesh has the potential to be an entry point to the region," said the FBCCI President.

He also sought investment from the Filipino entrepreneurs. In this respect, he also elaborated on various fiscal incentives for FDI being given by the government.

Commercial Bank of Ceylon MD in Dhaka

Amitha Gooneratne, managing director of Commercial Bank of Cevlon Limited, arrived in Dhaka yesterday.

During his stay in Dhaka, Gooneratne will meet Bangladesh Bank governor, government officials and customers of Commercial Bank of Ceylon, says a press release.

Commercial Bank of Ceylon has been operating in Bangladesh since November 2003.

BGIC, CDBL sign deal

Bangladesh General Insurance company Limited (BGIC) has signed an agreement with Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL) to convert its share certificates into electronic ones for trading under the central depository system

MA Samad, BGIC chairman, and MH Samad, managing director and CEO of CDBL, the service provider of CDS, signed the deal on behalf of their organisations on Wednesday in Dhaka, says a press release.

Among others, Vice-chairman of BGIC Kalim Sharafi, Managing Director Azizul Huq Chaudhury, Additional Managing Director Kaiser Rahman, Financial



Sirajul Islam

Md Anwarul Haque and Md Sirajul Islam Bharasha have been unanimously reelected chairman and vice-chairman of Global Insurance

The election was held at a meeting of the board of Directors of the company held in Dhaka recently, says a press release.

Haque is also chairman of Technocon Ltd, Manar Associates, managing director of Living Plus and a director of Mercantile Bank, Techno-Foki (BD) and Holiday

Bharasha is the chairman of Karim Impex, and managing director of New H. Tobacco and RK Metal

L/C guarantee scheme of ADB to cover Bangladesh

Bangladesh is among the countries in Asia and the Pacific to benefit from Asian Development Bank's newly launched \$150 million tradefinance facilitation programme

The TFFP fund is meant for boosting liquidity and stability of the trade-finance systems in the region. Under the TFFP, the ADB will

provide political and commercial risk guarantees to international banks bold enough to open credit lines to the region's poorest and riskiest countries, also including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, the

Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Bank officials said the aim of the guarantees is to encourage global banks to fund imports by countries seen as vulnerable to crises or not normally known as profitable mar-

It is also part of ADB's goal to reduce poverty in Asia, home of twothirds of the world's poor, despite its robust economic growth in present

According to reports reaching here yesterday, more than 40 international banks, including top lenders from the United States, Japan and Europe, have committed to participating in the programme They were designated as "founding partner banks" at the TFFP launch.

By the end of the year, some 30 local banks in priority emerging markets should be accredited under the TFFP as issuing banks, making them eligible for ADB guarantee support and direct loans

Under the trade-finance recipe. ADB's overall exposure limit will be \$150 million, which will offer three

A revolving partial credit guarantee (PCG) facility, under which ADB will quarantee to confirming banks the payment of letters of credit and other documentary credits issued by accredited local banks in the Asian region, excluding the Central

Asian Republics (CARs).

A revolving PCG facility, in the form of a risk-sharing arrangement with European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which will guarantee letters of credit issued by accredited local banks in the CARs.

A revolving loan facility, under which ADB will offer short-term loans to the banks accredited for participation in the PCG facilities, to help fund the hard currencyborrowing requirements of their private- sector exporter and mporter clients.

The facility also complements the donor agency's public-sector loans to banking sectors around the region. The programme is part of a broader strategy to use financial intermediation to promote privatesector development, and, through this, economic growth, according to Pamela Bracey, the TFFP Mission

Special offer for StanChart credit cardholders to buy Aktel phones

Aktel and Standard Chartered Bank have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to launch a joint promotional campaign for purchasing Aktel post-paid standard connection along with handsets.

Under the MoU, Standard Chartered Bank is offering zero percent interest to its Visa and MasterCard Credit cardholders through the bank's InstaBuys programme for purchasing Aktel post-paid standard phones, says a press release.

Assistant General Manager (marketing) of Telecom Malaysia International Bangladesh (TMIB) Limited Masud A Mallick and Head of Consumer Banking of Standard Chartered Bank M Sajidur Rahman Wednesday signed the MoU on behalf of their organisations in InstaBuys, an installment

programme, will remain valid up to September this year in selected Aktel marketing offices in Dhaka

Nasir Bin Baharom, managing director of TMIB, and David Fletcher, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh, were also present at the signing cere-

India steel ministry plans halt to stake sales of 2 units

India's steel ministry supports a halt to the sale of stakes of two profitmaking units under it, Steel Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said Saturday.

"Manganese Ore India Ltd this week told reporters.

MOIL made a net profit of 285 millior rupees (\$6.28 million), while SIIL had posted a 230 million rupees

"What is deduction at source?"

born. NBR has been vested with the legal powers to identify such mothers pregnant with potential income. "Seems a novel way of collecting tax before you see your offspring

and develop a fancy for it and has all the flavours of an indirect tax.'

Panasonic launches new cellphone sets

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Panasonic Mobile Communications Company Limited has introduced a new range of cellphone sets in Bangladesh market.

Limited, authorised dealer of Panasonic for Bangladesh, will market the sets including A100, G60, G70, G51M and G51E. The handsets priced at Tk 6,500

Discovery Communications

and above will be available with existing packages of GrameenPhone and other GSM

This was disclosed by officials of Panasonic and Discovery Communications at a press conference at a local hotel on Saturday

Taka Fujino and Kei Nakada from Panasonic Japan and Goh Cheng How from Panasonic Singapore, Fazlul Karim, managing director,

and Khandaker Hafiz, executive director of Discovery Communications spoke at the

Introducing A100, Nakada said.

This is a super small and super cool tri-band phone which can be very useful for those who use SMS (short message service) a lot." The company also launched

G%1 sets in two versions --G51M and G51E. Another Panasonic product G60 has a colour screen with five directional navigation keys. During the presentation, the

company's upcoming models including X300 and X700. Discovery Communications will provide after sales service for all

Panasonic officials also showed the

anasonic phones. Mehboob Chowdhury, director, Sales and Marketing of

GrameenPhone, attended the function as a special guest.



(From Left) Fazlul Karim, managing director of Discovery Communications Limited, authorised dealer for Panasonic cellular handsets, Taka Fujino of Panasonic Japan, Goh Cheng How of Panasonic Singapore and Kei Nakada of Panasonic Japan display their newly introduced handsets at a press conference in Dhaka on Saturday.

City Bank launches dual currency credit card

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The City Bank Limited has come up with a Visa credit card, which enables customers to do risk-free shopping both at home and abroad. "Customers can use the card,

Citycard, to withdraw cash anywhere at any time in the world," said Abbas Uddin Ahmed, managing director of the bank, at the formal launching of the card on Saturday evening The cardholders will also enjoy

45-day interest free credit period, he According to the managing

director, the first-ever dual currency card will be available in two categories-- gold and classic Bangladesh Electronic Payment

Systems (Beps), a Bangladesh-Malaysia joint venture, is providing technological support to the bank to launch Citycard. Science and Information and

Communication Technology Minister Abdul Moyeen Khan, City Bank Chairman Deen Mohammad, Vice-chairman Aziz Al Kaiser and Beps Chief Operating Officer Andy Ng Weng Yew also spoke at the

City Bank will soon introduce debit card in local market

DBH, Sky View Foundation sign MoU

Sky View Foundation Ltd, a real estate developer, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DBH) in Dhaka on Thursday.

Under the MoU, the clients of Sky View Foundation will receive faster and superior customer service from DBH to get up to 70 percent housing loans apartment purchase, says a press release

QM Shariful Ala, managing director of DBH, and N Zoha, managing director of Sky View Foundation, signed the MoU on behalf of their organisations.



With just days to go before a crucial minis-terial meeting, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries has put out signals suggesting that a substantial hike in production could be in the offing as a means of bringing down oil prices.

CITYCARD

The president of Opec, Purnomo Yusgiantoro of Indonesia, has said the cartel would study several options in Beirut on Thursday. But there now appears little doubt that oil markets can expect to receive

Opec's current output ceiling is 23.5 million barrels a day, but its actual production is estimated at 25.5-26 million barrels a day, with most members already pumping at their maximum.

But despite such supply levels, oil prices have been on the rise for months, putting Opec under heavy pressure from consuming countries to boost output and raising sharply the profile of the Beirut ministeria

increase its production quota by 2.0 to 2.3 million barrels a day, options that have already been deemed insufficient by the market and consumers in light of the cartel's current

Another approach would be to increase quotas by more than 2.0 to 2.3 million barrels a day, notably as Opec kingpin Saudi Arabia last week proposed a quota increase of 2.3 to 2.5 million barrels a day.

Saudi Arabia is practically the only Opec member that has the capacity to implement such a hike. Yet another possibility emerged

Friday as a source close to Opec said a suspension of Opec production quotas was an option that could also be discussed in Beirut. "Suspending the quotas could be

one of the options available to the organization to send a strong message to the markets that Opec is doing something real to curb oil prices." he said "Our commitment has not

changed and it will never change. We

vision and a clear mission. We need to stabilise the oil market, stability is in our interest and in the interest of the entire global community." The Wall Street Journal Europe earlier reported that Opec producers

CITYCARD

could allow each member to put as much oil as it wanted on the market, which would in effect mean a suspension of the output quota mechanism, in order to bring prices back down pelow 40 dollars a barrel. The paper said that in exchange for a suspension there could be a

significant expansion in Opec's current 22-28-dollar-a-barrel price band, a step several members have been advocating to compensate for lost revenues caused by a weaken-While consumers are clearly looking for a major surge in Opec output, its potential impact on prices remains difficult to predict given other

factors affecting the market, notably

insufficient refining capacity, the level

of commercial stocks and

geopolitical uncertainties.

REUTERS, New Delhi

(MOIL) and Sponge Iron India Ltd (SIIL) are both profit-making companies and we have said they should not be divested," Paswan who took charge of the department He said in 2003/04 (April-March)