

Star BUSINESS

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BGMEA
nominates
Annusul Huq
for FBCCI
presidency

Bangladesh Garment
Manufacturers & Exporters
Association (BGMEA) yesterday
nominated its former president and
Chairman of Mohammadi Group
Annusul Huq as the candidate for the
office of the president of FBCCI,
says a press release.

The FBCCI (Federation of
Bangladesh Chambers of
Commerce and Industry) polls is
scheduled to be held on August 16.

BGMEA President Anwar-Ul-
Alam Chowdhury Parvez formally
made the announcement at a meeting
organised on the occasion.

Samson H Chowdhury, chair-
man of Square Group, Mahbubur
Rahman, president of the
Bangladesh chapter of International
Chamber of Commerce (ICC),
Latif Rahman, president of the
Metropolitan Chamber of
Commerce & Industry, Dhaka,
Hossain Khaled, president of the
Dhaka Chamber of Commerce &
Industry, Anwar Hossain, chairman
of Anwar Group, and Abul Kashem
Ahmed, president of the Tangail
Chamber of Commerce & Industry,
were present among others.

Turkish-Bangla chamber formally launched

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Turkey-Bangladesh Chamber of
Commerce and Industry (TBCCI)
was launched Wednesday aiming to
boost trade and economy between
the two friendly countries.

Turkish Ambassador Ferit Ergin
formally announced the launching
at a city hotel.

Addressing the function, Ergin
said the present trade volume
between the two countries is not
satisfactory and does not match
with the potentials.

He suggested that the TBCCI
members should work for enhanced
trade relations between the two
countries.

The chamber was established in
April 2007 in Dhaka by Fikret
Cicek as its founding president.

Its main objective is to develop
commercial, economic and social
relations.

To explore business potentials,
the chamber will regularly arrange
meeting between the business
people of the two countries.

In line with the plan, it will also
provide assistance for any commercial
agreement in future.

The chamber will play the role of
a facilitator for the Turkish entrepre-
neurs to find new avenues for
investment in Bangladesh giving a
boost to both the country's econ-
omy.

Executive Chairman of the Board
of Investment Md. Nazrul Islam,
President of the TBCCI Fikret Cicek
and President of the Bangladesh
chapter of International Chamber of
Commerce Mahbubur Rahman
attended the function among others.

Exclusive showroom for Titan watch opens

Titan, a leading brand and manufac-
turer of watches based in India, has
opened its first-ever exclusive
showroom in Bangladesh styled
'World of Titan' at Bashundhara City
shopping mall in Dhaka, says a
press release.

Bipasha Hayat, an actress,
inaugurated the showroom yester-
day, while Manoj Tadepalli, Titan's
business head for Saarc and Far
East markets, and Ghulam Mostafa,
managing director of Kallol Group of
Companies, the franchisee of
'World of Titan' in Bangladesh,
among others, were present.

With watches of over 800
designs, the showroom will offer
customers Titan's many sub-
brands, including Raga collection
for women and Fastrack for the
youth.

Titan plans to open more such
showrooms in major cities including
Dhaka and Chittagong in near
future, said Tadepalli at the inaugu-
ration.

New budget lacks mechanism to contain inflation: BEA

Cashing in on zero duty on essentials by syndicate feared

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The proposed budget for the 2007-
08 fiscal would not help keep inflation
at a tolerable level, rather it
would mount the inflationary pres-
sure, Bangladesh Economic
Association (BEA) told a post-
budget press briefing in Dhaka
yesterday, pointing out that it lacks
any mechanism to contain inflation.

The BEA leaders described the
government's philosophy of free
market economy as unacceptable.

They also blasted the National
Board of Revenue for its move to
white money.

Dr Abdul Barakat, the BEA general
secretary, read out a written state-
ment on behalf of the association at
the press conference held at the
Dhaka Reporters Unity office.

BEA President Dr Quazi
Kholiquzzaman Ahmad was present.

The reduction in import duty on

some essential items, including
lentil and edible oil, is not enough to
cut down inflation, they remarked,
fearing that a strong syndication in
the supply chain, which is still in
existence, might take such a zero
duty facility to their advantage and
make windfall profits.

They suggested market monitoring
and good financial governance in
this regard.

"It is not possible for the govern-
ment to check the rice and wheat
prices following the open market
slogan, because prices of these
items have increased in the world
market," said Dr Barakat.

The BEA identified 10 reasons
for continued price-hike, which
include an active integrated syndi-
cate, breakdown of supply chain,
inadequate stock of food grains in
government silos, weak monitoring
of the demand-supply situation and

adverse situation in the international
market.

Wondering what type of money
would be whitened by government's
recent move, Dr Barakat said, "Any
amount of undisclosed money
should be treated as black money."

However, the BEA chief said if
such money can be utilised in pro-
duction sector, it would bring some-
thing good.

There should be a strong mecha-
nism by which government can
check inflation, Dr Kholiquzzaman
said, adding that the Consumer
Rights Protection Act could be a tool
to check syndication.

Resenting the government's
decision to raise the kerosene price,
he said this is totally against the
concept of poverty reduction.

The BEA termed the proposed
new duty structure for import 'a
drawback for the local industries.' It
said due to the slash of infrastruc-
ture development surcharge, import
duties of around 2,600 items would
decrease, but in most cases there
would be nothing good for the poor
people.

Dr Barakat questioned the
rationale of the proposed with-
drawal of zero duty facility from
nearly 400 items, mostly industrial
raw materials and capital machin-
ery. "Even the government pro-
posed to withdraw zero duty from
garments and textile machinery," he
lamented.

Expressing dissatisfaction over
the proposed big Annual
Development Programme (ADP),
the BEA said when the Tk21600
crore ADP of the current fiscal gets
half of its projects implemented,
then the bigger new ADP would be
too tough to implement.

Withdrawal of 10pc duty, 15pc VAT on textile machinery demanded

UNB, Dhaka

The FBCCI Standing Committee on
Textile and 12 other associations of
the textile and apparel sector,
including BGMEA and BKMEA,
Wednesday demanded the pro-
posed 10 percent import duty and
15 percent VAT in the new budget on
capital machinery import.

They mentioned the government
has set a target to increase the
textile and apparel export to US\$ 12
billion by 2010 and per capita
income to US\$ 1000 by 2015.

"We're urging the government to
withdraw the proposed tax from the
textile sector for the sake of achieving
this target," the statement said.

It said, "Our competitors -- India
and China -- produce the capital
machinery of textiles. So, it would be
impossible (for us) to survive the
competition by paying this proposed
import duty and VAT."

The leaders also demanded the
withdrawal of customs duty and
VAT on import of raw materials like
cotton, different fibers and dyeing
products used in textile industries.

The other signatories to the
statement include BGMEA
President Anwarul Alam
Chowdhury, BKMEA President
Fazlul Haque, Bangladesh Textile
Mills Association (BTMA) acting

President Jahangir Alam,
Specialised Textile and Powerloom
Industries' Association President
Liakat Ali Bhuiyan, Terr-towel and
Linen Manufacturers and Exporters'
Association President Khandaker
Badru Ahsan, Bangladesh Textile
Dyeing and Printing Industries
Association President Badru

Huda Mashuk, Bangladesh
Cloth Merchants' Association
President Muhammad Ayub,
Bangladesh Grew and Finished,
Fabrics Mills and Exporters
Association President Harun-ur-
Rashid, BTMOA President Afzal
Hossain, Bangladesh Corrugated
Carton and Accessories
Manufacturers and Exporters'
Association President Shafullah
Chowdhury, Bangladesh Embroidery
Manufacturers and Exporters'
Association President Major (retd) Ekram U Siddiqui and
B a n g l a d e s h J a m a d a n i
Manufacturers and Exporters
Association President Mohammad
Ali.



Turkish Ambassador Ferit Ergin (R) formally announces the launching of Turkey-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TBCCI) in Dhaka on Wednesday.

Kuwait to resume recruiting Bangladeshis after enacting law

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Kuwait will decide to resume recruit-
ment of workers from Bangladesh
after it formulates a law relating to
employment of foreign workers.

During a bilateral meeting with
Bangladesh's Labour and
Employment Adviser Anwarul Iqbal
on Wednesday in Geneva, Sabah
Khaled Al-Hamad Al Sabah also
expressed annoyance over some
unscrupulous recruiting agencies in
Bangladesh, according to a mes-
sage received in Dhaka yesterday.

Kuwait has not been hiring
workers from Bangladesh for the
last seven months.

In response to Kuwaiti minister,
Adviser Anwarul Iqbal said it is an
imperative to frame a law to ensure
protection of workers going abroad.

Urging the Kuwaiti minister to
withdraw the ban on hiring workers
from Bangladesh, Iqbal said Dhaka
is ready to extend full support to
Kuwait for manpower export.

The Kuwaiti minister invited



Oriental Bank gets new chairman

A H Tawfiq Ahmed, former deputy
governor of Bangladesh Bank, has
taken over as the chairman of
Oriental Bank Ltd, says a press
release.

Bangladesh Bank, through an
order, appointed Ahmed the chair-
man of the bank recently. Prior to his
new assignment, he was serving as
the secretary general of the Institute
of Bankers Bangladesh.

Ahmed started his banking
career in 1970 with the State Bank
of Pakistan after obtaining his post
graduate degree from the University
of Dhaka.

According to foreign ministry
officials, there are 5,000 irregular
Bangladeshi workers in Kuwait,
while the manpower businesses put
the number at around 30,000.

Trust Bank opens branch in Moulvibazar

Trust Bank opened a branch in
Moulvibazar recently, says a press
release.

Chief of Army Staff and
Chairman of Trust Bank Limited
General Moeen U Ahmed inaugu-
rated the new branch.

Managing Director of the Bank
Iqbal U Ahmed presided over the
function. Major General Abdul Hafiz,
GOC Comilla, Shahid Ahmed, SVP
and head of Human Resources,
Farhad Uddin, SAVP and company
secretary, Aftab Mahmud Khurshid,
head of Corporate Brand and Market
Communications, and Md Masud
Chowdhury, Moulvibazar branch
manager and SAVP, were also
present.

Xerox Global Services launched in Dhaka

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Xerox Corporation, the global
document management company,
has announced plans to further
strengthen its presence in
Bangladesh as Xerox Global
Services (XGS) was launched
yesterday in Dhaka to help organiza-
tions reduce costs in the document
management space.

XGS is the consulting arm of
Xerox that offers device and docu-
ment management services. XGS
solutions include three offerings:
Business Process Services, DOCS
(Document Outsourcing and
Communication Services) and
Xerox Office Services.

Speaking at the function, Andrew
Horne, chief of Xerox Corporation
(South Asia Chief), said, "We
believe XGS will prove to be a great
success in Bangladesh."

About its partnership with
International Office Equipment (IOE),
Horne said, "With IOE we will be
positioned to offer corporates in
Bangladesh an end-to-end portfolio
of products and solutions."

He said, "If banks provide us with
short-term loans and take it back
when the L/C are received, we can
run our factories without any hassle
and disruption."

When asked about the measures
the factory management took after
the May 20 violent incident,

Taher said they gave Tk 1 lakh
compensation to the family mem-
bers of the female worker who was
killed as the police fired upon the
workers staging demonstration for
realising their dues.

In the incident, many workers,
including cops, were injured.

Students flying with BA can carry
extra 23kg bag

Students flying with British Airways
between June 15 and October 31,
2007, can carry an extra bag weigh-
ing up to 23 kilos, says a press
release.

This special offer is valid for
ticketing between June 15 and
September 30, 2007 and travel
commencing between June 15 and
31 October 2007. To book, students
can simply visit ba.com or call
British Airways in Dhaka and Sylhet.

Chris Phipps, British Airways'
manager Bangladesh, said: "We
want to do something special for our
student travellers. We have come
up with this offer to be able to pro-
vide a fare and baggage allowance
that suits their requirements."

The offer only applies to students
holding a valid student visa to the
country of destination.

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Had the financial institutions come
forward to provide short term loans
for smooth running of ready made
garment units, the owners would
have ensured workers' monthly
salary on time, remarked the man-
agement of an RMG unit that fell
victim to the last month's labour
unrest while narrating the situation
to the press yesterday at Gazipur.

"Sometimes banks take longer
than scheduled time to receive
letters of credit (L/C), which often
forces us to delay paying workers'
salaries," said M Abu Taher, chair-
man of Fortuna Apparels Ltd, a
concern of Fortuna Group, at a view
exchange meeting with journalists
on his factory premises.

Recently, it received a \$ 12
million export order from Wall Mart,
the largest retail chain store of the
world, officials of the factory
informed the newsmen.

On May 12, Fortuna Apparels
Ltd celebrated its 24th found-
ing anniversary.

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Dollar above 123 yen

AFP, London

The dollar surged past 123 yen on
Thursday following news in the
United States that producer prices
jumped higher than expected in
May.

The dollar leapt to 123.13 yen in
mid-afternoon European trading,
which marked the highest level
since early December 2002.

Tough new US currency bill

AFP, Washington