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Poor supply to prompt more rawhide import this year

Leather industry people suggest duty lifting

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The local footwear factory owners and leather goods manufacturers will have to import more rawhides this year due to poor collection of rawhide during Eid-ul-Azha, said a top official of an export-oriented footwear manufacturing company.

This Eid, the main season for collecting rawhide, has witnessed at least 15 percent shortfall in collection of rawhide compared with the last year, industry insiders said.

They said the collection rate of rawhide was poor this year as the people affected by cyclone Sidr did not sacrifice animals. Many rich and influential political persons also refrained from sacrificing animals in large scale unlike they did in previous years mainly due to changed political scenario.

"Generally we collect around 18-20 lakh pieces of cowhide and 35-40 lakh pieces of goatskin during Eid-ul-Azha. But this year the collection of cowhide may be two lakh and goatskin five lakh less than those of the previous year due to the devastating cyclone," said Md Tipu Sultan, president of Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leather Goods and Footwear Exporters Association.

The local tanners have the capacity to process 300 million square feet of rawhide a year, but they receive only 200 million square feet of rawhide for processing, said Managing Director of Apex Adelschi Footwear Ltd Syed Nasim Manzoor.

He suggested the government should lift import duty on rawhide and wet blue leather in the 2007-08 budget, he said, adding "previously there had been no such duty and neighbouring India maintains zero duty on import of rawhide and wet blue leather."

"If we import tax-free rawhide, we can become more competitive



Workers processing rawhide with salt on the footpath of North South Road in Dhaka on Saturday.

PHOTO: STAR

in the international market," he said.

"If we want to remain more competitive in global footwear and leather goods market, we must import rawhide or wet blue leather from USA, Brazil and Russia," he added.

The value addition would be 60 percent in case of footwear, and leather goods, which are manufactured by imported rawhide and wet blue leather, whereas the value addition could be more than 80 percent if the products are made from local rawhide, said Nasim.

Talking to The Daily Star about the quality of local rawhide, he said professional butchers should skin, as the quality of local skin collected from different parts of the country during Eid is not up to the mark.

"The government should set up

some abattoirs on area basis at least in Dhaka and other metropolitan cities to maintain the quality of the rawhide," he said.

According to the industry people, Bangladesh produces over 220 million square feet of leather every year, 80 percent of which comes from sacrificial animals during Eid-ul-Azha.

Nasim said Bangladesh earned US\$115 million from export of footwear, \$8 million from leather goods and \$220 million from crust and finished leather during January-November period of this year.

The collection rate for per square feet of cowhide was fixed at Tk 70 in Dhaka and Tk 60 in other parts of the country, but the industry people said the cost of hide has already increased due to supply scarcity.

"Rawhide reaches the tanneries through middlemen. So when rawhide is bought at Tk 70 initially we get it at tanneries at Tk 90. But as supply shortage has increased the prices we may have to collect rawhide by paying over Tk 90," said SM Azizur Rahman of Bangladesh Hide and Skin Merchants Association (BHSMA).

The sector insiders also said the hidden cost of collecting rawhide was very low this year due to less frequency of extortion and hijacking for improved law and order situation.

"In previous years the skin collectors used to pay toll at different points during collecting and transporting hides. But the scenario was different this year. So the system loss is also very low," said Md Aftab of BHSMA.

Air Deccan merges with Kingfisher Airlines

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's biggest budget-carrier Air Deccan will merge with Kingfisher Airlines to set up the country's biggest domestic airline.

The decision to merge the two airlines was taken at separate meetings of their board of directors in Bangalore on December 19 and the two companies agreed to work under a single corporate entity to be called Kingfisher Airlines.

The new entity, which will come into being from April next year, will be operating as a subsidiary of liquor baron Vijay Mallya's United Breweries (UB) Holdings whose flagship beer brand is called Kingfisher.

Mallya will be the chairman and chief executive officer of the merged company and G R Gopinath, a former pilot who set up Air Deccan, the vice chairman.

"Merger formalities will be completed by this fiscal end (in March next year) and hopefully we will start the next financial year with a new merged entity," said Mallya.

Gopinath said the merger would bring about synergies across the board and lower the cost of operations of both the airlines.

Citibank NA acquires Chinese bank in Taiwan

Citibank NA has completed acquisition of Bank of Overseas Chinese (BOOC) recently, says a press release.

The total transaction amounts USD 427 million, which expands Citi's domestic network to 66 branches and adds one million new clients in Taiwan.

The new subsidiary, Citibank Taiwan Ltd, will take over all of BOOC's rights and obligations, including operations, assets and liabilities.

Citi, the leading global financial services company, has some 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 100 countries.

Alliance Bedware eyes business expansion on high demand

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

As the demand for quality bedware and pillow cushions is on the rise both at home and abroad, the local manufacturers of the two items are eyeing their business expansion.

Alliance Bedware, the producer of FeatherTouch, a brand of quality bedware and pillow cushions, is one of such manufacturers.

The company's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sanaul Haque said to raise his company's productivity, an automatic machine worth around US\$75,000 will be imported from Italy.

He hoped that this move would help churn out mainly bedware and pillow cushions worth \$5 million next year.

The Alliance Bedware, established in 2004 on 40,000 square feet of land at the city's Shewrapara area, has been producing bedware and kitchenware worth \$2.4 million per annum, the company CEO told The Daily Star.

The company's local turnover is around Tk 1.5 crore.

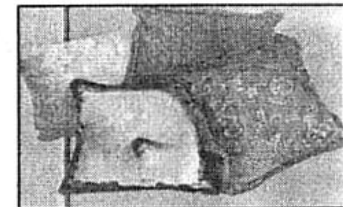
Sanaul said his company's main products are pillow, cushion (sofa & floor), comforter, bed sheet, baby quilt sheet, kitchen apron, oven gloves and place mat.

Referring to the Alliance's comprehensive market study report conducted before the company's formal launching of production, he said, "Now there are changes in customers' taste and choice, so exploration of new markets of bed ware and other items is very much likely."

The main export markets are Europe and America, he said, adding that Japan and India might be very potential destinations of the products as the manufacturers have received a significant number of orders from those countries recently.

According to the findings of the survey report, people are no longer interested in traditional pillow items, made from local cotton because of high prices and gradual decline in cotton output.

He said, "To make its products more cost effective in the local



Pillow cushion



Quilt



Kitchenware

market, Alliance Bedware uses imported fibre cotton from Korea.

He said a fibre pillow made by his and other similar companies is available at Tk 250, whereas local cotton is sold at Tk 250 a kg in the market.

There are as many as 300 appointed dealers across the country to distribute the Alliance's products.

The company's corporate clients are United Hospital, LabAid and Hotel Regency.

The other local competing manufacturers of Alliance Bedware are EuroAsia and Banging.

The total investment in the sector is Tk 30 crore with 20-25 percent annual growth, the industry insiders said.

Mentioning the Banging as the pioneer in this sector Sanaul Haque claimed his company's market share is 40 percent, although Banging started its production and export 11 years ago. EuroAsia started its formal production in 2006, according to Sanaul.

He said China, Thailand and in some cases Pakistan are main competitors in the international markets. Only China exports bedware and pillow cushions worth \$200 million per annum.

Korean firm to expand project in DEPZ

UNB, Dhaka

Korean owned company, Dong Bang Facilities (BD) Ltd, is going for expansion of its project in Dhaka Export Processing Zone with additional investment of \$7.5 million.

The company would also create new employment opportunity for additional 764 Bangladeshis including four foreigners. There are 123 Bangladeshis already working in the Korean company, a Bepza release said yesterday.

An agreement to this effect was signed between Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority and M/s Dong Bang Facilities (BD) Ltd in Bepza Complex here on December 18.



Trust Bank Ltd has recently opened its Uttara Corporate Branch in Dhaka. Major General Md Matiur Rahman, adjutant general of Bangladesh Army and vice chairman of the bank, inaugurated the branch, while Iqbal U Ahmed, managing director of the bank, and senior officials were present.

Norwegian women break down boardroom barriers

AEP, Oslo

Norwegian women have knocked down the door to the corporate world and taken their seats in the boardroom, thanks to a pioneering new law, but despite the giant step forward they remain under-represented in the business sector.

From the industrial fishing group Aker Seafoods to the StatoilHydro energy mammoth, women account for about 35 percent of board membership at Norwegian public limited companies, the highest proportion in the world.

For the companies, it was a question of survival. Norwegian legislation requires public limited companies to have at least 40 percent women on their boards as of January 1, 2008 or close their doors to business.

The 40 percent figure can vary a bit depending on the total number of board members.

"This reform is a success. The most alarmist people told us the economy would suffer, that investors would flee Oslo, that the level of competence on the boards would plunge," said Marit Hoel, the head of Norway's Centre for Corporate Diversity (CCD).

"What we've seen is that the economy is doing very well, that the investors are still there, and that the women who have been appointed to the boards are more highly educated, more international and younger than their male counterparts, which creates a new dynamic," she said.

The law -- the brainchild of the previous centre-right government in 2003, at a time when women represented only 15.5 percent of board members -- initially met with strong opposition.

Employers in particular feared that gender would take priority over merit.

But the law has become an unquestionable part of Norwegian mores, and not one of Norway's companies appears to be at risk of closure for non-compliance.

"The goal of the law was not to dismantle companies," Equality

Minister Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen said.

"The goal was to have women in the boardroom and we're there."

The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) has even launched a programme, called Female Future, which has already trained almost 600 future leaders so far.

Ingrid Amundsen, a marketing manager at Kraft Foods, is one of them. At 37, she has already been appointed to two boards.

"If a company offers me a seat on its board, it shouldn't only be because I'm a woman but also because the company thinks I can bring something to the table. It is totally out of the question for me to become a board member just because of my chromosomes," she said.

Alongside the new recruits, some of the women already well-established in the business sector have become even more sought after. Dubbed the "queens" of the boards, a number of them, including a few former cabinet ministers, are piling up board positions, with some holding up to 20.

But while Norway can now boast twice as many women on company boards as in Sweden and four times more than in Denmark, not everything is looking so rosy.

Women hold only 15 percent of executive management positions, and only four percent of board chairs are held by women -- statistics that put Norway back in the European average.

In addition, the Norwegian labour market remains very segmented, with the prestigious and well-paid jobs held overwhelmingly by men and the low-paid public sector jobs held primarily by women.

"It takes the same number of years of education to become a nurse as it does to become an engineer, and yet, the two professions are not at all considered equal," said Bjørge Unstad, the acting equal opportunities ombudswoman.

"In short, we need more men in the public sector and more women in the private sector," she said.



Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd

(A Company of Petrobangla)

80/A-B, Siddeshwar Circular Road, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217

(Construction Department)

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জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

Invitation for Tender

| SL No. | Name of works | Fixed tender security money Tk | Completion time | Cost of tender paper (non-refundable) Tk |
|---------|--|--|-----------------|--|
| 1. | Construction of Rig pad for P-80 Workover Rig in well No-2 at Fenchugonj Gas Field, Kulaura Moulvibazar. | 14,500/- | 30 days | 400/- |
| 2. | Brief description of works | P-80 workover Rig pad construction. | | |
| 3. | Source of funds | Revenue Budget of BAPEX. | | |
| 4. | Tender package No. | Fenchugonj # 02.12/07. | | |
| 5. | Tender notice and date | 124.56.88 date: 10-12-2007. | | |
| 6. | Eligibility of tenderer | Enlisted contractors of govt./semi-govt./sector corporation and other autonomous organizations having experience as mentioned in the tender document. Interested tenderers may view the document at the office of the undersigned during office hours. | | |
| 7. | Name and address of the offices selling tender document | a) Accounts Division, BAPEX, Shahjalal Tower (2nd Floor), 80/A, Siddeshwar Circular Road, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217. b) Accounts Division, Petrobangla, Petrocentre, 3, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka. c) Titas Gas T&D Co. Ltd, Titas Bhaban, 105, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka. d) Rupantanta Pratikritik Gas Co. Ltd, PRGCL Bhaban, Plot No-27, Nikunja-2, New Airport Road, Joursahara, Dhaka-1229. | | |
| 8. | Name and address of the offices receiving tenders | a) Construction Dept., BAPEX, Shahjalal Tower (8th Floor), 80/A, Siddeshwar Circular Road, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217. b) Petrobangla, Petrocentre, 3, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka. c) Titas Gas T&D Co. Ltd, Titas Bhaban, 105, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka. d) Rupantanta Pratikritik Gas Co. Ltd, PRGCL Bhaban, Plot No-27, Nikunja-2, New Airport Road, Joursahara, Dhaka-1229. | | |
| 9. | Name and address of the office opening tenders | Construction Dept., BAPEX, Dhaka. | | |
| 10. | Last date and time for selling tender document | 26-12-2007 to 06-01-2008 up to 2.00pm. | | |
| 11. | Date and time for submission of tenders | On 07-01-2008 up to 11-30am. No tender will be accepted after the deadline for submission. | | |
| 12. | Date and time for opening of tenders | On 07-01-2008 at 2-30pm in presence (if any) of the tenderers/their representatives. | | |
| 13. | Special instructions | Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason without accepting any liability. | | |
| GD-4550 | | General Manager (Planning) | | |

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

পরিকল্পনা কমিশন

কার্যক্রম বিভাগ

(রুক নং-২, কক নং-২৪)

শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭

নং-পক/কার্যক্রম/প্রকল্প-৭/অংশ-১/২০০৬/১১৭

তারিখঃ ১৯/১২/২০০৭

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পরিকল্পনা কমিশনের আওতাধীন বাস্তবায়িত "স্ট্রেইনসিং অব অপারেশনাল সাপোর্ট ইউনিট ইন দি প্রোগ্রামিং ডিভিশন" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পে (জুলাই ০৫ হতে জুন ০৮ মেয়াদে বাস্তবায়নধীন) নিম্নলিখিত শূন্য পদে সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে এবং সাফল্য বেসনে প্রকল্প চলাকালীন সময়ের জন্য পুরস্কার নিমিত্ত বর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

| ক্রমিক নং | পদের নাম ও সাফল্য | পদের সংখ্যা | সাফল্য বেসন | বয়সসীমা | শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা |
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| ১. | গাড়িচালক | ১ (এক) | ৫৪২০/- টাকা | অনুর্ব ৩০ বছর | বেশ ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স সহ অটম শেখা পাস। গাড়িচালক হিসেবে কমপক্ষে ৩ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। |
| ১. | উল্লিখিত পদের বিপরীতে বর্ণিত ২০০৫ সালের জাতীয় বেসন ফেল অনুযায়ী সাফল্য বেসনে (Consolidated Pay) প্রচলিত সরকারি বর্ণি অনুযায়ী অন্যান্য ভাতা প্রদান করা হবে। | | | | |
| ২. | প্রার্থীর নাম, পিতার নাম, মাতার নাম, বর্তমান ঠিকানা, স্থায়ী ঠিকানা, জাতীয়তা, নিজ জেলা, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, জন্ম তারিখ ও অভিজ্ঞতা এবং নিজস্ব প্রকাশের তারিখে বয়স ইত্যাদি উল্লেখপূর্বক আবেদনপত্রের সহিত উল্লিখিত সনদপত্র, স্ব-প্রত্যয়ন/পেরসনাল ইত্যাদি প্রদানের নিকট হতে নাগরিকদের সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি, গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র এবং সাম্প্রতিক তোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত ছবি প্রকল্প পরিচালকের বরাবর উপরোক্ত ঠিকানায় আগামী ৩১/১২/২০০৭ তারিখে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে পৌঁছাতে হবে। | | | | |
| ৩. | চাকরীতে প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। তবে সরকারি দপ্তরের সমাপ্ত উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (স্বাধীন খাতে স্থানান্তরিত) হতে বাদ পড়া অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন দক্ষ নির্বেদিত কর্মচারীদের আবেদন গ্রহণযোগ্য প্রাপ্য এবং বয়সসীমা নির্ধারিত। | | | | |
| ৪. | প্রচলিত বর্ণি অনুযায়ী সর্বপ্রকার সরকারি কোটা সংরক্ষিত। | | | | |
| ৫. | যাদের উপর পদের নাম অপশাই উল্লেখ করতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ এবং বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। | | | | |
| ৬. | প্রার্থী বাছাই প্রক্রিয়ায় অংশগ্রহণকালে প্রার্থীকে কোন প্রকার ভিত্তি/প্রদান করা হবে না এবং সাফল্যবাসের সময় মূল সনদপত্র প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। | | | | |
| ৭. | নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ প্রয়োজনবোধে নিয়োগের যে কোন শর্ত সংযোজন, বিয়োজন, পরিবর্তন এবং নিয়োগ বাতিল করতে পারবে। | | | | |

মোঃ মোফাজ্জল হোসেন

মুদ্রা-প্রধান-১ ও প্রকল্প পরিচালক

স্ট্রেইনসিং অব অপারেশনাল সাপোর্ট ইউনিট ইন দি প্রোগ্রামিং ডিভিশন

কার্যক্রম বিভাগ

পরিকল্পনা কমিশন

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ক্রি: ৪৬৬২