

BJMC fails to recover Tk327cr from Sudan, Iraq



SAJADUR RAHMAN
The ailing Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) has been struggling to recover about \$48 million (equivalent to Tk 327 crore) export bills from Iraq and Sudan for years. Of the outstanding bills from the two war-torn countries, Iraq owes \$37 million and Sudan \$10.86 million, according to the BJMC data.

The officials of the state-run body said despite repeated attempts, Bangladesh even neither got any cotton from Sudan nor oil from Iraq in exchange for the export bills. "Sudan, which is a cotton producing country, promised to give cotton, but failed to do so," a senior BJMC official told The Daily Star. A similar attempt was taken to import oil from Iraq, but nothing happened, he lamented. BJMC statistics shows it exported 13,975 bales of jute goods, mostly sacks, to Iraq in 1998-99 at a price of \$10 million, which now stood at \$10.5 million with interests. On the other hand, Sudan imported jute goods worth \$27 million in 1996-97 from

Bangladesh. The amount now stood at \$37 million with interests. "We've writing letters to Sudan almost every month," a BJMC director said. He said: "A consul general has also been appointed there to work for us. But there is no visible progress so far." The size of business of BJMC, the world's largest state-owned jute goods manufacturing and exporting organisation, now gets shrunk because of recurrent losses. The number of mills it runs has reduced to half a dozen from 80 during the post-liberation period. The corporation is also struggling with fund crunch. "We can't buy raw jute on time due to financial crisis," the BJMC director said.

"Banks also do not give us loans. Moreover they cut 30 percent from each export payment as their payment against loans," he said. BJMC exported jute goods worth Tk 472 crore in the 2006-07 fiscal. Jute trade is still centred on the Indian subcontinent. The major producing countries of jute are: Bangladesh, India, China, Thailand and Myanmar. Bangladesh is the largest exporter of raw jute, and India is the largest producer as well as largest consumer of jute products in the world. But currently India is focusing more on raw jute production and many Bangladeshis think that India would replace Bangladesh soon as the largest exporter.

Easy bank loans needed for grassroots women entrepreneurs

Seminar told
STAR BUSINESS REPORT
More government support is needed for easy access to bank loans and license for grassroots level women entrepreneurs in order to ensure their contribution to the national economy, said a winner of the Begum Rokeya Padak 2007. "As women are 50 percent of the total population, Bangladesh needs to encourage the grassroots level women entrepreneurs to strengthen the national economy," Professor Latifa Akand told a seminar in Dhaka yesterday. Nari Maitree, A local NGO, arranged the seminar on Investment for Women and Female Child at the National Press Club where 11 entrepreneurs engaged in boutique print business, a scheme funded by the NGO, shared their experiences. "Now many women come up with plans of investment in small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which is a positive sign for a developing economy like Bangladesh," Prof Latifa said, suggesting government patronisation for them. The problems the entrepreneurs now face with regard to bank loans came up prominently in the discussion. Shahin Akhtar Dolly, executive director of Nari Maitree, urged the government to formulate a policy in favour of the grassroots level women entrepreneurs.

Local firms get \$1.36m export order from US show

BSS, Dhaka
The Bangladesh companies have confirmed export orders to the tune of US\$ 1.36 million and US\$13.2 million as prospective ones from ASAP show in Las Vegas, USA, while negotiations with the new buyers is still under way. Bangladesh participated at the 13th edition of ASAP (Apparel Sourcing Association Pavilion) Global sourcing show, a premier Apparel Exposition, held recently in Las Vegas, USA, an Export Promotion Bureau press release said here yesterday. Thirteen garments exporting companies and members of BGMEA and BKMEA took part in the show under the auspices of Export Promotion Bureau. Along with Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Macao, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Korea, Sri Lanka, Israel, were other participating nations at show. A wide variety of woven and knit garments such as T-Shirt, Polo Shirt, Sweat Shirt, Tank-Top, Trousers, Shirts were exhibited in Bangladesh Stand during the fair. Almost 400-500 hundred buyers, registered with the ASAP, visited the show and were seen enthusiastic about Dhaka's apparel products. Besides these registered buyers, some buying agents of world famous Wal-mart, K-mart, Kumer Group, Nautica, GAP, Target also visited Bangladesh Stand. Visiting buyers discussed some key issues like child labour, timely shipment, compliance issue, and quality management and shipment under LDP system to augment Bangladesh's export to the US market.

Malaysian Becomes MD of Oriental Bank

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
Bangladesh Bank yesterday approved appointment of Abdul Latif Yahiya, a Malaysian national, as the managing director of once scandal-ridden Oriental Bank Limited now renamed ICB Islamic Bank, BB sources said.

His salary has been fixed at \$10,000 (about Tk 7 lakh) a month. Abdul Latif Yahiya will replace M Asaduzzaman Khan, who was given the responsibility to work as an interim CEO after the central bank took over the operation of Oriental Bank. Switzerland-based ICB Financial Group Holdings AG won the bidding for purchase of 50.1 percent shares of Oriental Bank Limited at Tk 350.6 crore on February 28. ICB Financial Group Holdings AG is the holding company for several banks operating in Eastern Europe, Africa and Indonesia and now in South Asia.

New DMD of First Security Bank

Md Sayedul Hasan has been appointed new deputy managing director of First Security Bank. Prior to joining this bank, he was senior executive vice president of Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd. Hasan started his career as a probationary officer at IFIC Bank Ltd in 1984.

China Chamber of Commerce for Import & Export of Textiles (CCCT) Delegation, China



Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) acting President Salahuddin Abdullah (2nd from left) speaks at a meeting with a 21-member delegation from China Chamber of Commerce for import and export of Textiles (CCCT) in the capital yesterday. Delegation leader and CCCT Vice Chairman Cao Xin Yu (2nd from right) and DCCI Vice President Khandaker Shahidul (left) are also seen.

Sino-Bangla businessmen vow to reduce trade gap

UNB, Dhaka
Business leaders of Bangladesh and China yesterday pledged to enhance bilateral trade through exploiting huge potential and thereby reduce the trade gap of some US\$ 2.44 billion between the two countries. The business leaders said the two countries have huge scopes in the two-way trade for boosting exports, imports and investment. They came up with the observations at a business meeting held at the auditorium of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) in the morning. A 21-member business delegation from "China Chamber of Commerce for Import & Export of Textiles (CCCT)" joined the meeting for a latest appraisal of trade prospects.

Head of the Chinese delegation Cao Xin Yu conveyed their interest in investing in Bangladesh, particularly in textiles. Xin Yu also invited Bangladeshi businessmen to visit China and make effort to explore markets of Bangladeshi products in the vast country of nearly 1.5 billion people. "Now the two countries need increased economic cooperation to reduce the trade gap. I request my Bangladeshi friends to visit China and find out market of their products in the country," he said. Acting DCCI President Salahuddin Abdullah said in 2006-07, Bangladesh exported products worth about US\$ 93 million to China against the import of US\$ 2,534 million. "Since Bangladesh has

competitiveness in RMG sector, China-Bangladesh cooperation can work better if Chinese investment for establishing backward-linkage industries in the field of textile and clothing can be attracted. Jute-based textiles can also be planned to explore for future expansion," Salahuddin told the meet. He mentioned that Bangladesh offers conducive investment climate compared to the other South Asian economies. Furthermore, geographical location of this country is ideal for global trade with very convenient access to international sea and air routes. Salahuddin said as an LDC, Bangladesh enjoys preferential and duty-and quota-free market access to various countries' market, including EU, Canada, Australia, Japan, India, Pakistan, Thailand and Korea."

EBL launches travel loan

Eastern Bank Limited (EBL) has launched travel financing solution, under the title "EBL TravelLoan" recently to help travelers finance their travel related expenses, says a press release. A press briefing was arranged at a city hotel to announce the product launching. Managing Director and CEO Ali Reza Iftakhar, Head of Consumer Banking Mamoon Mahmood Shah, and Head of Marketing Nazeem A. Choudhury of EBL attended the press brief. Borrowers, under the EBL TravelLoan scheme, will get 50 percent issuance fee waiver on EBL dual currency credit card. The bank is also aiming to bring in economy travel packages for its customers in partnership with different tourism boards and travelling agencies.

Tata unveils long distance CNG-run bus in Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
Tata Motors yesterday unveiled long distance CNG-run buses in Bangladesh as local transport operators are shifting to CNG-based commercial vehicles. "We have developed the version eyeing market potential," said N Ramchandran, country manager of Tata Motors. Tata's TATA LPO-1510 CNG Long Distance Version bus chassis was unveiled at a function at organised by its distributor Nitol Motors at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. The demand for CNG-run vehicles such as buses are growing at a time when global oil price is has been surging and hit above \$100 a barrel on March 11, 2008. Tata Motors, which is now supplying Cummins CNG engine buses, has already supplied over 1100 buses in Bangladesh. Most of the buses ply mostly in Dhaka metropolitan areas. "We have developed the version with the understanding that the number of CNG-run vehicles will rise in Bangladesh," said Ramchandran, "We anticipate the market for 40-60-seater buses is growing between 20-25 percent on an average a year." Sudhakar Dalela, counsellor (Economic & Commercial) of Indian High Commission, and Sujoy Nag, senior resident representative of Tata International- Bangladesh, were also present at the function, chaired by Nitol Motors Managing Director Abdul Musabbir Ahmad. The managing director of Nitol Motors said the new model bus's CNG cylinder storage capacity is 792 litres, enabling the vehicle to ply up to 500 kilometers.



AZM Azizur Rahman, general manager (Investment Promotion) of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza), and Mohamed Subaid Ali, director (Finance) of M/s South China Bleaching and Dyeing Factory Ltd, exchange documents after signing an agreement in Dhaka yesterday for expansion of the factory in Dhaka EPZ with an additional investment of US\$ 10 million. Brig Gen Ashraf Abdullah Yussuf, executive chairman of Bepza, among others, was present.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর
পরিবেশ ভবন, ই/১৬ আগারগাঁও
শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা - ১২০৭

১৬/১১/১৪১৪ বাং
৩৬/০৩/২০০৮ ইং

নং- পরিবেশ/ওডিএস (সার্ভে)/১২০৮(২য় খন্ড)/২০০৬/৬৮৯ তারিখ -----

পরামর্শক নিয়োগ

পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তরে বাস্তবায়নধীন "ইনস্টিটিউশন্যাল ট্রেনেদেনিং ফর দি ফেজ- আউট অব ওডিএস (ফেজ-৪)" প্রকল্পের আওতায় বাংলাদেশে ওজোনস্তর ক্ষয়কারী দ্রব্যসমূহের আমদানি ও ব্যবহার সংক্রান্ত জরিপ কাজের জন্য অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত নামে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

২৪/৩/২০০৮ তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্রত্যেক কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সকাল ৯টা থেকে বিকাল ৫টা পর্যন্ত Terms of Reference (ToR) ও অন্যান্য সংশ্লিষ্ট কাগজপত্র সিনিয়র অফিসার, ওজোন সেলের নিকট হতে পাওয়া যাবে। দরখাস্তসমূহ আগামী ২৫/৩/২০০৮ তারিখ বিকাল ২.০০ টার মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দপ্তরে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে জমা দিতে হবে এবং ৫ দিনই বিকাল ২.৩০ মিনিটে দরখাস্তকারী প্রতিনিধিদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেই উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে। দরখাস্ত খোলার দিন কোন দরপত্র সরবরাহ করা হবে না।

দরখাস্তকারীদের অবশ্যই দরখাস্ত ToR-এর শর্ত মোতাবেক জমা দিতে হবে এবং দরখাস্তে উল্লেখিত মূল্যের ২.৫% আর্নেস্টম্যানি হিসাবে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংক হতে ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অনুকূলে দরখাস্তের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে। অন্যথায় দরখাস্ত বাতিল হিসাবে গণ্য হবে। কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র অথবা সকল দরখাস্ত কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। অসম্পূর্ণ দরখাস্ত সরাসরি বাতিল হিসাবে গণ্য হবে। ToR ও অন্যান্য সংশ্লিষ্ট কাগজপত্রের ফটোকপি/সত্যায়িত কপি গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।

(মোহাম্মদ রিয়াজুদ্দিন)
জাতীয় প্রকল্প পরিচালক
"ইনস্টিটিউশন্যাল ট্রেনেদেনিং ফর দি ফেজ- আউট অব ওডিএস (ফেজ-৪)"
ফোন নং ৯১১৫১২০

চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন: এলাকায় ভোটার নিবন্ধন সংক্রান্ত জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকায় এখনো যারা ভোটার হিসেবে নিবন্ধিত হননি তাদের আগামী ১৮ মার্চ, ২০০৮ ইং তারিখের মধ্যে ছবিসহ ভোটার নিবন্ধনের সুযোগ রাখা হয়েছে। নির্ধারিত সময়ে খসড়া ভোটার তালিকা মুদ্রণের স্বার্থে চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকায় বর্তমানে চালু থাকা সকল সার্ভার কক্ষ ১৮ মার্চ, ২০০৮ ইং তারিখে বন্ধ ঘোষণা করা হবে।

চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকায় ছবিসহ ভোটার নিবন্ধনের কাজ শুরু হয় ২০০৭ সালের ৫ ডিসেম্বর। এ পর্যন্ত চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকায় ১৫ লক্ষ ৫৯ হাজার ৪'৪ জন ব্যক্তি ভোটার হিসেবে নিবন্ধিত হয়েছেন।

ভোটার নিবন্ধনের জন্য সর্বাঙ্গীণ নির্বাচন কর্মকর্তা ও সার্ভার কক্ষে যোগাযোগ করুন। এছাড়াও, ভোটার নিবন্ধন সংক্রান্ত যে কোন তথ্য সাহায্যের জন্য 'ছবিসহ ভোটার তালিকা প্রণয়ন ও জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র প্রদানে সহায়তা প্রদান' প্রকল্পের ভোটার নিবন্ধন তথ্য কেন্দ্রে সাপ্তাহিক ও সরকারী ছুটির দিন ছাড়া প্রতিদিন সকাল ৯টা থেকে বিকাল ৫টা পর্যন্ত ৯১১৬৯৭১ এবং ০১৭৩০-০২০৫০৪ নাম্বারে ফোন করতে পারেন।

বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

Uncertainty looms on Ctg customs house automation

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg
Sunday for his approval. But the proposal could not be put forward for approval on the day due to reported unwillingness of officials concerned, said the sources. The process for automation system came to an apparent halt reportedly due to non-cooperation by vested interest groups at Chittagong Customs House and National Board of Revenue, alleged the sources.

India, Bahrain to ink MoU

PTI, Dubai
India and Bahrain will sign a memorandum of understanding on labour and manpower co-operation during Labour Minister Majeed Al Alawi's visit to New Delhi next month. During an Abu Dhabi meeting on labour export in January, Alawi had met Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vyal Ravi who had called on Bahrain to sign the MoU.