

# Exports to Thailand rise 73pc

## Three-day Thai trade show starts March 29

GAZI TOWHID AHMED

Bangladesh's exports to Thailand increased 73.66 percent in 2011 from a year ago, as demand for fertiliser and pesticide, garments, yarn and fibre, fresh aquatic animals, chilled frozen foods and textile items increased in the Southeast Asian market.

Exports to Thailand rose to \$42.20 million in 2011 from \$24.3 million in 2010, according to data from the Southeast Asian nation's commerce ministry. Thailand exported \$1.21 billion of goods to Bangladesh in 2011.

Relations between the two nations

have developed over the last 40 years, especially in trade, said Usa Wijarum, director of Thai Trade Centre.

Thailand exports rice, polymers, woven fabrics, sugar, yarn, synthetic filament and staple fibres, chemical products, refined fuel, machinery and parts, auto-parts and paper to Bangladesh, Wijarum said.

Suwapong Sirisorn, chargé d'affaires of the Thai embassy, said: "Trade between Bangladesh and Thailand is increasing by the year."

Economic relations can be developed not only by bilateral trade but also through investment in the form of joint

venture business and in tourism, said Sirisorn.

Thailand will organise a trade show in Bangladesh at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka to increase business opportunities between the two countries.

Thailand Trade Show 2012, a three-day event, will start on March 29 to expand the opportunities with the business communities of both countries to accelerate the economic relations, Wijarum said.

The trade show is supposed to be an assembly of all interested traders and importers as well as classified consumers and the public at large, she said.

Ghulam Muhammed Quader, the com-

merce minister, will inaugurate the event as the chief guest. The fair will remain open from 10am to 8pm.

There are 46 Thai manufacturers and exporters showcasing their products of 14 categories that include food and beverage, gift and decorative items, health and beauty, household and kitchenware and fashion accessories.

Eldridge J Mac Ewan III, general manager of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, said a team of highly professional Thai chefs from Bangkok will fly in to prepare an array of mouth-watering authentic Thai dishes at the hotel bringing in Thai culinary flavours.



YUNUS CENTRE

Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus shakes hands with UK Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg at the Ismaili Centre in London on March 8 after holding a private meeting. Later, Clegg introduced Yunus to an audience of 200 investors, journalists, social activists and philanthropists with glowing tributes for his contribution in reducing poverty.

## Stocks rise on buying spree

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stocks returned to the black yesterday as investors regained their confidence and went on a buying spree.

The benchmark General Index, DGEN, the indicator of Dhaka Stock Exchange, closed the day at 4,759.14 points, after gaining 58.89 points or 1.25 percent.

"Confidence and liquidity are important for a stable stockmarket," said Ahasanul Islam, director of DSE.

The prices of shares should be guided by market fundamentals, not rumours, he said.

Turnover lost 7.34 percent, compared to the previous day. A total of 1.14 lakh trades were executed, generating a turnover of Tk 442 crore with 8.32 crore shares and mutual fund units changing hands on the Dhaka bourse.

Among the major sectors, telecoms gained 3.77 percent, fuel and power 3.24 percent, textile 1.18 percent, general insurance 0.98 percent and pharmaceuticals 0.84 percent, while life insurance lost 0.40 percent and engineering 0.26 percent.

Prices of 213 issues gained, 34 declined and nine remained unchanged on the Dhaka bourse.

Grameenphone topped the turnover table with 12.83 lakh shares worth Tk 22.69 crore changing hands.

Tallu Spinning was the biggest gainer of the day as it posted a 9.13 percent rise, while National Tea was the worst loser, slumping by 5.07 percent.

Buying pressure lifted Chittagong stocks. The Selective Categories Index of Chittagong Stock Exchange gained 1.90 percent or 165.75 points, to



Noeleen Heyzer, UN under-secretary general and executive secretary of ESCAP, fifth from right, and Mahbubur Rahman, president of ICCB, fifth from left, pose at a group picture at the third session of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council meeting in Bangkok on Monday.

ICCB

## Indonesia expo takes off

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A three-day exposition to promote Indonesian products and services in Bangladesh began in the city yesterday.

Commerce Minister Ghulam Muhammed Quader inaugurated the fair, "Integrated Expo 2012" at a ceremony at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in Dhaka.

About two dozens stalls are showcasing Indonesia's exportable leather, garments, textiles, handicraft, boutique items, furniture, fashion accessories, lubricants, tyres, tiles, bathroom fittings, food and herbal cosmetics.

The Indonesian embassy in Dhaka, the organiser of the event, is also promoting the country's tourism industry.

Traders from Indonesia and local importers are participating in the exposition, which has been organised to mark Indonesia's 40 years of diplomatic relationship with Bangladesh.

Zet Mirzal Zainuddin, ambassador of Indonesia, said economic relations between the two countries have been increasing sharply for years.

The bilateral trade crossed the \$1 billion milestone for the first time in 2010. It was \$1.4 billion last year, according to officials of the embassy.

"The trade balance is in favour of Indonesia. But I am trying to bring our businessmen and investors to Bangladesh," said the ambassador. "Our aim is to strengthen the relationship between the two countries."

AK Azad, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, urged the ambassador to remove tariff and para-tariff barriers that Bangladesh faces particularly in the jute and jute products segment to increase exports to the Southeast Asian country.

Quader said the economic relations between the two countries would get a boost if direct air links between Dhaka and Jakarta could be established.

"Efforts are underway to establish direct air links. I think it will be done soon," he said.

# Indian envoy wants growth of South Asia as a whole

## Pankaj Saran meets CCCI leaders in the port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

India as an economy cannot prosper alone and recognises that all South Asian nations have to develop together, Indian High Commissioner Pankaj Saran said yesterday.

Efforts are underway to upgrade seven more land customs stations on the Indian borders with Bangladesh and more border haats to boost trade between the two countries, Saran said in a meeting with business leaders in Chittagong.

Saran met the leaders of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at Hotel Agrabad.

Morshed Murad Ibrahim, CCCI president, presided over the meeting where former CCCI presidents Awami League lawmaker MA Latif and BNP lawmaker Jafrul Islam Chowdhury spoke.

One border haat on the Bangladesh-India border in the northeastern state of Meghalaya has already been commissioned while another is soon to be in operation, the new Indian envoy said.

India plans to open more haats on the borders of Tripura and Mizoram, he said.



Pankaj Saran, the newly appointed Indian High commissioner to Bangladesh, speaks at a meeting with the leaders of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Agrabad Hotel in the port city yesterday.

"We are also in the process of upgrading seven land customs stations on our borders with Bangladesh," he said.

Referring to trade imbalance between the two countries, Saran said: "We have built over the decades a very comprehensive set of institutional mechanisms to deal with trade, investment and economic relations."

"The results show that trade has grown but India recognises that

major trade imbalance exists between the two countries," he said.

Chittagong has shown what a port city can do, what potential it has to bring countries and regions from across the world together, Saran said. "India would like to be a partner for the development of Chittagong."

The CCCI chief urged the Indian envoy to take steps to boost bilateral trade.

**BRAC BANK**  
13<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
March 22, 2012  
১৩তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা  
২২ মার্চ, ২০১২

Muhammad A (Rume) Ali, middle, chairman of BRAC Bank Ltd, attends its 13th annual general meeting at Bashundhara Convention Centre in Dhaka yesterday. It has declared 20 percent stock dividends for its shareholders for 2011. Syed Mahbubur Rahman, second from left, managing director of the bank, was also present.

## ESCAP meeting held in Bangkok

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) held its third business advisory council meeting in Thailand on Monday.

The meeting discussed a number of issues such as regional economic integration and business perspectives on achieving energy security, including modalities for private sector involvement, according to a statement.

A number of business leaders from Asia and the Pacific attended the meeting. Noeleen Heyzer, under-secretary general of the United Nations and executive secretary of ESCAP, co-chaired the session.

Heyzer said the Business Advisory Council has three principle objectives: first, it aims to build partnerships between key business leaders and ESCAP to achieve inclusive, resilient and sustainable development.

Its second aim is to advance regional economic cooperation and integration, especially in the commitment of Asean to establish the Asean economic community by 2015.

Thirdly, it thinks that there is a need to forge and mobilize an Asia-Pacific regional voice in multilateral forums, said Heyzer.

Mahbubur Rahman, president of International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh, attended the meeting as an ESCAP-BAC member.

Rahman proposed two joint seminars: the first sub-regional seminar on SME development in the South Asian region and their effective penetration into regional and global markets will be held on 13 May 2012, and while the second one on the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement to be organised in Dhaka in June this year.

Mohamed Iqbal Rawther, chair of the ESCAP-

## Dhaka motor show kicks off

FROM PAGE B1

She said motor and spare parts makers from 13 countries including Bangladesh are exhibiting their products at the show.

The other participating countries are India, Pakistan, China, South Korea, the USA, France, Japan, Russia, Singapore, Dubai, Taiwan and Thailand.

Car importers have offered discount for various products at the exhibition.

International brands including Ford, Suzuki, Kia, Cherrey, Toyota and Great Wall showcased cars, sport utility vehicles and pickups.

Some auto-rickshaws, bikes and electric motorcycles were also displayed, while mobile phone operator Grameenphone showcased its vehicle