

Sharecroppers to get more funds

STAR BUSINESS DESK

..... Bangladesh Bank aims to allocate more funds to sharecroppers so that they can get access to collateral-free farm loans at affordable rates, Governor Atiur Rahman yesterday.

Under a refinancing scheme starting in 2009, around Tk 738 crore has been disbursed to 578,210 sharecroppers up to February this year, Rahman said.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) has been solely operating this programme in 250 upazilas of 48 districts across the country.

Almost 80 percent of the sharecroppers are marginal landowners having only 1-149 decimals of land, Rahman said at a seminar on "credit programme for sharecroppers: impact and evaluation" at BRAC Centre Inn in the city.

The regulator has started a re-financing scheme with Tk 500 crore in 2009 for the neglected sharecroppers who have hardly any formal access to finance.

The refinance scheme was initially adopted with the validity till June 30, 2012, which has been extended up to June 2015 considering its success and positive impact on lives of sharecroppers.

The interest rate has been fixed at 18 percent based on declining method, equivalent to the flat rate of 10 percent a year, the governor said.

Various survey studies confirm that the sharecroppers, who have received the loan for the first time, are truly getting substantial benefits, which reflects positive impact on their living standard, Rahman said.

An independent survey study by a group of experts on this special credit project for the sharecroppers was conducted in 2011.

Around 80 percent sharecroppers cultivated high-valued paddy and harvested 2-2.4 tonnes per acre, which is almost twice the former 1-1.2 tonnes per acre, according to the study that interviewed 400 sharecroppers from seven divisions of the country.

The study also confirmed that 95 percent sharecroppers repaid the loan in time and 90 percent sharecroppers find themselves in a relatively better financial condition than they might had without this loan facility.

Before the initiation of this credit facility, the sharecroppers used to borrow money

from informal sources like moneylenders at an exorbitantly high rate -- 10 percent monthly -- for cultivation, said Rahman.

In some cases, they had to pay Tk 8,000 or 400 kilogram of paddy as interest against loans of Tk 10,000 for three months, he added.

One of the appreciative features of the programme, recognised in the survey, was that sharecroppers could avail the loan within 21 days of being a member of the group substantially saving their time compared to other parallel formal loan facilities.

The study found the evidence that the social status of 83.18 percent of the sharecroppers in the programme improved and nearly 86 percent sharecroppers became solvent.

Hotel Agrabad ready to celebrate Pahela Baishakh

STAR BUSINESS DESK

..... The Hotel Agrabad in Chittagong has taken special preparations to celebrate the Bengali New Year -- Pahela Baishakh -- at its Ichhamati hall on April 14.

The hotel of 101 luxurious rooms and suites will organise a concert where popular singers will entertain guests in a colourful and musical evening.

The package also comes with buffet dinner and a raffle draw, the hotel said in a statement yesterday.

The programme at the hotel situated at Agrabad commercial area in the port city is open to guests with reservations only. A single ticket of the programme will cost Tk 2,600 while couple tickets are priced at Tk 4,800.

Advance reservations could be made through the numbers: 01841-

Bank Asia chooses vice chairmen



Mohammed Lakiotullah



Nurul Islam Anu

STAR BUSINESS DESK

..... Mohammed Lakiotullah has recently been re-elected as the vice chairmen of Bank Asia, the bank said in a statement yesterday. The bank also elected Nurul Islam Anu as its vice chairman, according to the statement.

Lakiotullah has 43 years of experience in banking and was the founder managing director of Exim Bank where he served for eight years. He also served Jamuna Bank as managing director.

Anu has an extensive administrative experience in international trade and development financing as an economic diplomat in Washington.

He also served National Bank as a director and as chairman of its audit committee. He is also a finance adviser to OPEX Sinha Group.

Saarc insurance regulators' meet begins Saturday

STAR BUSINESS DESK

..... Bangladesh Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (BIDRA) is set to organise the First Saarc Insurance Regulators' Conference 2013 in the capital tomorrow to initiate co-operation between the Saarc nations.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the two-day conference as the chief guest where Finance Minister AMA Muhith will also be present at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

There will be eight sessions in the event where 15 valued articles by experts from different Saarc nations of the insurance sector will be presented. At the end of each session, question answer sessions will be held.

A proposal will be prepared based on the sessions to draw an outline to develop the insurance industry of these nations, BIDRA said in a statement yesterday.

A committee will be also formed who will represent the regulatory authority of the Saarc nations and the committee



MA Baqui Khalily, executive director of Institute of Microfinance (InM) Bangladesh, and Yonghai Ren, president of Lang Fang City WanXinHe Credit Guarantee Co Ltd (WanXinHe) of China, exchange documents of a deal at a ceremony at Beijing in China on Sunday. InM will provide microfinance training to WanXinHe.



Leif Andersen, commercial bank training expert of the European Union-funded INSPIRED project Component 3, speaks at a press meet in Dhaka yesterday. Ali Sabet, team leader, and Desmond Bodley, banking and financial management consultant, were also present.

CCCI president urges ministers to meet transport workers' demands

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

..... The newly elected president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday urged the government to accept the rational demands of the goods carrying transport owners and workers of Chittagong.

Mahbubul Alam made the request in separate letters to Communications Minister Obaidul Quader and Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan.

On Wednesday, the goods-carrying transport owners and workers said they would go on a 72-hour strike from April 9 in the Chittagong division to obtain their 13-point demand.

In the letters to the ministers, the CCCI president said the strike would hinder transportation of goods and export-import procedures, and prices of commodities would go up as a result.

He suggested holding discussions with the transport owners and workers to reach a solution and save the national economy from loss.

Hasina welcomes more Chinese investment

UNB, Dhaka

..... Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday encouraged more Chinese investment in Bangladesh to narrow the trade gap between the two friendly nations.

"We will welcome Chinese investment in the country, especially in textiles, agro-processing, energy and power, pharmaceuticals, communications and infrastructure development. This will reduce the trade gap between the two countries," she said.

Hasina spoke in a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Li Jun when he called on her at her office in the capital.

The premier and the ambassador discussed various issues of bilateral interest, including construction of deep seaport and a number of bridges in Bangladesh with the Chinese assistance.

The envoy said Chinese entrepreneurs are very keen to invest in Bangladesh's exclusive economic zones.

Hasina assured that her government would extend the necessary support and requested easing visa formalities for Bangladeshi businessmen who intend to visit China and Hong Kong.

The Chinese envoy on behalf of the Chinese president invited the Hasina to attend the First China-South Asia Expo to be held in Kunming next June.

Hasina accepted the invitation and said she would consider attending the expo if her schedule permits.

She said Bangladesh is very happy to see that the new leadership of China is making necessary effort to reach out to the region and sought Chinese support for Bangladesh's initiatives in establishing greater connectivity in the region.

Ambassador at-Large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary Shaikh Md Wahid

Uz Zaman, Prime Minister's Office's Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were also present.

SIBL comes out of BB's early warning system

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

..... Social Investment Bank Ltd (SIBL) has successfully moved out of the central bank's early warning system of supervision thanks to its improvement in financial performances.

Bangladesh Bank de-listed the private commercial bank recently under some conditions, according to a statement the banking regulator yesterday.

SIBL will have to pay due importance to build capital buffer under the BASEL-III standards and bring down the classified loans to the accepted level, according to the statement.

The central bank also instructed SIBL to ensure strong footing in all of the parameters under the CAMELS rating, a supervi-

sory rating of bank's overall condition.

The bank will have to implement core risk management guidelines and raise ratings in the areas of foreign exchange, anti-money laundering and ICT component to satisfactory level, the central bank said.

However, the observer of Bangladesh Bank will continue to remain with SIBL until further notice that came into effect on April 1, the BB said.

The central bank employs the early warning system to address the difficulties faced by the banks in any of the areas of CAMELS.

Any bank found to have faced difficulty in any areas of operation is brought under the category and monitored very closely to help improve its performance.

Used car importers demand fair play in duty structures

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"We have to pay higher duties for used cars against new cars of a similar model," said Dawn. The association said a discrepancy in valuation has taken a toll on reconditioned car imports and government's revenue collection.

Revenue earnings from used car imports slumped 41 percent to Tk 1,335 crore in fiscal 2011-12 from Tk 2,276 crore in the previous year, according to Barvida.

Revenue from old car imports would decline further to Tk 800 crore in the cur-

rent fiscal year amid falling imports, it said.

NBR Chairman Md Ghulam Hussain said there is an "apparent inequality" in the duties on old and new cars. "We have noted your concerns and will give our suggestions to the policymakers."

"But if possible, we will meet some of your demands out of the budget framing process."

Abdul Haque, founder and a former president of Barvida, said the importers of old vehicles were "victims of injustice" in the last two-three years.

Dhaka bourse seeks BB's help to prop up markets

FROM PAGE B1

Rahman urged the banks to make fresh investment remaining within the purview of regulatory limit.

"The amended bank company act is yet to be passed in the parliament. So, the banks can invest in the secondary market," he said.

According to the proposed amendment to the bank company act, a bank's exposure to stockmarket will be equivalent to 25 percent of its total capital.

And, as per existing rules, banks are allowed to make investments in the share market equivalent to 10 percent of their

total liabilities.

But the banks' exposure to the stockmarket currently stands at around 3.5 percent.

Referring key policymakers' irrational comments on the stockmarket, the DSE chief said no one should vocalise their opinions on the share market without proper analysis.

"The stockmarket is a sensitive place. Anyone's irrational comment can put negative impact on the market and can hurt investor confidence," he said.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith at a programme on Mon-

day blamed brokerage houses for the current moribund state of the stockmarket.

"Brokerage houses are manipulating the market. It has nothing to do with the economy," Muhith said, adding that demutualisation can stop manipulations.

"But they [brokerage houses] are also trying to resist the process so that we cannot have demutualisation."

Defending Muhith's comments, the DSE president said after getting the cabinet nod, the proposed demutualisation act is

waiting to be passed in the next parliamentary session.

"If we want to resist it we could do it much before the enactment of the proposed demutualisation draft. Rather, we prepare a draft proposal on the demutualisation act and submitted it to the government," he said.

Citing US, India and Sri Lanka where stockbrokers had opposed demutualisation during the process in their countries, Rahman said: "We never opposed the demutualisation process like it was happened in many countries."

He said presently the market is passing through a crisis period due to the ongoing political upheaval.

"The investors lost their confidence, but my main concern is will it take off the momentum in the long-run as well," he said, adding that around Tk 24,000 crore have been raised from the stockmarket since 2009.

He said the financial institutions raised their paid-up capital from shareholders through the capital market to comply with the regulatory requirements such as BASEL II.

Bangladesh Lamps Limited

Sadar Road, Mohakhali
Dhaka - 1206

Price Sensitive Information

Based on annual accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st December 2012, the Board of Directors of Bangladesh Lamps Limited at its meeting held on 04-04-2013, decided to recommend cash dividend of Tk.2.00 per share of Tk.10/- each (i.e. 20%) for the year 2012.

The date of 52nd Annual General Meeting of Bangladesh Lamps Limited has been fixed to be held on **Sunday, 12-05-2013** at 11:00 a.m. at the Emmanuelle's Banquet Hall, House No. 04, Road No. 134-135, Gulshan-1, Dhaka. The register of members and share transfer book of the Company and the depository register of CDBL will remain closed on **17-04-2013, as Record Date.**

The key financial statistics as per the audited financial statements of the Company under report are :

Net asset value (NAV)	:Tk. 614.58 million
Earning per share (EPS)	:Tk. (5.31)
Net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS)	:Tk. (9.32)

The shareholders whose names appear in the Register of Member of the Company on the Record Date will be eligible to attend the meeting and qualify for dividend.

By order of the Board

Abdullah Ismail
Abdullah Ismail
Company Secretary

Dhaka
04-04-2013

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