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VENDING MACHINE IN JAPAN Key part made in Bangladesh

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

In Japan, one can buy just about anything from vending machines -- from smart cars to undergarment, live crabs to fresh eggs, fried chicken to steaming hot cup noodles -- and they are available all the time, everywhere.

But what is not widely known is that the pushbutton, which is used to select the items, in 90 percent of these machines is made in Bangladesh, at a factory in Chittagong Export Processing Zone.

Established in 1997 by a Japanese national, Op-Seed Bangladesh Ltd has been supplying this vital part to vending machine manufacturers in the Far-east nation, which has the highest number of vending machines per capita, since 1999. There is about one machine for every 23 people.

Ataul Haque, general manager of Op-Seed, said the company's patented interlocking pushbuttons are held in high regard by its clientele, as they offer greater flexibility in panel design and save labour in the assembly process.

The company also supplies many other sophisticated devices such as display boards at train stations, railway signals and LED lighting products.

Haque says the majority of the signalling lights and displays in railway stations in Japan are made in the factory.

"We have a commendable market share in Japan," he said, adding that the CEPZ-based company also exports to the US.

The factory employs nearly 1,000 Bangladeshi skilled workers along with some Japanese technicians. Each of the recruited Bangladeshi workers is personally trained by Japanese experts.

"The Japanese customers are very quality-conscious, so we have to unfailingly maintain the superior quality of our products. And for that, highly skilled manpower is needed," said Haque, also a director of the company.

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Workers busy at Op-Seed Bangladesh in Chittagong EPZ. The factory manufactures pushbuttons of vending machines widely used in Japan. It also supplies to the economic giant sophisticated devices like display boards at train stations, railway signals and LED lights.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



Farmers flood-hit

Crops on one lakh hectares of land damaged as more areas go under water

STAR REPORT

Floods have damaged aman paddy and other crops on more than one lakh hectares of land in seven northern districts, much to the despair of thousands of farmers.

Mahim Uddin, a farmer at Sindurna village in Lalmonirhat, said he planted aman on six bighas of land, and the entire cropland was submerged by floodwater from the Teesta.

"I don't have any extra aman seedlings". He doubted whether he would be able to plant seedlings once floodwater recedes.

Crops on around 24,000 hectares of land in Nilphamari, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha and Rangpur were damaged in the flooding that started more than a week ago, said Kamal Kumar Sarker, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Rangpur.

Apart from this, crops on 24,000 hectares of land in Jamalpur and 54,000 hectares in Sirajganj were damaged, said district officials.

Safayet Hossain, deputy director of the DAE in Lalmonirhat, said they were

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A man and some kids row a boat and a raft in flood-hit Sindurna village of Lalmonirhat. Inset, people stand on what is left of the dyke in Boirati village under Kaliganj upazila in the district. Boirati and two other villages got flooded as part of the dyke was washed away by the Teesta yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: STAR



BCL men clash with police

30 hurt at Islamic University

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

At least 30 Bangladesh Chhatra League activists were injured when they had an hour-long clash with police at Islamic University yesterday.

According to campus sources, the clash erupted around 1:00pm when Chhatra League men went on the rampage on campus after activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir brought out a procession.

The IU authorities last night closed the university in the

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL Govt mulls reshuffle in prosecution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to reconstitute the prosecution team of the International Crimes Tribunal against a backdrop of longstanding infighting and lack of coordination between its members.

"I am planning to reshuffle the prosecution team members after the delivery of the verdicts [in the pending cases], since there are some disagreements and ego clashes between them," Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Those who are performing well will stay in the [prosecution] team, and those who cannot do

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ALLOTMENT OF SHOPS Khoka, 7 others sued for graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday sued former Dhaka mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and seven officials of undivided Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) for allocating shops of a DCC market through forgery.

Apart from Khoka, also a vice chairman of the BNP, surveyors Motalab Hossain, Faruque Hossain, Bachchu Mia, Kanungo Mohammad Ali, former estate officer Sahabuddin Sabu, estate officer Mohsin Uddin Mural and former chief estate officer Mashier Rahman were sued in the case lodged with Shahbagh Police Station by ACC Assistant Director Mahbubul Alam.

Mashier Rahman is currently serving as a director of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority.

The case was filed under ACC Act 2004. If found guilty, the accused could face up to 10 years' imprisonment, fine of unlimited amount and confiscation of their properties.

According to the case statement, Khoka allowed erection and allocation of over a hundred shops occupying parking

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ASA UNIVERSITY BANGLADESH (ASAUB)
ASAUB, ASA Tower, 23/3 Bir Uttam A.N.M. Nuruzzaman Sarak, Shyamoli Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207, Tel: 8130238, 8130283, 8122555, Ex-346, 329
Cell: 01678013135, 01678013136
email: info@asaub.edu.bd web: www.asaub.edu.bd

Convocation 2014

ASA University Bangladesh is going to hold its 2nd Convocation on 26 November 2014. Students who have completed their Bachelor and Master Degrees in different Programs of ASAUB from Spring 2012 to Fall 2013 are advised to register for the Convocation. Registration Form is available in the office of the Registrar and ASAUB Website (www.asaub.edu.bd). Last date of Registration is **15 October 2014**.

- Registration Fee: BDT 4000/- only.
- 3 (three) copies of P.P. size photographs.

Note: Students failing to register by the deadline will not be allowed to attend the Convocation.

Registrar
ASA University Bangladesh (ASAUB)

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