



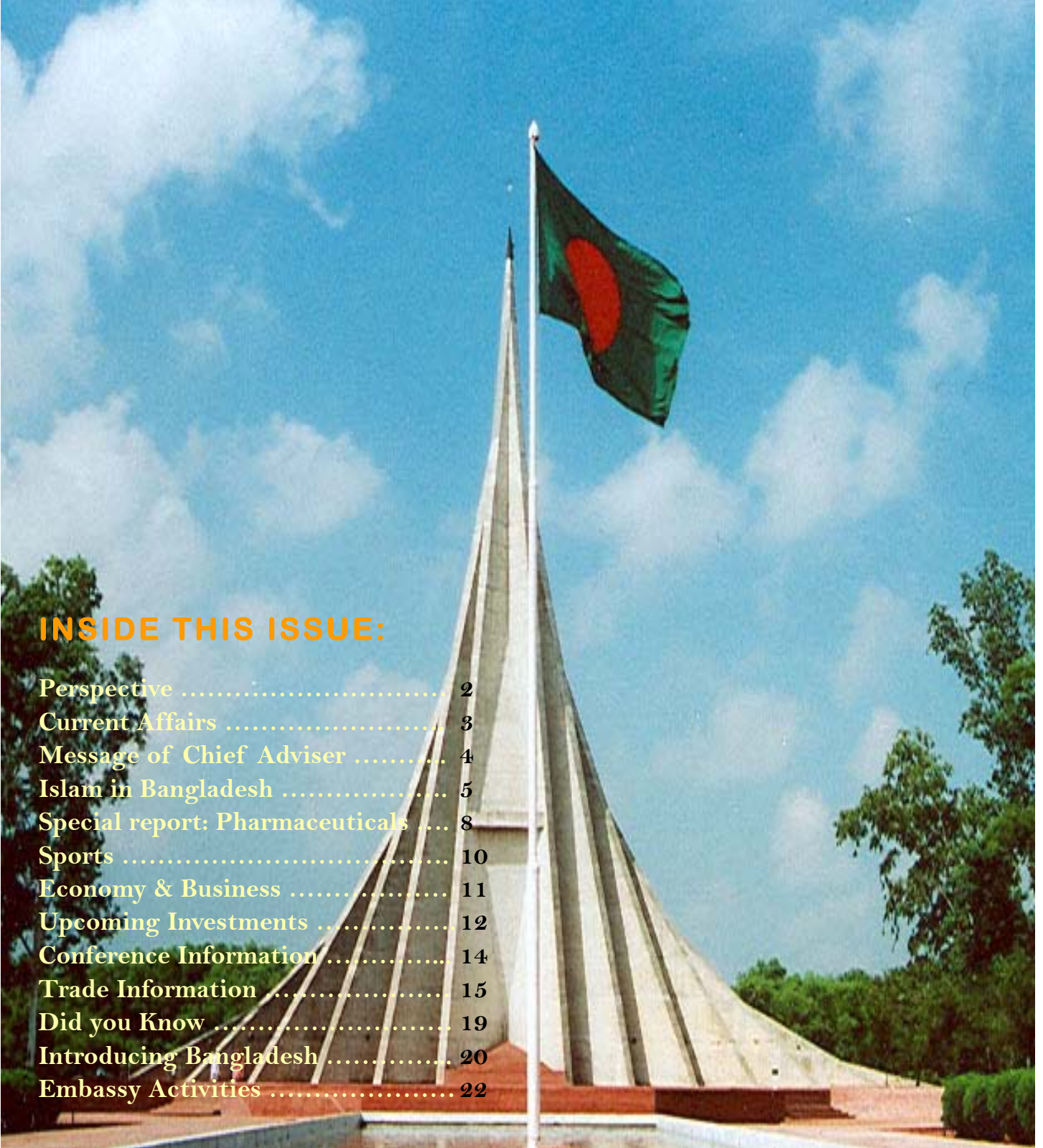
The Colors of Bangladesh

Kaleidoscope

Newsletter of the Embassy of Bangladesh, Stockholm
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First Word

Our first issue (January- February 2007) of the **Kaleidoscope** with which we resumed the publication of the newsletter has been widely acclaimed. Our readers' comments have brought us deep and vivid realization about the utility of a good newsletter. We are now firmly determined to continue unimpeded publication of the newsletter come what may in the form of additional pressure on this Mission's budget and extra demand on our small staff's time and energy.

This second issue (March-April 2007 issue) of the Kaleidoscope is being published against the backdrop of the celebration of the 36th anniversary of the Independence & National Day of Bangladesh on 26 March 2007, the recently-concluded 14th SAARC Summit in the Indian capital New Delhi, and the spectacular and extraordinary performance by **the Tigers** –our youthful cricketers named after the world famous Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sunderbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world located in the south of Bangladesh –currently playing the ICC Cricket World Cup in the Caribbean. The write-ups on these events, therefore, conspicuously feature in this issue of the newsletter.

The militant elements in Bangladesh took the nation by shock and surprise by sudden and nearly-synchronized bomb attacks across the country on 17 August 2005, leaving some 30 people dead. They were also responsible for a few more subsequent bomb attacks the same year that killed some other innocent people, including lawyers, policemen and two judges. These acts of militancy in the country in the name of

religion provided the vested interest groups/individuals with an opportunity to launch a fresh smear- and disinformation campaign against Bangladesh: thereby giving the world an erroneous perception of the present state of Islam in our country. We have in this issue of the Kaleidoscope an article styled **Islam in Bangladesh: A Rejoinder** in the form of a rebuttal to a motivated, baseless and one-sided report by a local reporter telecast on the Swedish TV on 11 March 2007 on, what he called, a shift of the population in Bangladesh from secularism & non-communalism to militancy & extremism, from openness to closeness, and from tolerance to intolerance. The purpose is to put the Nordic peoples' perception of the issue to rights.

Besides the above, we have devoted much space in this issue of the newsletter to other regular sections, like **Economy & Business, Trade Information, and Introducing Bangladesh**. The objective is to keep catering useful information to the relevant actors in the economic and trade fields of both Bangladesh and the Nordic countries; while focusing of our spotlight on Cox's Bazar and the surrounding places in the **Introducing Bangladesh** section will enlighten the tourists intending to visit Bangladesh on those tourist destinations of enchanting and breathtaking beauty.

We hope our readers will find the issue informative and interesting.

Muhammad Azizul Haque
Ambassador

Editor's Note

Spring is here! In Sweden, as the upholstery of nature shakes up the winter cover, we notice a celebration of life all around us. Small children at the playgrounds and parks, the bikers on the wheels and the hikers with their walking sticks on the streets of Stockholm- there is a sudden sense of 'busy-ness' everywhere. We take this opportunity to tell of business of another kind. We thought this newsletter could capture the essence of 'natural' energy, and like our previous issue, would focus on some of the positive changes in Bangladesh that have redefined Bangladesh's relationship with the world, a relationship based on mutual trust and respect.

Coincidentally, Bangladesh national cricket team (we fondly call them 'Tigers'), who were considered as minnows before this ongoing Cricket World Cup, have forced the world to rethink their position, and earned admiration. The rise of Bangladesh in cricket symbolises the vital changes that have taken place in other fields of our national life, politics and economy for instance. The positive changes in the country

offers a huge sigh of relief for the business communities and investors, who were earlier troubled by the occasional political unrest that affected the country's trade and economy, and progress in general.

As we publish the second issue of this year's Kaleidoscope, Bangladeshis back home are eagerly waiting to welcome a new Bengali year with new hopes. '*Pabela Baishakh*', the first day of the Bengali New Year (beginning on 14 April 2007) is usually marked by *kalbaishakhi*-a seasonal storm that soothes the thirsty earth with vital life-juice and sprouts the greenery for which Bangladesh is well-known. Everybody in Bangladesh awaits the seasonal storm that will drive away the old and make room for the new.

We hope our friends in the Nordic region, including investors and expatriate Bangladeshis, would share our optimism and come forward to contributing to the growth of the country.

Greetings for the Bengali New Year, 1414. *Shuvo Nabobarsbo!*



Message from the Hon'ble Chief Adviser of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the Occasion of the Independence and National Day 2007



The Independence and National Day is the most glorious day in our national life. I extend my sincere greetings and best wishes to my fellow countrymen and all citizens of Bangladesh living abroad on this auspicious occasion.

On this memorable day, I recall with deep respect and gratitude the extraordinary sacrifices and contributions of the martyrs and valiant freedom fighters through whose efforts our independence was achieved. I also recall with deep admiration and gratitude the sacrifices, forbearance and contributions of our freedom-seeking people living at home and abroad, as well as the unflinching support and cooperation of the governments and people of friendly countries.

The war of independence is the noblest chapter in our nation's history. The objective of the liberation War was emancipation in all fields—including socio-economic, political and cultural emancipation—and the removal of all injustice, unfairness, and discrimination. The dream of the freedom fighters was the establishment of a democratic Bangladesh free from exploitation and able to fulfil its tremendous potential. We are determined to realize that goal and dream.

The present government is carrying out a number of fundamental reforms to strengthen democracy and establish good governance. An all-out drive has been launched to curb corruption and crime, and to establish the rule of law. We have undertaken initiatives to infuse dynamism into the economy, increase public welfare and uphold the people's interests. Through the continued support and cooperation of the people, we can unite as a nation in making these programmes stronger and more sustainable.

We are confident that we shall build a Bangladesh free from the shackles of poverty, exploitation and deprivation. Through the combined efforts of our citizens, we can fulfil the dream of modern, prosperous and democratic Bangladesh. On this day, I call on all Bangladeshis living at home and abroad, regardless of their class, creed or political affiliation to stand united in the spirit of 1971, so that we may together achieve the goals of the Liberation War and fulfil the dreams of the martyrs.

Fakhruddin Ahmed
Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed

The Hon'ble Chief Adviser of Bangladesh calls for removing non-tariff barriers within SAARC member states



On Tuesday, 3 April 2007, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, the Hon'ble Chief Adviser of Bangladesh, asked the larger South Asian countries to take greater responsibility to extend support to the region's "less-developed" nations and stressed the need for addressing non-tariff barriers to better integrate South Asian economies. While addressing the inaugural session of the 14th SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) summit in New Delhi, India, on 3 April 2007, the Chief Adviser commented that those who are larger and better resourced countries in SAARC has a greater responsibility to extend support to those lower down the scale of development." Attending his first major international summit, Dr. Fakhruddin said, "To optimise the potential of South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), we must pursue trade-facilitation measures and address the non-tariff barriers." He commented that full implementation of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) would only pave the way for further economic integration between the South Asian countries as it was still to be implemented by Pakistan. "The economies of South Asia are varied and diverse. We should, therefore, make the best use of each other's complementarities," the chief adviser said, adding that it is the larger nations that should help the "less-developed" nations. He also urged the SAARC nations to "redouble efforts" to ensure that the SAARC Development Goals are realised.

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed advised the SAARC to "address the root causes that lead to violent actions," adding, "We must make bold efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations." The Chief Adviser mentioned that the people deserve an environment where they can reach their full potential, "Where the State and its vital basic institutions would ensure a level-playing field for all and uphold the rule of law and good governance." "All of us in South Asia are committed to these fundamental principles of democracy. As a natural corollary, it is also expected that the governments and public representatives, elected through free and fair electoral processes, remain mindful of the aspirations of the people," he said.

Regretting the continuing poor quality of basic "telephony service" within South Asia, Dr. Fakhruddin said, "Our efficiency in this sector must therefore be improved and tariff should be lowered." He also asked the SAARC leaders to ensure that the South Asian University is beneficial to all member states and is participatory. "It is in this context that we strongly support the establishment of South Asian University which was proposed during the 13th summit in Dhaka," he added. Stressing the need for boosting intra-SAARC tourism, Dr. Fakhruddin called for a "uniform" fee for all SAARC tourists at the heritage and archaeological sites. He said, "The strengthening of Track II process among civil society of our region will also help buttress the network of linkages." The Head of the Bangladesh Government also offered to host a SAARC Youth Camp this year to bring the youth of the region closer together. "We propose a more elaborate SAARC scholarship programme for our youth in ICT and Bio-Sciences." ■

Islam in Bangladesh: A Rejoinder

On Sunday, 11 March 2007, the National Swedish TV aired a short report on **Islam in Bangladesh** in its programme styled **Rapport**. The report failed to reflect the true image of Islam in the present day Bangladesh. H.E. the Ambassador sent a rejoinder to the Swedish Television on 30 March 2007. The rejoinder has been reproduced below. The readers may find the contents of the letter informative and useful.

Mr. Bengt Persson
Head of Foreign News Department
Swedish Television, Stockholm

30 March 2007

Dear Mr. Bengt Persson,

I write to draw your kind attention to the short report on **Islam in Bangladesh** telecast, beside other reports, by the National Swedish TV in its programme styled **Rapport** on the evening of Sunday, 11 March 2007.

2. The above report of Mr. Per Anders Engler does not only fail to reflect the true image of Islam in the present day Bangladesh, but it is also riddled with misinformation/disinformation about the country and is based on interviews of people who are biased, close-minded, and ill-informed. Some vested interest groups/individuals in Bangladesh are engaged for quite sometime now in propaganda campaign against Bangladesh, and their campaign is continuing irrespective of the government of the day. Despite Bangladesh's reputation as a moderate Muslim country that prides itself on its enviable communal harmony and peace and where people of all faiths have been living in peaceful coexistence for years and enjoying all political, social, economic and religious rights and freedom under constitutional sanction, these vested interest people/groups continue to malign their motherland. **Blinded by their motivated purposes and intentions, these people/quarters do not see the silent revolution that has been remoulding and reshaping Bangladesh for several years now towards making it a modern, liberal, prosperous and forward-looking country of the 21st century.**

3. Despite the fact that more than 85% of the Bangladeshis are Muslims, Bangladesh is a very pluralistic society. All the Hindu, Christian and Buddhist holy days are official holidays in Bangladesh. **Religious freedom is enshrined in our constitution and is absolute in the sense that one is free to practice one's religion or even not to practice any religion at all, if one so wishes. Psychologically, the present day society in Bangladesh has long ago shot away from that parochial and dogmatic approach one could think of in the Middle Ages to religion; thanks to the spread of literacy, modern thoughts, knowledge about today's world through satellite televisions, internet, and other electronic and print media, massive interaction with the world at large (some six million Bangladeshis are working abroad), etc.**

4. Bangladesh had witnessed remarkable progress in the recent time in different sectors, especially in empowerment of women, poverty alleviation, combat of religious militancy, and development of human resources, in attaining autarky in rice production despite the fact that the population of Bangladesh (continued)

doubled since her independence in 1971. **Bangladesh is the only South Asian country that has achieved gender parity in secondary education. We have thousands of women professionals, including doctors, lawyers, engineers, academics, diplomats, judges, and even commissioned officers in the army, who are working side by side with their male colleagues. Around 95% of the more than 2-million-strong-workforce in the garments factories in Bangladesh are women. These are evidences of a modern, vibrant, forward-looking and tolerant society.** With all this progress in the society, the secular Bangladesh is not at all shrinking; on the contrary, it is expanding belying the view of Mr. Per Anders Engler. The fact is: Bangladesh, with its ever-growing & enlightened civil society, is becoming more and more an open, modern and liberal society of the new millennium.

5. **Bangladesh has a huge population, estimated to be around 150 million, which is larger than that of Russia and crowded into an area smaller than one third of Sweden with the resultant density of some 2,200 persons per square mile, highest in the world, if you exclude city-states and microstates such as Monaco, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Vatican. It is nothing surprising that such a huge & crowded population will be a mosaic of different segments of people representing different and numerous shades of socio-economic & politico-religious opinions. Some of them may have propensity to extremism, some of them may even engage in terrorism in the name of religion. What is, however, important is: What per cent of the total population such people make. The people of Bangladesh take pride in their communal harmony track record and detest extremism and militancy in the name of religion. It is for this reason that any extremist or militant elements will always fail to take root in Bangladesh. As a matter of fact, the extremist or militant elements represent a very tiny and insignificant fraction of the total population of Bangladesh. In the sea of the Bangladesh population, they are like a few tiny drops, totally insignificant.**

6. **The world had noticed Bangladesh's resounding success in capturing the supremos of the outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Banglades (JMB) - who masterminded a string of bombings across Bangladesh on 17 August 2005 that left some 30 people dead. They also conducted a number of subsequent bomb attacks targeting judges and court rooms, killing two judges of a lower court in Bangladesh. On 29 May 2006, a court sentenced them to death. The High Court upheld the trial court's judgment on August 31 and the Supreme Court turned down the six imprisoned convicts' appeals on November 28 last year. They have just been executed in the early hours of today (30 March 2007) as per the law of the land following the rejection by the Hon'ble President of Bangladesh of the militant convicts' mercy petition on March 5, 2007. That the militants could be nabbed and brought to justice within a few months of the perpetration of their crimes is explained by the fact that the people at large in Bangladesh, who abhor terrorism, extended all out cooperation to the Government to locate their hideouts and arrest them.**

7. **To the Government and the people of Bangladesh terrorism is unpardonable offence and it is determined to put down terrorism with iron hand under the law of the land. The caretaker government of Bangladesh is now framing the Anti-terrorism Ordinance 2007 that would provide for tougher punishment to be awarded to anyone found guilty of terrorism. The provision of this stringent punishment**

(continued)

Islam in Bangladesh

is being made not just because our country has some terrorism problems, but also because Bangladesh can get more international cooperation in combating terrorism if this ordinance is promulgated. (By the by, the suspected linkage of Islamic militants in Bangladesh with the Al-Qaida has remained hitherto unsubstantiated.) The government is carefully framing this tough law so that innocent people are not harassed by the law and it is not misused. The law will penalize those who indulge in terrorist acts in the name of religion and present themselves as heroes for such activities as well as those who assist in such activities. Spewing hatred against believers of different faiths will also be considered as terrorism.

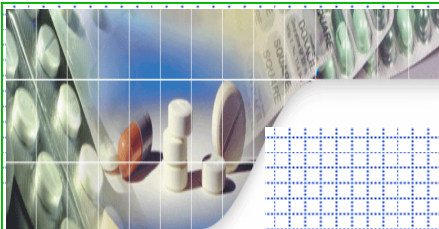
8. I would like to mention here that Bangladesh is a partner in the world's combat against terrorism, and the US government has been very appreciative of Bangladesh in this regard.

9. In his biased and one-sided report, Mr. Engler seems to have deliberately avoided covering all the above positive developments in our society and country; and it appears obvious that he chose to throw his spotlight on people and places that would help prove his preconceived notion. He wanted to see some individual trees of a type and ignore the forest around him comprising millions of other trees of different types. Instead of interviewing well-educated and well-informed Islamic scholars in Bangladesh, he chose to interview one of those imams who serve in neighbourhood mosques and who are often not properly informed and are likely to misinterpret the Quraánic verses. They are also likely to overstate and exaggerate matters out of over-enthusiasm when being interviewed by a foreign journalist. **Mr. Engler shows footage of Quraán-reciting boys. This is a social landscape in Bangladesh that is many centuries old now, and has nothing to do with militancy or extremism. Tens of thousands of boys and youths in Bangladesh have always recited and learnt the Quraán to take their places in the society as Muslim clerics to conduct the prayers and various other religious rites of the vast Muslim population of the country. Cap- and long-dressing-wearing and Quraán-reciting adolescents and youths are not potential extremists and militants. Nor there has been a sudden mushrooming of madrasahs (schools for religious education) in Bangladesh. Statistics does not prove that; again belying the report of Mr. Engler.** Whereas there has been 333% increase in the number of polytechnic institutes in Bangladesh during the last six years (2000 -2006) from 27 to 117 and the number of vocational institutes has increased by 25.5%, madrasahs –offering religious education of various levels –have registered an average increase of 23%. This is a normal increase in the number of religious schools along with the increase in population. It is true that many of the arrested militants have been found to be former students of madrasahs. This is because a big percentage of the madrasah students come of poor families since education in those schools are much cheaper, and the militant groups find it easier to hire these poor God-fearing adolescents/youths with piffling financial allurements to use them in their heinous crimes in the name of religion. (Well-to-do families normally send their children to general education schools to enable them to get better-paid jobs when they enter the job market as adults.)

10. Mr. Persson, had your reporter Mr. Engler visited Bangladesh with an open-mind and had he taken into consideration all the positive socio-economic, political and other changes that Bangladesh has gone through in the recent years, his report would have been totally different and objective.

Yours sincerely,

Muhammad Azizul Haque
Ambassador of Bangladesh to
Sweden & other Nordic country



PHARMACEUTICALS

Bangladesh Marks Progress in Pharmaceutical Industries

With an annual turnover of about US\$ 500 million, Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Industry is a unique success story. In the land of 150 million people with frequent natural disasters, poverty and many other negatives the Pharmaceutical Industry has grown from strength to strength since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971.

The industry is now making available quality medicines at an affordable price to the millions, which were beyond their reach. Among the 49 LDCs Bangladesh is the only country that is near self-sufficient in pharmaceuticals. Thanks to its pulsating private sector that efficiently utilized all the, available resources from Government initiatives to science in making the sector as one of the most successful in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Industry now caters to 96% of the countries need of pharmaceuticals. The remaining 4% comprises of Insulin, vaccines, high-end anti-cancer drugs etc. the production of which are very capital intensive and therefore are not economically feasible for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is basically a Branded Generic market. The industry's major competency lies in formulation. In total more than 230 companies have operations in Bangladesh at present. Out of this about 200 have their own manufacturing facilities of which 5 are multinationals. It is also active in API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients). 21 different companies now locally manufacture 41 API's.

The industry's inception dates back to the 1950s when a few multinationals and local entrepreneurs started with manufacturing facilities in the then East Pakistan. By 1982 many top ranking multinationals established their manufacturing facilities in this part of the world. Prominent among them were Pfizer, Glaxo, Fisons, Squibb, Hoechst, ICI, May and Baker and Organon.

1982 brought in a substantial change in the Bangladesh Pharmaceutical scenario. During June of that year Drug (Control) Ordinance of 1982 were promulgated at the backdrop of rising cost of medicines and emphasis of the manufacturers in producing low-tech products with negligible or doubtful

need. The ordinance sought to bring down the prices of "Essential Drugs", discontinue production of pharmaceuticals of doubtful or negligible utilities and encourage local production of pharmaceuticals. After about 21 years it can now be said that the major objectives of the ordinance are largely fulfilled.

Some of the major achievements of Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Industry so far are:

- Affordability of medicines to the substantial portion of the population: Major epidemics of Bangladesh are Malaria including Dengue, Cholera and Typhoid. Morbidity and mortality from these scourges also reduced substantially over the years in Bangladesh. Increased affordability and availability of medicines has contributions towards this achievement. Bangladesh now has an average life expectancy of 61 years, which is at the top end in the Indian sub continent.
- Near Self-sufficiency in Pharmaceutical manufacturing: Among the LDCs Bangladesh is the only country, which can boast a local pharmaceutical industry, which caters to 96% of the countries need. Over the years role of import has diminished substantially and now stands at about 4% covering mainly Insulin, Vaccines and anti-cancer drugs.
- Strong footing of the local Industry and local entrepreneurs: In 1982 there were about 10 multinationals availing about 80% of the domestic market. The situation is reverse now. Local companies cater to about 80% of the market now and the rest by the multinationals. Local companies continued their expansions and up gradation of their facilities to the international level.
- Export of Pharmaceuticals: After catering to countries need Pharmaceuticals from Bangladesh are now being exported to 52 countries in Asia, Africa and Europe.
- Quality Assurance: All the major companies complies to WHO GMP guidelines and Bangladesh's ability to face competition from Developing countries like India, China, Brazil, Turkey etc. in its export markets is due to Bangladesh Pharmaceutical's strict quality compliance. A few of the top-level companies are going beyond WHO GMP. With an aim to get into the (Contd)

Bangladesh Marks Progress in Pharmaceutical Industries

regulated markets like US, EU countries etc. they are putting up manufacturing facilities of US FDA and UK MHRA standards. Pioneer among them is Square Pharmaceutical's the leader of the industry. Its state of the art and International GMP standard Pharmaceutical manufacturing facility has gone into commercial operation in 2002.

There are still some weaknesses in the Government policy on pharmaceuticals, which are bringing down the performance of the industry and they are:

- Restrictions on manufacturing under license: This has stopped availability of products in Bangladesh from the Multinationals who does not have a direct presence in the country. Due to this Bangladesh is also being deprived of

Points to Ponder

- Annual turnover of about US\$ 500 million.
- Among the 49 LDCs Bangladesh is the only country that is near self-sufficient in pharmaceuticals.
- In total more than 230 companies have operations in Bangladesh at present.
- Pharmaceutical Industry of Bangladesh is a unique example of Private Sector success in the country.

the technology transfer where the major strength of the multinationals lies. With fast changing pharmaceutical manufacturing process these knowledge are important to make the local Industry more efficient in the domestic as well as in the overseas market.

- Adherence to single active products: Due to the advancement of science combination drugs in vitamins, cardiovascular, dermatological etc. are common even in the advanced countries. Local regulatory authority's conservatism in allowing multiple active drugs is depriving the country of recent advancements in pharmaceutical formulation.
- Restrictions on Dietary supplements & OTC products and on their mass media advertisement: These are quite common even in the advanced economies because of research findings. But these are not allowed in Bangladesh. This has created a major scope for illegal import of such drugs from the neighboring countries, which are promoted on satellite channels. Local industry is facing undue competition due to this ban.

The government is now aware of these weaknesses and has reviewed the current situation with all concerned. Coming Health Policy is expected to take care of these hindrances with an objective to place the industry on a strong footing.

Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Industry's progress so far is praise worthy. It has made the country near self-sufficient in pharmaceuticals, became the 2nd largest contributor to Govt. exchequer is now a major employer of the knowledge based workers, made pharmaceuticals accessible & affordable to the majority of the population and forayed into export markets with success.

The industry can still go a very long way. Some of the areas where it has great potentials are:

- Export of formulation products: The country is already exporting its pharmaceutical to 52 countries in Asia, Africa and Europe. With its quality assured products it can and will expand its footing in the existing markets. The reach can be expanded further to newer countries. Most important is the export of Generics to the regulated markets e.g., US, EU countries etc. A few of the local companies have already put in place pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities to comply with standards of US FDA and UK MHRA
- Contract/Toll manufacture: The US FDA/ UK MHRA standard manufacturing facilities of a few local companies are already in commercial production. Prominent among them is the Industry Leader Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Multinationals companies who outsource their manufacturing job may avail these facilities. Bangladesh is in a position to toll manufacture products maintaining International standards at a cost much below then other such sources.
- Continuation with newer molecules: As an LDC Bangladesh can continue with the patented products up to 2015: This has created a big opportunity to make available NCEs (New Chemical Entities) to the LDCs up to 2015.
- Transfer of Technology and marketing knowledge: With about 45 years of experience in Pharmaceutical formulation and marketing Bangladesh is in a position to share those with both Least Developed and Developing countries where needed.

Pharmaceutical Industry of Bangladesh is a unique example of Private Sector success in the country. After the laudable role it played in domestic market it is now poised to play its role in the international arena. With its continued development and experience in manufacturing and marketing it is sure to repeat its success in the International market as well.

-Sampson H. Chowdhury
Chairman, Square Pharmaceuticals Limited, Bangladesh



TIGERS ROAR AMONGST THE CRICKET ELITE

– Bangladesh Cricket Team in the Super Eight

Bangladesh cricket team stormed into the super 8 of ICC Cricket World Cup by defeating Bermuda by 7 wickets at Queens Park Oval in Trinidad. With this win Bangladesh joins Sri Lanka in the Super 8 and eliminates pre-tournament favorite India from the World Cup. After qualifying from the “Group of Death” featuring India and Sri Lanka, Bangladesh is now looking forward to make big strides and establish herself within the cricket elite. Bangladesh Cricket has reached a new height today as they reached the Second Round of World Cup for the first time in history. This is the



biggest ever success for the Bangladesh Cricket. This historic win came as the Independence Day gift for 150 million Bangladeshis.

It was a wonderful display of all-round cricket from Bangladesh under the guidance of coaching prodigy Dav Whatmore. Bangladesh utilized every little

opportunity they got in the Caribbean to build a perfect momentum before the start of the World Cup. If defeating New Zealand in pre-World Cup warm up matches was a noise in the world media, defeating India in their World Cup opener created a tsunami in.

Bangladesh is appearing as a completely different outfit to most of the cricket pundits who were not following the steady progress of the young Tigers over last couple of years. Indians were caught in a surprise by the professional display from the Tigers and had no clue to resist the onslaught. Bangladesh had a bad game against Sri Lanka who is enjoying their premium form in the tournament. Apart from that, Tigers were beaming in confidence at every moment they were on the field. They held their nerve in the crucial rain-affected final

group match against Bermuda to seal the second round berth.

Now, after reaching the super eight stage, Bangladesh must sustain the momentum going their way. Bangladesh achieved the super eight spot with sheer perseverance and now it's time to utilize that platform to launch the much anticipated world beating campaign.



Bangladesh will be playing six matches in the super eight stage against oppositions who have not played with Bangladesh for a while. This is a huge advantage for Bangladesh to play with big teams like Australia, and South Africa. Bangladesh managed to defeat New Zealand in the warm up and India in the group stage as they were not aware about the level of threat Bangladesh was capable of posing. They had never played against most these young boys who were ready to enjoy their games. Except West Indies, none of the Bangladesh's opponents in the super eight had played with Bangladesh in the last 2 years and Bangladesh has progressed in leaps and bounds over this period.

Bangladesh has strongly made their point in the group stage and emerged as a survivor from the Group of Death eliminating India. It seems that despite the Tigers' impressive performance the world media is not yet ready to accept them as a top-ranking cricket team. However, Bangladesh is determined to dispel any doubt about their capability on the ground. ■



Overall Balance of Payments shows Surplus Trend

Bangladesh's overall balance of payments continued to maintain a surplus trend during the first seven months of the current fiscal mainly due to improvement in both current and financial accounts. The current account balance recorded a surplus during the July-January period of the fiscal 2006-07, thanks to robust growth of inward remittance.

However, higher import payment against export earning pushed the overall trade deficit to \$1.878 billion during the period compared to \$1.498 billion of the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. "Despite larger deficits in services and income, current account balance recorded a surplus of \$245 million during July-January, 2006-07 against the surplus of \$321 million during July-January, 2005-06 due to larger current transfers of \$3.594 billion," the Bangladesh Bank (BB) said in its Major Economic Indicators: Monthly Update-March 2007, released on 29 March 2007.

The Monthly Update said the overall balance of payment showed a surplus of \$360 million during the period against the deficit of \$11 million in the same period of the previous fiscal due to surplus in current

account balance and financial account to the tune of \$245 million and \$365 million respectively. Remittances from the Bangladeshi expatriates stood at \$3.32 billion in the same period, marking a 29.74 percent growth over the corresponding period of the last fiscal. The remittance earnings in the first quarter of the current fiscal came as a continuation to last fiscal's trend and a record inflow of \$4.806 billion. The growth in 2005-06 was 24.89 percent over the previous fiscal.

According to the statistics, the deficit in services increased to \$909 million in the same period from \$423 million in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. The financial account balance stood at \$365 million during the period against \$96 million of the corresponding period of previous fiscal despite a significant fall in the net foreign direct investment (FDI). (The FDI dropped due mainly to political turmoil.) Central bank officials, however, are hopeful of a rise in the flow of FDI and foreign assistance in the near future due to the ongoing reform programme taken up by the caretaker government. ■

Computer Fair City IT-2007 in Dhaka

The sixth 'Computer Fair City IT-2007', organised by BCS Computer City, will begin from April 5 on IDB Bhaban premises in the city. Hon'ble Adviser for Science, Information and Communication Technology Mr. Tapan Chowdhury is expected to inaugurate the fair which will continue till April 13. There will be some 157 stalls in the nine-day fair to provide different brands of computer instruments to the customers on special rebates.

LITEON, Lexmark, Gigabyte and Asus will sponsor the fair. The key objective of the fair is to popularise the use of computer in Bangladesh and to supply computers and instruments to the consumers at affordable prices. Everyday an eminent journalist, actor or actress and author will be bestowed City IT award during the fair for their remarkable contribution in their respective fields. ■



Thai Businesses keen to Invest in Bangladesh, said Foreign Adviser

"Thai businesses are keen to take advantage of the stability in Bangladesh and invest," said the Hon'ble Foreign Adviser Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury while speaking to the media after a 17-member delegation from the Thai Board of Investment called on him at his office on 28 March, 2007.

"They want to profit from the comparative advantages of Bangladesh and relocate certain enterprises from such industries as engineering, electricity, food-processing, automobile and information technology," he added.

Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury earlier met with the delegation and briefed them at length about the investment friendly policies of the government. Bangladesh's bilateral policies together with its large population would provide an important market for business partners, he explained. He also stressed upon the need to reduce the trade gap.

"Bangladesh and Thailand are traditional friends, and economic cooperation will contribute to strengthening the bond", the Adviser remarked. ■

Taiwanese Entrepreneurs Want to Invest More in Bangladesh

Taiwanese entrepreneurs are eager to invest more in Bangladesh because of business potentials and availability of cheap labour force.

"Hundreds of Taiwanese investors will come here if there is no political unrest in the country and our existing projects in Bangladesh see success," said Lin Mei-Hui, Managing Director of Golden Son Limited, a Taiwan-Bangladesh joint venture company.

She said Bangladesh could attract investments worth billions of dollar from Taiwan if the congenial atmosphere along with adequate infrastructure and policy support is ensured.

Taiwan has a good amount of investment in Bangladesh's export processing zones (EPZs) in readymade garments, textile, knitting, garment accessories, metal, footwear and leather goods and plastic product units.

But the Taiwanese investment can be enhanced many times in Bangladesh's textile, shoe and home appliance production units if there the political stability is sustained.

Belal Ahmed, Executive Director of the company, said after China and India, Bangladesh is the best place for investment in textile and garment manufacturing factories.

"Vietnam and Indonesia are also among the top priority destinations of the Taiwanese investors because of their better infrastructure. But Bangladesh is ahead of them in terms of labour availability," Belal said.

The Taiwanese government and the Taiwan Textile Federation (ITF) had studied the investment potentials in Bangladesh through several fact-finding missions during the past few years, he said. Taiwanese investors are now looking for investment destinations other than China.

Taiwanese trade delegation leader John J P Lin, who visited Bangladesh last year (2006), described Bangladesh as an "excellent place for investment and trade" and said there is enormous prospects for the Taiwanese investment in different key sectors in Bangladesh. ■



Chinese Firms are Eager to Increase Investment in Bangladesh

China likes to see its companies and investors make investment in Bangladesh in a bigger way availing of the advantage of the current stable situation and healthy investment climate in the country.

"We see changes taking place in the country. I've already told Chinese companies to do it (make investment) now if you want to do it. This is the high time for them to come and do it," said Chinese Ambassador Chai Xi, appreciating the current anti-corruption drive under the Caretaker Government and improvement of law and order in Bangladesh.

In an interview with the news agency at the Chinese embassy, he said China always considers Bangladesh not only a neighboring country but also one of the best neighbors in all considerations. "We want to see people

of Bangladesh enjoying peace, stability and greater economic development," he said, underlining the importance of cooperation in trade and economy, communications and defense sectors.

In 2005-06, Bangladesh imported from China goods worth US \$ 2045 million (\$ 2.05 billion) while exports fetched only a paltry amount of US \$ 64.35 million, leaving a trade imbalance worth \$1981.05 million for Bangladesh.

Asked about the Chinese investment in Bangladesh, he said many Chinese investors were ready to come to this country to make investment in different promising sectors, including textiles, but instability and bureaucratic tangles discouraged them in the past. ■

US Homemaker Eyes Urban-market in Bangladesh

A US company has expressed its interest in investing US\$ 2.7 billion in Bangladesh in building affordable and low-cost houses for urban people of fixed and low-income groups.

Ecorntech Inc placed its investment plan in a presentation to the Board of Investment on Wednesday, expressing its readiness to make foray into Bangladesh's booming urban housing market. Dhaka, rated as one of the fastest-growing cities in Asia's south and southeast regions, would be its initial focus.

The company officials said it would build low-cost houses with sophisticated technology. Financial supports are expected to be received from institutions such as the Asian Development Bank.

A four-member delegation of the Ecorntech Inc, led by its chief executive officer and president, Kim Yoo Seung arrived in Dhaka on a three-day visit to Bangladesh

to explore potentials for undertaking housing project.

For commissioning a housing project, the company would focus on low-income group of people who constitute around 70 per cent of the Bangladesh population and 28 per cent belonging to the middle-class group.

The US-based company may also take another \$55-million project on non-wood composite particle panel board in the country.

The company officials observed that population of Dhaka was growing at a rate of six per cent annually compared to the national population growth at 1.48 per cent a year. ■

**BANGLADESH AN ATTRACTIVE FOREIGN INVESTMENT DESTINATION****INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS' CONFERENCE IN DHAKA, MAY 2007**

The two-day international investors' conference, due in May in Dhaka, would attract foreign investment in Bangladesh reducing dependency on foreign aid in the country's economic development, according to organisers of conference. The conference will disseminate information on Bangladesh's overall economic potentials, untapped capital market and reforms in the last decade, current legal and governance frameworks, and public and private foreign investment opportunities with special focus on some sectors of interest such as power, telecom, textile, pharmaceuticals and financial services. In a word, Bangladesh will be presented as one of the most attractive destinations, especially for foreign investors, the organisers said announcing the programme schedule at a press conference on 11 March, 2007 at Dhaka. Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) and globally acclaimed financial services company Citigroup's Bangladesh chapter are jointly organising the first-ever international investors' conference titled **'Bangladesh - The New Investment Frontier' on May 5 and 6, 2007 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.**

Speaking at the press conference, the DSE Chief Executive Officer Salahuddin Ahmed Khan said although Bangladesh is currently maintaining a consistent economy, mainly driven by exports, a significant private sector led investment is needed in major infrastructure projects such as power and telecommunications, and export-oriented sectors like pharmaceuticals and textile.

"Instead of foreign aid, we feel the necessity of foreign

investment in the country's development process and through this conference we will highlight Bangladesh with all its potentials to the foreign investors," he said. Citing the proverb 'seeing is believing', **Mamun Rashid, managing director and country officer of Citigroup Bangladesh, said foreign investors, including leading equity and fixed income investors, from across the globe will not only have an idea of the country's capital market but will also look into the investment opportunities here. "We want to present Bangladesh as a potential investment destination to them through the conference," he said.**

Abrar A Anwar, head of Corporate Bank, Citibank NA, said there is a surplus liquidity in the Asia Pacific and the Middle East regions and entrepreneurs from those regions are looking for new investment destinations, especially in emerging economies or developing countries. He commented that given the positive growth trajectory and the overall investor liquidity in the regions, it is a right time to attract the surplus liquidity in Bangladesh.

"We have already started publicity of this conference in the world's different capital market hubs and we hope that at least 50 to 75 reputed investment organisations will take part at the conference," he said.

Among others, DSE President Abdullah Bokhari and Senior Vice President Ahmad Rashid Lali spoke at the press conference. ■



Government Amends Visa Policy to Attract Foreign Investors

The government amended some provisions of its visa policy of 2006 under which the foreign investors would be encouraged to come forward in Bangladesh.

According to the new visa regime, which entails 33 categories, foreign entrepreneurs will be allowed to travel to Bangladesh without any visa if they are willing to invest at least US\$5.0 million in heavy industries or any permanent business in Bangladesh.

Besides, the foreign nationals intending to visit Bangladesh for business purposes, will be allowed to stay in the country for up to six months at stretch instead of one month.

Home Secretary Mr. Abdul Karim announced the government's decision on relaxation of visa policy on 4 April 2007 and hoped that the present visa rules would help improve the diplomatic and economic relations with many countries.

Welcoming the amendment of the existing visa policy of 2006, former President of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) Aftab-Ul-Islam told that the new visa regime would help to attract more foreign direct investment in the country. "We had been lobbying with the policy making level in the government for several years to relax its visa regime so that the foreigners, especially the businessmen, can travel to Bangladesh easily," he said. The Home Secretary told journalists at his secretariat office that the visa policy of 2006 was giving rise to a number of complexities and problems resulting in proposals from different quarters to amend and revise it. That was why the government had decided to amend the visa policy, he added. According to the secretary, the new visa regime will help to improve diplomatic and economic relations with

different countries, expand trade and commerce, develop industries and tourism, create new employment opportunities as well as for technology transfer and development of education and culture. As per the new visa rule the foreigners who will come to Bangladesh with visas of 90 or more, would not have to go to the special branch of police to register their names. From now on they could get their names registered at the airport immigration counter. The government has also reduced the fine for overstay by any foreigners in the country and they would be allowed to leave the country paying the fine within 30 days to the Bangladeshi immigration authority in the airport.

The foreign workers (under "E" category), working for any local company for three years, will not be required to take approval of the Home Ministry to extend their visas if the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone or Board of Investment renews their work-permits.

Besides, the visa period for the specialists/consultants/officer-workers/labours, working in different projects in the country, can be extended as per bilateral or multilateral agreements between the government and development partners. The duration of visa for the officials and workers in Dhaka office of the United Nations or any other international organisations can also be extended as per international convention.

The Secretary, however, commented that if any donor agency has any link with extremists and it is proved through investigation, the government will take stern action against them. ■

Source: *The Financial Express*, 5 April, 2007



Government to continue support to boost Textile Sector

The Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, assured to continue all possible support to the country's textile sector, a promising foreign exchange industry. The Chief Adviser gave the assurance when a delegation of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association led by its president Abdul Hye Sarker made a courtesy call on him at the Chief Adviser's office on 25 February, 2007. The BTMA leaders informed the Chief Adviser that they have fixed an export target of \$20 billion by the year 2011 with 65 per cent local inputs.

The Chief Adviser appreciated the export target assuring to continue support for achieving the goal and recalled the important and remarkable contributions of the textile sector in national economy. Ahmed said the textile sector has created tremendous job opportunities to cope with the challenges of post-MFA situation despite negative predictions by different quarters that the sector would face disas-

ter after withdrawal of MFA.

BTMA put forward a number of proposals including development of backyard linkage, restrictions on yarn import through Benapole border for three years, checking smuggling, formulation of comprehensive national policy on textiles and improving efficiency of Chittagong port. The Chief Adviser said the government would not shy away from taking any decision particularly for economic uplift but it needs to discuss with stakeholders before taking any decision. The Chief Adviser said the government wants to improve the services of Chittagong port permanently. He also sought active cooperation from the business community in this regard.

The Energy Adviser, Tapan Chowdhury, and the Industries and Textiles Adviser, Geetiara Safiya Chowdhury, were also present. ■

BOI Eying Investments from Developing Countries

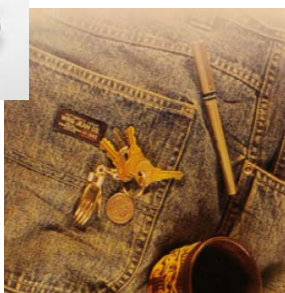
The Board of Investment (BOI) is eying on new investment frontiers among the developing and transitional countries to augment the inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bangladesh. "The BOI has planned to initiate a fresh drive to entice investments from the developing and transitional countries apart from the developed ones to boost the FDI flow," BOI Executive Chairman Md Nazrul Islam told the Financial Express. He said the FDI flow from the developing countries especially from China and India has increased significantly in the global markets. Besides, the World Investment Report 2006, prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), also revealed a similar scenario where it found FDI flows from the developing and transitional countries vibrant. The BOI will soon have discussions with the businessmen and experts in the relevant fields to sort out a final action plan to attract foreign investments in the recently changed political

situation, the BOI executive chairman added. The non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) will also be among the new avenues to be targeted by the BOI for fresh investments.

The BOI would arrange road shows and seminars abroad as part of its plan to attract investments from the targeted investors. BOI is set to exploit the opportunity to attract foreign investors, who are expected to visit and participate in the country's first ever investors' conference from May 5-6, 2007 to invest in Bangladesh. The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) and the Citibank NA are jointly organising the conference titled "Bangladesh: the new investment frontier," to showcase the country's investment potentials. BOI has consistently been wooing investors from the developed countries like the USA, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the other European countries. ■



EXPORTS UP 21% IN JULY 2006—JANUARY 2007



According to the Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh's export earnings in the period from July 2006 – January 2007 reached US\$ 7.04 billion. Exports surged 21 percent in the first seven months of the current fiscal year led by the garment sector.

Ready-made garments - woven and knit apparels - is the manufacturing sector of Bangladesh with about 76 percent share of the total export earnings during the period

Export earning from woven garments grew by 19 percent reaching US\$ 2.69 billion while knitwear exports shot up by 26 percent, reaching US\$ 2.64 billion during the period.

Apart from woven and knitwear exports, earnings from frozen food, home textiles, footwear, petroleum by-products, ceramic products, handicrafts, cut flower, agro processed goods and engineering products also registered significant increases, contributing to the overall export growth. All the

products also exceeded the export target for the period.

EPB has fixed a target of export earning at US\$ 12.5 billion in FY 2006-07. In FY 2005-06, export earnings, for the first time, reached over US\$10 billion, totaling \$10.53 billion. During the 2004-05 fiscal, the country earned US\$8.65 billion from exporting. In the following table comparative year-wise export earnings for 6 years are given below.

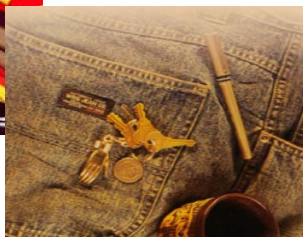
Overall Export Performance (in million USD)

Fiscal Year	Export Earnings	% Change of Export (+) Increase / (-) Decrease
2000-2001	6,467.30	(+) 12.43
2001-2002	5,986.09	(-) 07.44
2002-2003	6,548.44	(+) 09.39
2003-2004	7,602.99	(+) 16.10
2004-2005	8,654.52	(+) 13.83
2005-2006	10,526.16	(+) 21.63

Bangladesh's exportable products might be categorized into two different types, namely traditional products and non-traditional products. Government initiatives on export development are also focused on expansion of non-traditional export. In addition, some products are also incorporated in the **Special Development Sector**. such as, pharmaceutical products, cosmetics and toiletries, fashion goods, cards and calendar, stationery products, silk clothes, handicrafts, herbal medicines, and medicinal plants, etc. ■



READY-MADE GARMENT SECTORS' ACHIEVEMENTS



Bangladesh Ranks 2nd in Apparel Exports' Growth to USA

Bangladesh apparel exports to the United States secured the second position after Indonesia in terms of growth in 2006 compared with the previous year, according to a trade report, (reports bdnews24.com). The trend indicated healthy performance among other apparel-exporting countries last year, according to the preliminary trade data of the US Department of Commerce, Office of Textiles and Apparel.

Indonesia was the top apparel-exporting country to the US market last year (2005-06) with a growth of 27.57 per cent to \$3.67 billion, while Bangladesh recorded a growth of 22.87 per cent to \$2.91 billion, and Cambodia 24.69 per cent to \$2.13 billion.

However, the US formally slapped quota on some categories of the Chinese products in the beginning of 2006. After imposition of restriction of the Chinese exports, four Asian countries have performed well.

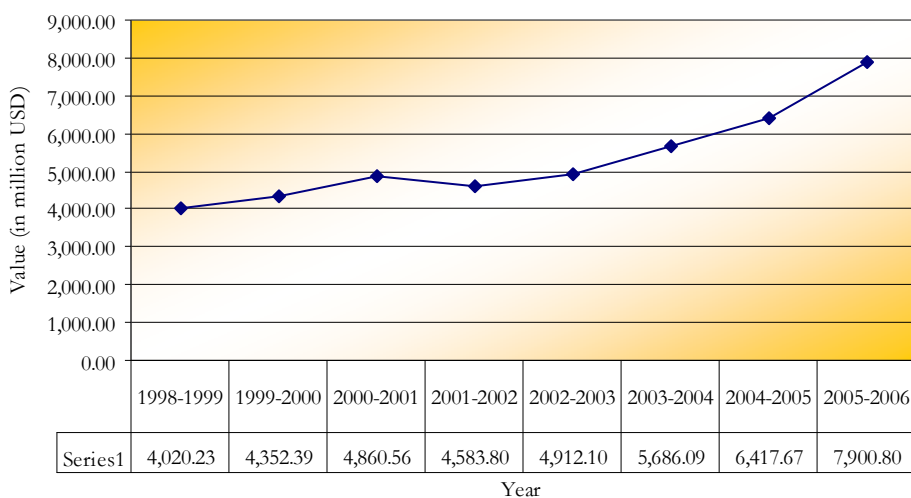
Bangladesh would face a big

challenge from Vietnam as an emerging country after China. However, Bangladesh has more than two decades of experience in dealing with the US buyers in a patron-client relationship unlike Vietnam.

"Increased demand for low-cost apparels among the middle and low-income groups has created a strong market for Bangladeshi products," the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in its quarterly economic update on Bangladesh's economy, released on February 25, 2007. The report also added that the flexible exchange rate management of Bangladesh strengthened competitiveness of the local industry.

Bangladesh's RMG sector annually earns about US \$8.0 billion in exports, mainly to the US and the European countries. The industry has employed about 1.8 million workers, mostly women. ■

Export Earnings of RMG Sectors (1998-2006)



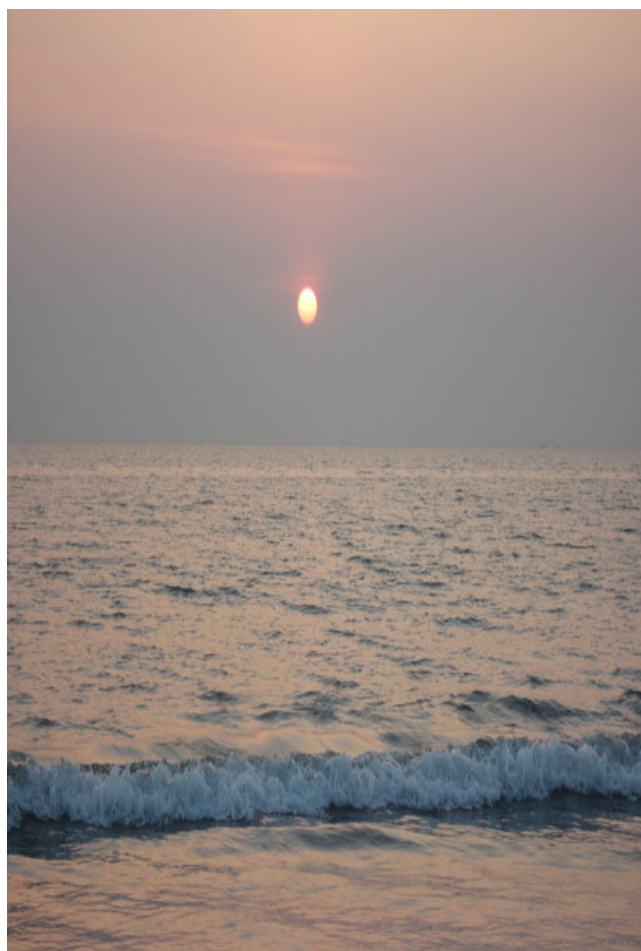
Did You Know



- **Bangladeshi scientists got prestigious award "The Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability" for arsenic filter.** The US National Academy of Engineering (NAE) announced (Washington, 1st February 2007) the winners of the 2007 Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability. The contest sought innovative solutions for removing arsenic from drinking water that is slowly poisoning tens of millions of people in developing countries. Mr. Abul Hussam, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry at George Mason University, Virginia, USA, and Dr AKM Munir, a physician from Kushtia, Bangladesh, innovated the technology.
- **Bangladeshi scientist Mr. Saleemul Huq, a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change and head of the Climate Change Group at the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development,** was awarded the prestigious Burtoni Award for contributions to climate change adaptation on 26 February 2007.
- **Jawed Karim (born 1979), a Bangladeshi who now lives in the USA, is the co-founder of the popular video sharing website YouTube.**
- **Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus is the first Bangladeshi but the third Bengalee to receive Nobel Prize.** In 1913, Bengalee poet Rabindranath Tagore received Nobel Prize in Literature for his work 'Geetanjali'. In 1998, Professor Amartya Sen also received the Nobel Prize in Economics.
- **The world renowned architect Mr. Fazlur Rahman Khan, who was a Bangladeshi, designed the Sears Tower in USA, which was the tallest building in the world at the time of its construction (1974).**
- **Mr. Meghnad Saha, a great Bengalee nuclear scientist was born in Dhaka, (now Bangladesh) on October 6, 1893. His theory of high-temperature ionization of elements and its application to stellar atmospheres, expressed in the Saha equation, is fundamental to modern astrophysics; subsequent development of his ideas has led to increased knowledge of the pressure and temperature distributions of stellar atmospheres.**
- **Ecorntech Inc., a private sector investor of the USA, expressed its interest to invest about \$2.75 billion in Bangladesh.** The US-based company plans to invest in low-income high tech housing project and in non-wood composite particle panel board project. It may be mentioned here that Bangladesh has received billion dollars investment proposals from several countries in the recent years.
- **The number of cell phone users in Bangladesh reached 22 million at the end of 2006, adding over 12 million subscribers in a single year. The growth in 2006 was 120%.**
- **GDP growth of Bangladesh reached 6.7% in fiscal year FY 2005-06.** The GDP growth is projected to increase to 6.8% in fiscal year 2006-07 and 6.9% in fiscal year 2007-08 and 7.0% in fiscal year 2008-09.
- **Export earning in fiscal year 2005-2006 is amounted to US\$10.526 billion. It is expected to be US\$ 12 billion in fiscal year 2006-07.**
- **More than Three million Bangladeshies work aboard in different countries, annually remitting around US\$ 6 billion, through official and unofficial channels.**
- **Bangladesh has approximately 82,864 primary schools, 19,766 secondary school, 1,302 colleges and some 75 universities.**
- **Bangladesh has the longest unbroken sandy sea beach in the world (120 km).**

COX'S BAZAR

The Longest Unbroken Sandy Beach in the World



Sunset over Cox's Bazar Beach

Cox's Bazar is said to be the home to the world's longest unbroken clean sandy beach. The 120-km length of the beach always attracts tourists from different parts of the world because of its smooth and soft-carpeting of silver sand sloping gently into the clean blue water of the Bay of Bengal. It is overlooked throughout by a picturesque range of forested green hills. Cox's Bazar is famed for its calm and quiet, shark-free beach with the green trees and pretty hills on one side and blue waves on the other. One, perhaps, does not come by many such seaside resorts around the globe. The beach is suitable for bathing, sunbathing and swimming. The beauty of the setting sun behind the waves of the sea is really breathtaking.

Cox's Bazar, the tourist capital of Bangladesh, gets its name after Captain Cox, an administrator in the days of the British Raj in India. Besides the resplendent beach, Cox's Bazar offers such attractions as ornamented temples and pagodas, a Burma market and a view of indigenous communities and their vibrant culture. Moreover, tourist may visit Ramu, Ukhiya, Himchhari and Teknaf and the off-shore islands Moheshkhali, Sonadia, and Kutubdia, for their natural beauty, their beaches and an experience of tribal life and culture.

Cox's Bazar is not only famous for its beautiful sea beach and the sunset, but also has several other places of attractions, including the following:

Teknaf:

Teknaf is the southernmost upazila of Cox's Bazar district as well as Bangladesh. It's a small township on the Naf river at the end of the hilly region. It is an amazing place facing the green hills of Mynmar across the Naf river. One of the major attractions of Teknaf is a cruise by boat or sampan. The town and its surrounding areas provide visitors an opportunity to see the people and culture of the Arkan and Rakhain communities.



Tecknaf - A Wonderful View of Naf River

COX'S BAZAR - The Longest Unbroken Sandy Beach in the World

Moheskhal:

Moheskhal is an island off the coast of Cox's Bazar. It has an area of 268 sq. km. The centre of the island and along the eastern coastline rises a range of low hills, about 100 meters high. In the coastal hills lies the old temple of Adinath, dedicated to Shiva, which becomes a place of pilgrimage during the month of March. The western and northern coasts of the island form a low-lying tract that is fringed by mangrove forests. Tourist can reach this island by local motorboats called trawlers, or by speedboat. Tourists will come across interesting sights of mangrove forests, hilly areas, salt fields, Buddhist Temples or Pagodas.



Cox's Bazar Beach



Beauty of Himchhari along the beach

Himchhari:

It is located 18 km south of Cox's Bazar, along the beach. The broken hills and waterfalls here are unique. There is a hilltop resort from where the shore of the Bay of Bengal looks enchanting. The scenic beauty one can see while driving from Cox's Bazar to Himchhari - is quite extraordinary, with lovely green hills on the left and the blue waves just on the right. The waterfall in Himchhari is more lively during the rainy season.

Sonadia:

Sonadia is a crescent shaped island off the Cox's Bazar coast. The area of the island is about 9 sq km. Its western coast is sandy and is rich in different kinds of shells. During winter, fishermen set up temporary camps on the island and dry sea fish, which they catch from the sea. Every winter thousands of fishermen camp there and make large hauls. The island is also known as a paradise for migratory birds like ducks, sea-gulls, fowls and geese, etc. During the winter season migratory birds in swarms are found crowding the beach, marshes and pools of the island.



White seagulls create contrast over the sea

Ramu, St.Martin Island, etc. are also main attractions of Cox's Bazar.

How to Reach:

Cox's Bazar is 154 km. to the south of the city of Chittagong which is connected by a well-built highway. Comfortable AC and non-AC coaches are available from Dhaka-Chittagong-Cox's Bazar road. Domestic airlines serve Dhaka-Chittagong-Cox's Bazar route both ways. Flights are available on certain days of the week. Journey from Chittagong to Cox's Bazar by waterways is enchanting.

Where to Stay:

Bangladesh Parjatan (Tourism) Corporation has modern and luxury hotels and motels with restaurant in Cox's Bazar for accommodation of tourists. Besides, a number of private hotels, guest and rest-houses are available for tourists. Prior reservation is advisable. ■

Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation

233, Airport Road,
Tejgaon, Dhaka - 1215
Bangladesh

Phone : +880-2-9120392
Fax : +880-2-8126501
E-mail : bpcho@bangla.net
Website : www.bangladeshtourism.gov.bd



Embassy Activities

21 FEBRUARY: MARTYR'S DAY AND INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY OBSERVED

The Martyr's Day and the International Mother Language Day was observed at Embassy on 21 February 2007. The programme started in the morning with hoisting of the national flag at half-mast by Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Muhammad Azizul Haque with the national anthem played in the background. A special prayer was offered for the salvation of the souls of the martyrs of the Language Movement and for the continued peace and prosperity of Bangladesh.

The flag hoisting ceremony was followed by a discussion meeting at the Embassy. One minute's silence was observed in memory of the martyrs of the Language Movement. In his speech, H.E. the Ambassador recalled the supreme sacrifices of the Martyr's of the Language Movement for their mother language Bangla. Highlighting the significance of the day he mentioned that 21 February 1952 has very profoundly influenced our language, literature, art, and culture. He mentioned that despite the fact that we are not a strong power economically, our language, literature and culture are extremely rich and that we should all be proud of it. The Ambassador also mentioned the current political situation in

Bangladesh and said that the Hon'ble President declared the state of emergency prior to the assumption of office by the reformed Caretaker Government. The military is assisting the Caretaker Government being totally under the control of the civil administration. He mentioned that the Caretaker Government is taking different reformative measures for holding a free, fair and credible general election. He said that necessary actions had already been taken or were being taken by the Caretaker Government for the reformation of the Election Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission and the Public Service Commission. The government is also taking measures for introduction of voter ID cards, preparation of a correct and flawless voter-list, and establishment a corruption-free society. The discussion meeting was followed by a cultural function, which was participated by local Bangladeshi artistes. The function featured music and recitation. Local artists rendered songs of 'Amar Ekushey', and through the songs and recitations of poems, they narrated the history of the Language Movement. This was highly applauded by the audience. ■

36TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAY OF BANGLADESH CELEBRATED

The Embassy celebrated 36th anniversary of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh on 26 March 2007. The programme started in the morning with hoisting of the national flag by H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Azizul Haque with the national anthem being played in the background. This was followed by recitation from the Holy Quran and special prayer for the Martyrs of Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971 and for the continued peace and prosperity of the country. A discussion meeting was also held at the

Embassy. In his speech, H.E. the Ambassador paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the liberation war. He said that Bangladesh got its political independence in 1971 and now it was time to work



Embassy Activities

for attaining freedom from poverty and eradicate corruption. He mentioned that the present Caretaker Government is taking different reformative measures for the establishment a corruption-free society and for holding a free, fair and credible General Election. This was high time for all Bangladeshis to start working unitedly for making positive changes within the country and for upholding the positive image of Bangladesh abroad, he added. Mentioning the recent success of the Bangladesh national cricket team in the ongoing World Cup tournament, H.E. the Ambassador said that our young generations have tremendous energy and potentials and we should try to direct their energy to right and positive directions. We all need patriotism and national unity at the moment, he said, for moving towards our cherished

goal of attaining peace, progress and prosperity.

The Embassy arranged for a National Day reception in the evening. The programme was attended, among others, by officials of the host government, foreign diplomats, journalists, businessmen, expatriate Bangladeshis and their spouses. ■



THE HOLY EID-E-MILADUNNABI OBSERVED BY THE MISSION

The holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi, commemorating the birth-and- death anniversary of Prophet Hazrat Muhammed (SM), was observed by the Mission on Sunday, 01 April 2007, in a befitting manner and with due religious fervour. On this occasion, the Mission organized a discussion meeting and a Milad mahfil at the Embassy premises. Besides the Embassy officials, the programme was also participated by a wide cross section of Bangladesh community in Stockholm including the representatives and members of local mosque committees, Islamic scholars and thinkers, representatives of Bangladesh cultural organizations, etc.

The programme commenced at 3 O'clock in the afternoon. Some of the guests took part in the discussion. They recited from the holy Qur'an and spoke on the life and works of the Prophet Muhammad (SM). A traditional Milad was conducted by the Imam of Rinkeby Mosque.

In his speech, H.E. the Ambassador thanked the participants and the guests for joining the programme. He said that the life and the teachings of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) were an eternal ideal for mankind to emulate. "Since the Creator is one", he said, "all the Prophets and Messengers, starting from Hazrat Adam (PBUH) to the last prophet, Muhammad (SM), brought basically the same message from Allah for peace and welfare of the mankind". He also remarked that the holy Quran revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SM) was a complete code of life & showed people the path of truth and justice. Stressing the need for reflection of the great Prophet's ideals in our lives, H.E. the Ambassador sought Allah's blessings so peace and stability could be achieved in society through following those tenets. The discussion meeting and the Milad was followed by prayers for Prophet Muhammad (SM). The participants prayed for the mankind, the Muslim Ummah and for the peace and prosperity of Bangladesh. At the end of the Milad mahfil, refreshments were served. ■

L.I.N.K.S.

Government Organizations

Bangladesh Government Website :
<http://www.bangladesh.gov.bd/>

Chief Adviser's office :
<http://www.cao.gov.bd/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs :
<http://www.mofabd.org/>

Ministry of Commerce :
<http://www.mincom.gov.bd/>

National Board of Revenue :
<http://www.nbr-bd.org/>

Bangladesh Tariff Commission :
<http://www.bdtariffcom.org/>

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics :
<http://www.bbsgov.org/>

Bangladesh Bank :
<http://www.bangladesh-bank.org/>

Biman Bangladesh Airlines :
<http://www.bimanair.com/>

NGO Affairs Bureau :
<http://www.ngoab.gov.bd/>

Trade & Investment... continued

Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry :
<http://www.ficci.org.bd/>

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh :
<http://www.mccibd.org/>

Dhaka Stock Exchange Limited :
<http://www.dsebd.org/main.jsp>

Chittagong Stock Exchange :
<http://csebd.com/cse/start.html>

Business Information :
<http://www.bizinfo-bangladesh.com/>

Bangladesh Yellow Pages :
<http://www.bgyellowpages.com/>

Trade and Investment

Board of Investment :
<http://www.boi.gov.bd/>

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) :
<http://www.epzbangladesh.org.bd/>

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) :
<http://www.bgmea.com/>

Export Promotion Bureau :
<http://epb.gov.bd/>

The Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry :
<http://www.fbcci-bd.org/>

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry :
<http://www.dhakachamber.com/>

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry :
<http://www.chittagongchamber.com/>

Tourism and Media

National Tourism Corporation:
<http://www.bangladeshtourism.gov.bd/>

Hotel and Travel Guide :
<http://www.bangladesh.com/>

News and Media:

The Daily Star (English) :
<http://www.thedailystar.net/>

The Financial Express :
<http://www.financialexpress-bd.com/>

Weekly Holiday :
<http://www.weeklyholiday.net/>

The Daily Ittefaq (Bangla) :
<http://www.ittefaq.com/>

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