

## American Airlines averts immediate bankruptcy

AFP, Washington

American Airlines swerved away from immediate bankruptcy Wednesday as staff gave a last-minute ratification to a survival plan for the world's biggest carrier.

Flight attendants, who had rejected the plan the day before, changed their minds after being given another day to think about it.

They voted 10,761 or 52.4 per cent in favor and 9,652 or 47.0 per cent against, the Association of Professional Flight Attendants said on its Internet site.

Another 562 votes were ineligible.

Pilots, mechanics and other ground workers all voted Tuesday to ratify the

tentative union-management cost-cutting deal, part of a plan to remove 1.8 billion dollars in annual costs.

But the deal would have fallen through without all parties, including the flight attendants, behind it.

Shares in American's parent AMR Corp. shot up 83 cents or 24.41 per cent to 4.23 dollars before the vote. In after hours trade, AMR shares soared even higher to 4.78 dollars.

American Airlines said Tuesday it had decided to pay creditors "millions of dollars" due immediately to avoid bankruptcy and to extend the voting deadline for flight attendants.

"With almost 10,000 jobs hanging in

the balance, and the future of 100,000 employees at stake, we agreed to take this risk," said AMR Corp. chairman Don Carty.

"So that there is absolutely no confusion or uncertainty, I must make completely clear that if we fail to secure flight attendant ratification by tomorrow (Wednesday), we are, regrettably, left with no alternative but to immediately file for bankruptcy," Carty said.

Investors had already banked on the flight attendants approving the new contract, Merrill Lynch analyst Michael Linenberg said.

"The alternative, i.e. bankruptcy, would be a far worse alternative than the

concessions," he said.

AMR was also negotiating with suppliers, vendors and lessors over an additional concessions package, he said.

"While the total concessions package -- labor and other -- should be enough for now, AMR could be facing a similar hurdle four to six months from now if industry conditions do not improve," Linenberg said.

On Tuesday, flight attendants initially voted to reject the deal. But they were the only group of workers barred from changing their votes even after American Airlines management sweetened the deal slightly.

## Inflation data reveal slack US economy

AFP, Washington

Slack economic growth kept core inflation at a four-year low, but housing remains a bright spot, analysts said Wednesday after the release of data.

Core consumer prices, excluding energy and food costs, were unchanged in March -- the lowest level since February 1999 -- and were up just 1.7 per cent over the past 12 months, the government said.

"We are seeing a lack of cost pressures in the US economy, reflecting the slack in the economy," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Financial Group.

The risk of deflation was small, however, so long as the monetary and fiscal stimulus already in the system can help the world's biggest economy avoid a recession, he said.

"Confidence will pick up now that war is over, so the US economy will strengthen through this year and that will limit the risk of deflation," Guatieri said.

Spiralling natural gas, fuel oil and gasoline prices sparked a 0.3 per cent overall consumer price increase in the month to March, and a 3.0-per cent surge over the 12 months.

Energy prices rose 4.6 per cent, including a 14.8-per cent leap in natural gas prices, a 9.8-per cent increase in fuel oil prices and a 4.1-per cent advance in gasoline prices.

Food prices rose a more moderate 0.2 per cent.

SG Economic Research chief economist Stephen Gallagher said the rise in overall prices was less critical than the mild core rate.

## Styrene butadiene rubber import China to take anti-dumping action against Russia, ROK, Japan

ANN/China Daily

China has decided to take anti-dumping action against Russian, South Korean and Japanese imports of styrene butadiene rubber, the Ministry of Commerce said in a

statement yesterday.

The ministry said that, starting immediately, importers of styrene butadiene rubber from these three countries must pay cash deposits to Chinese customs according to their dumping margins.

However, the statement did not provide details of the dumping margin.

China initiated the anti-dumping investigation with regard to styrene butadiene rubber, a chemical raw material for tyres and other rubber

products imported from Russia, South Korea and Japan on March 19, 2002.

Four major domestic styrene butadiene rubber producers -- Qilu Petrochemical Co Ltd, Shenhua Chemical Industrial, Jilin Chemical Industry Co Ltd and PetroChina Lanzhou Co -- filed the application for investigation.

Based on investigation findings and relevant Chinese anti-dumping regulations, the ministry determined that dumping had taken place and the imports did cause substantial damage to China's domestic industry.

According to official statistics, China initiated 10 cases last year.

Annual sales of involved products stood at 59.2 billion yuan (US\$7.15 billion).

Trade experts hail these investigations as important steps for Chinese players to learn to make use of related rules and protect their interests in the new trade environment, which has been changed by China's entry to the World Trade Organization in late 2001.

## CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's foreign exchange rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Selling	Currency	Buying		
		TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
58.8500	58.9000 USD	57.9500	57.7988	57.7106
64.8350	64.8901 EUR	62.6555	62.4715	62.3997
93.7775	93.8572 GBP	90.9062	90.6391	90.5307
36.6871	36.7183 AUD	34.9381	34.8354	34.7937
0.4974	0.4978 JPY	0.4819	0.4805	0.4799
42.2212	43.2579 CHF	41.9684	41.8452	41.7951
7.0298	7.0358 SEK	6.9058	6.8855	6.773
40.7690	40.8036 CAD	39.6239	39.5075	39.4603
7.5528	7.5592 HKD	7.4225	7.4007	7.3919
33.3863	33.4146 SGD	32.5891	32.4934	32.4545
16.1538	16.1675 AED	15.6507	15.6048	15.5861
15.8186	15.8321 SAR	15.3311	15.2861	15.2678

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar						
Indian Rupee	Pak Rupee	Lankan Rupee	Thai Baht	Norwegian Kroner	NZ Dollar	Malaysian Ringgit
47.33	57.77	97.01	42.755	7.1825	0.5569	3.80

**Local Interbank FX Trading:**  
The local interbank foreign exchange market was active Thursday. Dollar continued to become stronger against the Bangladeshi taka as demand for greenback continued to rise due to higher import.

**Local Money Market:**  
Demand for call money was moderate. Call money rates remained stable as market continued to experience stable liquidity condition. At the close, call rates remained unchanged between 7.75 and 8.25 per cent.

**International Market:**  
US Dollar fell to a one-month low against the euro and a two week trough versus the yen as markets

remained unconvinced about US economic health. Despite the release of strong housing starts and benign inflation data, worries over US economic prospects were not diminished and the currency remained vulnerable to economic fundamentals. US dollar fell to 119.71 yen against the Japanese currency and was down a quarter of a per cent against the euro at \$1.0940. The greenback was also down versus the Canadian dollar, the Swiss franc and slightly weaker against the British pound. At 1500 hours on Thursday, euro was at 1.0921/26, GBP at 1.5808/12 and yen at 119.25/30 against the dollar.

This memorandum is issued by Standard Chartered Bank and is based on or derived from information generally available to the public from sources believed to be reliable. While all reasonable care has been taken in its preparation no responsibility or liability is accepted for errors of fact or of opinion expressed herein.

## SHIPPING

### Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 17/4/2003

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Jet Challenge	Cano/R.S	Sing	Mutual	8/4	28/4	6006
J/3	Dok Chon	Sugar	Tuti	Mutual	3/4	19/4	1004
J/4	Al Muztuba	Rice	Viza	Cla	11/4	21/4	1028
J/5	Hang Shun	Rice	Kaki	USL	30/3	19/4	1653
J/6	Ocean Pride	GI(Log)	Yang	PSAL	10/4	23/4	1474
J/7	Inwa	Rice	Yang	Total	7/4	18/4	1105
J/8	Jat Na Mu	Wheat(P)	Viza	Uniship	2/4	20/4	696
J/9	Sanlit	C. Clink	Indo	Tosl	13/4	22/4	1239
J/10	Kwan Mo bong	Rice	Kaki	SSTL	9/4	20/4	685
J/11	Banga Birol	Cont	Chen	Baridhi	13/4	17/4	201X
J/12	Banga Biraj	Cont	P.Kel	Pssl	14/4	18/4	
J/13	QC Dignity	Cont	P.Kel	QCSL	14/4	18/4	306/X
CCT/1	Dali	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	12/4	17/4	285/448
CCT/2	Kota Naga	Cont	Sing	Pil (Bd)	14/4	17/4	146/X

### Vessels due at outer anchorage Date: 17/4/2003

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Zang La San Chongryon	17/4	Kand	SSTL	Rice(P)	
H/O					
Banga Bijoy	18/4	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Tug Winstar Rellance	17/4	Mala	Otbl	DVI	Tara
Tara	17/4	Mala	Otbl	For Scraping	
Heng Fu	17/4	Viza	Uniship	Wheat	
Sittwe	19/4	Yangoon	Everest	GI	
Maritime Friendship	18/4	Tang	Bsl	C. Clink (CCJ)	
Santa Barbara	18/4	Thai	Uniship	C. Clink	
Banga Bodor	20/4	P. Kel	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Mardios	19/4	P. Kel	Rsl	Cont	Sing
Kota Cahaya	20/4	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Xpress Resolve	19/4	Col	Everest	Cont	Col
Balangan	19/4	Jaka	Otbl	For Demolition	

### Outside Port Limit

Barge: S-657	P Cargo	Kol	Sakhi	21/2
Dea Captain	--	--	Arafeen	R/A(11/4)

### Vessels at outer anchorage Vessels ready:

Myeik	Wheat	Viza	Mutual	13/4
Sea Elegance	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	14/4
Asimont	Cont	P.Kel	Seaborn	14/4
Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	K. Dia	Bsc	R/A
Pho Thae	Rice	Kand	Mutual	15/4
QC Honour	Cont	P. kel	QCSL	16/4
Orange Sky	Vehi	P. Kel	Everett	16/4
Pinya	Gi (Y. Ma)	Yang	Total	16/4
Al Monsoor	Rice	Chan	Total	17/4
Hai Soon-VIII	Lbo	Chan	Mstpl	17/4
Tai Ping	Urea	Pena	Everett	17/4
Handy Jade (Liner)	Gi (St.C)	Sing	Everett	17/4

### Vessels awaiting employment/instruction

Banglar Shourabh	-	-	BSC	R/A(15/4)
------------------	---	---	-----	-----------

### Movement of vessels for 18/4/2003 & 19/4/2003

	Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
18/4/2003			
J/7	Inwa	J/7 H. Jade	TSP: Jat Na Mu
J/18	Ocean Sky	Pho Thae	RM/4 Chebucto
J/13	QC Dignity	Z. Sa San Chong	
CCT/3	Xpress Manaslu	RM/3 Hai Soon	
RM/14	Pavonis	DOJ: B. Jyoti	
RM/3	Suppavan	RM/10 B. Shourab	
DOJ:	E. Aries		

The above are shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Family, Dhaka.



PHOTO: AB BANK

Abu Haniff Khan, managing director and president of Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited, speaks as chief guest at a seminar on policies and procedures relating to large loans in Dhaka recently.

## STOCK