

EU eyes free trade deal with ASEAN

AFP, Brussels

The European Union is ready to negotiate a free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) after the current round of WTO-led talks, the European Commission said Monday.

The EU's executive arm will this week formally agree a document setting out a strategy for relations between the EU - currently 15 members, expanding to 25 next year - and the 10-member ASEAN.

The commission is notably

proposing a regional trade action plan, called the trans-regional EU-ASEAN trade initiative, said spokesman Reijo Kemppinen ahead of the weekly commission meeting Wednesday.

"If successfully implemented it would permit us to give serious consideration to entering into a free trade agreement once the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations is successfully completed," he added.

The Doha development agenda, launched with great fanfare in the Qatari capital Doha in November 2001, aims to establish a more

equitable approach to international trade for developing countries.

The European commission added that the EU was also ready to sign bilateral agreements with ASEAN states "to deepen cooperation" on issues like human rights, good governance, justice and home affairs, and fighting terrorism.

The idea of an EU-ASEAN free trade area was raised by German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder - whose country is the EU's biggest economy - during a visit to Singapore in May.

President, secy gen of Bangla China chamber

FR Siddiqui and Ahammadi Abbas Kapadia have been elected president and secretary general of Bangladesh China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCCI).

Shajahan Mridha Benu, Mokhales Alam and ASMK Ali were elected senior vice-presidents, says a press release.

They were elected at the association's first election held at a local hotel on Saturday.

The first general meeting of the BCCCI was also held later on the same day. Newly appointed president FR Siddiqui presided over the meeting.

The meeting approved the budget and programme of BCCCI for the period of 2003-05.

Barkat Ullah Bulu, advisor to the Commerce Ministry, and high officials of the Chinese Embassy were present.

3 billion people live on \$2 a day or less: ILO

AFP, Paris

Almost half the world's population, or three billion people, live on two dollars (euros) a day or less and the gap between the world's richest and poorest has doubled in 40 years, the International Labour Organisation said Sunday.

"Poverty today affects almost half the world's population. Three billion human beings live on less than two dollars a day and one third of them only have one dollar on which to survive," the ILO said in its July press statement.

"The gap between the world's poorest 20 per cent and the richest 20 per cent has more than doubled" between 1960 and 1999, the organisation said.

While poverty strikes all societies, it has surged in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, eastern Europe and central Asia, the organisation reported.

Some 180 million people were officially unemployed at the end of last year, against 100 million people at the end of 1990, while the number of under-unemployed, some 730 million people at the end of 2002, was growing, according to ILO figures.



PHOTO: GREEN DELTA HOUSING

An agreement was signed on Thursday to build a high rise building in Rankin Street area at Wari in Dhaka. Green Delta Housing and Development Limited will construct the building. The company's Chairman Nurul Amin, Managing Director Rebat Kumar Mondal and businessman Mohsin Ahmed were present.



PHOTO: AB BANK LTD

Ali Reza Iftakhar, senior executive vice-president of Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited, and AKM Shafiqul Azam, senior vice-president of Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited, sign an agreement in Dhaka recently. Under the deal, AB Bank has become corporate client of CityCell Digital.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Selling		Currency	Buying		
TT/OD	BC		TT Clean	OD Sight	OD Transfer
58.8000	58.8500	USD	57.8700	57.7000	57.8310
68.1374	68.1954	EUR	65.6535	65.4607	65.3823
98.6840	98.7680	GBP	95.6880	95.4070	95.2928
40.8954	40.9302	AUD	38.8308	38.7167	38.6704
0.5028	0.5032	JPY	0.4868	0.4853	0.4847
43.6708	43.9081	CHF	42.5577	42.4327	42.3619
7.3053	7.3115	SEK	6.8211	6.8010	6.7929
44.2105	44.2481	CAD	42.8984	42.7724	42.7212
7.5478	7.5542	HKD	7.4134	7.3917	7.3828

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringit

Local Interbank FX Trading

The local interbank foreign exchange market was active yesterday as the international market was open. Demand for import made the dollar slightly stronger against the US dollar Monday.

Local Money Market

Call money rate was steady. Market continued to experience adequate liquidity. Call money rate also remained unchanged at 2.50-3.00 per

International Market

Euro fell against the US dollar and yen on Monday because of rising Tokyo shares and US stocks. Euro fell as low as 134.57 yen, its lowest in seven weeks and more than 6 yen below all time highs hit in May. Euro fell below \$1.1420, five cents below the record highs hit in May and revisited in July. The euro faces seven-week lows at \$1.1395. Dollar also became slightly

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 7/7/2003

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	C.S.B.C Nyon Ho	Sug /WT(P)	Kaki	SSTL	8/6	9/7	126
J/3	Midas	Clink	Ind	SSA	21/6	9/7	3120
J/4	Ocean Pride	GI(Log)	Yang	Peal	2/7	18/7	461
J/5	Tien Mu	W/Lentils	Sing	Mutual	22/6	12/7	2329
J/6	Yayasan Tujuh	Gi	Sing	Seacom	30/6	9/7	2291
J/7	Hellin	GI	P Kel	TMMML	17/6	7/7	259
J/8	Ankang Jiang	Gi	Yoko	Bdship	4/7	9/7	2529
J/9	Guljiang	Tspi(Bag)	Qinz	Unique	29/6	10/7	2623
J/10	Mardios	Cont	Hald	Everbest	5/7	10/7	116/821
J/11	Oclairk	Cont	Pkel	QCSSL	2/7	9/7	423/202
J/12	Kota Berjaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	2/7	7/7	34/X
J/13	Budi Teguh	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	4/7	9/7	151/536
CCT/2	Xpres Manaslu	Cont	P Kel	RSL	2/7	9/7	187/518
CCT/3	Qc Teal	Cont	P Kel	QCSSL	5/7	9/7	161/213

Vessels due at outer anchorage Date

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Tatiana-L	7/7	Sing	Prog	GI	--
Pathein	7/7	Yangoon	Total	Rice/PO	--
Orient Excellence	8/7	PSSL	Cont	Sing	--
QC Dignity	7/7	P Kel	QCSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Bonik	7/7	Hald	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Banga Biraj	7/7	Pkel	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Banga Borti	8/7	Pkl	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Orient Freedom	8/7	-	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Vespataurini	9/7	GOA	PSA	GI	--
Jaami	10/7	PKL	RSL	Cont	Sing
Gikim	10/7	Sing	OTBL	For Demolition	--
Xuan Cheng	10/7	Inch	--	GI	--
Yong Jiang (Liner)	10/7	--	Bdship	GI	--
New Sea Star	10/7	P kel	QCSSL	Cont	Sing
Banglar Moni	10/7	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Kota Singa	11/7	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing
Banga Borat	11/7	--	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Kota Cahaya	14/7	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing

Tanker due

Victoria	8/7	Chenn	Pol	CDSO(RM/4)
Al Sabiyah	8/7	Kuwa	STPL	HSD/JP-1(RW/1)
Orapin-3	8/7	Bela	NTCL	Cpo(RM/83)
Silver Star	8/7	Tuti	Seacom	Phos Acid
Vernal Grace	9/7	Sin	SMBH	CPO(RM/4)
Filma	7/7	Yang	Seacom	ABD (RM/3)
Eagle	11/7	Rast	OWSL	Crude oil
Ocean guardard	11/7	Sing	MSTPL	HSD/MS(DOJ)

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Dea Captain	--	--	Arafleen	R/A(28/6)

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready

Happan	Pil(BD)	Yang	Total	4/7
Banglar Robi	Cont	Sing	BSC	6/7
Banga Borak	Cont	P Kel	Bdship	6/7
Sea Elegance	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	7/7
Epress Resolve	Cont	Col	Everbest	7/7

Vessels awaiting employment/instruction:

Banglar Shourab	-	-	BSC	R/A(23/6)
Banglar Jyoti	-	-	BSC	R/A(4/7)
Banga Lanka	Ballast	Col	Baridhi	30/6

Movement of vessels for 8/7/2003.

Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
J/6 Yayasan Tujuh	RM/10	B Shourab
CCJ George	RM/8	Orapin

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



PHOTO: GREYWORLDWIDE

Syed Manjur Elahi, chairman of Apex Tannery Group, cuts tape to open a new showroom in Rangpur recently. Managing director of Apex footwear, president of Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry and principal of Rangpur Medical College were present at the function.



PHOTO: THAI AIRWAYS

Participants pose for a photograph at a Mega Media Forum 2003 to Chaing Mai, Chiang Rai, and Bangkok arranged by Thai Airways International from July 6-10, 2003. The group consists of journalists and travel agents along with Mohammed Faisal, district sales manager of Bangladesh, and Seema Afzal, sales promotion officer of Thai Airways International in Dhaka.

STOCK