

Take export as tool to spur growth, reduce poverty

WB country director tells workshop

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

World Bank (WB) Country Director Christine Wallich yesterday said Bangladesh should come out of its import substitution policy and put emphasis on export as a tool to reduce poverty and achieve its desired economic growth.

"Nurturing domestic industries behind high tariff walls will generate only inefficiency," she said pointing at the small domestic market and lack of competitiveness required to secure a place in the international market.

Bangladesh must bank on export to achieve 6 to 7 per cent annual GDP growth required to halve poverty level by 2015 under the UN Millennium Development Goal, she said while addressing a workshop on "Trade Policies in South Asia."

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) and the World Bank jointly organised the two-day workshop that began yesterday at IDB Bhaban in Dhaka.

The WB country director said South Asian countries raise high tariff walls to help grow their infant industries but the policy backfired as the infant never grew up and failed to become competitive in world market.

The trade liberalisation policy of Bangladesh should encourage export and only export can change the face of its economy, Wallich said urging the government to formulate an export-friendly trade policy.

She said trade liberalisation in Bangladesh should be carried out

as part of medium term programme so that firms can better their plans and make adjustments to their business.

Developing countries must have to gain by reducing their own levels of protection. Through this process they can boost productivity, export



Christine Wallich

and make their products competitive in world market, she added.

Citing statistics on tariff rates, the WB country director said East Asian exporters pay 60 per cent tariffs to developing countries and 66 per cent of the total tariff is paid to their neighbours in East Asia.

However, she said, South Asian countries are gradually moving their economies away from protectionism towards greater openness and global economic integration.

About potential of WTO trade liberalisation talks, Wallich quoted an observation of WB President James Wolfensohn where he urged the rich countries to rise above special interests and national constraints for the betterment of global community.

The farmers in rich countries receive subsidies to the tune of \$350 billion a year while official development assistance is a mere \$50 billion that speaks of the unbalanced priorities in the system, she said.

Addressing the workshop, Commerce Secretary Suhel Ahmed said though South Asian and East Asian countries were of same economic status during 1950s, the East Asians surpassed South Asians due to their market openness and investment-friendly condition.

The South Asian economies lagged behind as they stuck to import substitution policy. He said South Asian countries must shift from the policy and liberalise their market.

Fakhruddin Ahmed, governor of Bangladesh Bank, Quazi Shahabuddin, director general of BIDS, Omar Haider Chowdhury, research director of BIDS, Garry Pursell, international development consultant of WB, Zaidi Sattar, senior economist of WB in Bangladesh, Tercan Baysan, regional trade director of WB and Mustafizur Rahman of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) also spoke in different sessions of the workshop.

CPA team visits Dhaka EPZ

UNB, Dhaka

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) evinced keen interest in the working procedure in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and praised the contributing role the BEPZA is playing in the industrial development of the country.

The visiting delegation of the CPA showed their interest when they visited the Dhaka Export Processing Zone yesterday to see for themselves the activities of the zone.

Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) Brig Gen (retd) M Mofizur Rahman briefed them about EPZs of Bangladesh.

Rahman told the delegation about the incentives and facilities offered by BEPZA to the investors, said a press release.

Later, the delegation visited the Dada (Savar) Ltd and Youngong (Hi-Tech) Sportswear Industries Ltd both from South Korea.

SE Asia puts final touches to free trade plan

REUTERS, Bali, Indonesia

Southeast Asian ministers put the finishing touches yesterday to an action plan to transform the region into a giant free trade zone that will be the centrepiece of this week's annual summit of leaders.

Leaders of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean), together with China, Japan and South Korea, meet on Tuesday and Wednesday in Bali to agree on integrating trade.

With their focus on nurturing the economic growth of a region rocked in the last few years by a financial crisis, terror attacks and the SARS virus, the leaders looked set to avoid direct criticism of fellow member Myanmar after the junta moved democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi from detention into house arrest.



PHOTO: TEEMS

FBCCI President Abdul Awal Minto distributes certificates among the participants of Medexpo 2003 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on Sunday.

Medical exposition ends in positive note

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The first ever international medical exposition in Bangladesh -- Medexpo 2003 -- ended on Sunday with huge response from the visitors, specially the medical practitioners and entrepreneurs in hospital business.

Medical equipment manufacturing companies from home and abroad who participated at the three-day event got spot orders from the owners of private hospitals, clinics and diagnostic centres in Bangladesh.

Officials of Braun and Company of UK, Endolap Services Limited, Romsons Scientific and Surgical Industries Ltd of India, Sunny Trading Agency of Bangladesh, Tradevision Limited of Bangladesh and C-Max Information Technology of Bangladesh said they have received orders from local buyers.

Some visitors talked to the officials of participating companies and assured them of placing orders later, said Sayeed Ahmed of Sunny Trading Agency Ltd.

"As our company is an exclusive distributor and sales representative of some medical equipment companies of Germany, Switzerland, USA, Japan, UK, Canada and Denmark, we got orders for surgical instruments and other medical equipment," he said.

Les Drayton, technical manager of

UK-based Braun and Company Limited said, "We have received huge response from the people regarding our medical products."

A large number of visitors enquired about services of different participating companies and institutions including foreign hospitals and local banks who offer loans to entrepreneurs in medical business, said an organiser of the show.

He said around 10,000 people have visited the exhibition organised by Triune Exhibition and Event Management Services (TEEMS) and co-sponsored by Siemens Bangladesh Ltd, Bangladesh Private Clinic and Diagnostic Centre Owners' Association, DHL and Novo Cargo Services Ltd.

The organisers have already fixed the schedule for the next Medexpo. It will be held from October 7 to 9 next year, said one of the organisers.

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Abdul Awal Minto distributed certificates among the participants of the fair at the concluding ceremony held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, the fair venue.

Managing Director of Siemens Bangladesh Ltd Peter E Albrich and Chairman of Medexpo 2003 Kazi Wahidul Alam were present at the function.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 6/10/2003

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Myiek	GI	Yang	Total	22/9	11/10	--
J/2	Ja Gang	Rice (P)	Chen	Jnsl	15/9	8/10	--
J/4	Guo Shun	Fert (Bag)	Sing	Unique	13/9	11/10	1669
J/5	Safinaz	Fert (Bag)	Sing	Pml	19/9	10/10	546
J/6	Banglar Doot	Wheat (G)	--	Lams	R/A	9/10	1889
J/7	Sagaing	GI	Yang	Everett	4/10	--	1306
J/9	Hpaan	Timber	Yan	Maritime	6/10	1/10	--
J/10	Tong Shang Hai	Canola/ Wheat/G/P	Vanv	Mtcl	20/9	9/10	1039
J/11	Orient Enterprise	Cont	Halldier	Pssl	5/10	--	202
J/12	Xpress Resolbe	Cont	Colom	Everbest	13/10	7/10	106

Vessels due at outer anchorage Date:6/10/2003

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Peral of Bahrain	5/10	Thai	Uniship	Clink	--
Ocean Breeze	6/10	Suez	RR Ship	--	--
Shun Chang	7/10	--	Rainbow	Wheat	--
Olympic Champion	5/10	Male	Rsship	--	--
Baroness	6/10	--	Jf	--	--
George	6/10	--	Bsl	Clink	--
Ramita Naree	6/10	Van	Mutual	Wheat	--
Banglar Shikha	6/10	Sing	Bsc	Cont	Sing
Bosowa Delapan	9/10	Vizag	Able	Sugar (P)	--
Xpress Manaslu	7/10	P. Kel	Rsl	Cont	Sing
Orient Grace	8/10	Pki	Pssl	Cont	Sing
Xuan Cheng (Liner)	7/10	Inchon	Bsship	GI	--
Litohoro	15/10	Bang	Mutual	Sugar(P)	--
Kota Cahaya	7/10	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing

Tanker due					
Borvoy-Vil	6/10	Mala	USL	CPO(RM/4/3)	
Raffles Park	7/10	Al-Jub	Eosl	HSD	
Scottish Wizard	1/10	Sing	Mstpl	HSD/MSB	

Vessels at outer anchorage Vessels ready:

Banga Barta	Cont	Baha	BDShip	4/10
Praneoya Pratama	F Oil	Sing	CTPL	2/10
Grient Enterprise	Cont	Hald	PSSL	5/10
Hpaan	Timebr	Yan	Maritime	6/10
QC Teal	Cont	Mong	QCQL	6/10

Vessels not ready				
High Tide	HSD	P Kel	EOSL	4/10
Burni Jaya	Sugar	Visal	SSL	6/10

Vessels awaiting employment/ instruction				
Banga Lanka	--	--	Baridhi	R/A (1/9)
Banglar Shourabh	--	--	BSC	R/A (22/9)

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

STOCK