

WTO still far from a deal as deadline looms

AFP, Geneva

The 149 nations in the World Trade Organisation are under mounting pressure to reach a deal to drive forward the Doha Round talks on liberalising global commerce, but a compromise still appears out of reach.

Uncertainty surrounds an April 30 target for an accord on cutting tariffs on industrial and agricultural goods, as well as slashing subsidies

paid to farmers in rich nations which critics say undermine competitors in the developing world.

The lack of progress means that the WTO has still not decided whether to hold a meeting of trade ministers at the end of this month to cap weeks of talks among specialised negotiators.

The spotlight remains on trade diplomats in Geneva this week who are attempting to break the deadlock

which pits the rich, notably the European Union and United States, against developing country powerhouses including Brazil and India.

"Everything depends on the discussions in the next three days. If we are recording significant convergence on the 21st, I expect (WTO Director General Pascal Lamy) to decide to have this ministerial meeting or not," Ujal Singh Bhatia, India's trade ambassador, told AFP.

The April 30 deadline was part of a loose agreement at a WTO conference last December in Hong Kong.

At the conference, governments tried to bring some momentum back to the struggling Doha Round of negotiations, which was launched in 2001 with the aim of tearing down barriers to commerce and using trade to boost the economies of poor nations.



PHOTO: PRAN DAIRY

Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Kuddus Talukdar Dulu speaks at the inauguration of the 10th milk collection centre of Pran Dairy Ltd, a sister concern of Pran-RFL Group, in Natore recently. Chief Executive Officer of Pran-RFL Amjad Khan Chowdhury is also seen.



PHOTO: BANGLALINK

Mehboob Chowdhury, chief commercial officer of Banglalink, and Md Imamul Kabir Shanto, chairman and managing director of Sundarban Telecom, sign a special distributorship deal on behalf of their organisations recently. Among others, Banglalink Manager (direct sales) Kazi Monirul Kabir and Sundarban Telecom Executive Director Sk Noshur Ali were present.

Samsung, Sony inject more money into LCD expansion

AFP, Seoul

High-tech giants, Samsung Electronics of South Korea and Japan's Sony agreed Wednesday to boost the production of liquid crystal display (LCD) panels at a joint venture.

Samsung Electronics said the joint venture, S-LCD, in South Korea would invest 222 billion won (233 million dollars) to increase monthly production at its existing plant to up to 90,000 panels.

The investment plan came nine days after the two companies sealed a two billion dollar deal to produce a new generation of LCDs at the plant, which was launched last year in Tangeong 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Seoul.

S-LCD currently makes 7th-generation, 40-inch LCD panels. Its new LCD line will have a monthly capacity of 50,000 panels to meet brisk demand for large, flat-screen televisions.

On Tuesday, Samsung and Sony agreed to buy panels worth 4.02 trillion won from S-LCD by the end of this year.

The deal comes amid growing competition among major LCD makers for the world's fast-growing large flat panel market which has been dominated by Samsung and LG Philips, a Dutch-South Korean joint venture.



PHOTO: BSB

MK Bashar, chief executive of BSB Global Network and BSB Travels, and Imran Rahman, deputy managing director of Brac Bank Limited, sign a corporate agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka Sunday. Under the deal, students will get easy term loans from the bank through BSB.



PHOTO: DBBL

Md Yeasin Ali, managing director of Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited (DBBL), formally inaugurates a relocated branch of the bank at Agrabad in Chittagong Sunday. Among others, deputy managing directors Abul Hashem Khan (operation) and KS Tabrez (administration), were present.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 19/4/2006

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch.
J/1	Bibi-M	GI(St. Bil)	Chenn	RSA	15/4	23/4	3786
J/2	Marbor	GI	Sing	ANCL	18/4	21/4	162
J/4	Zebra	GI	Mong	TMML	14/4	19/4	--
J/5	QC Teal	Cont	Col	QC SL	16/4	20/4	64
J/6	Pontoklydon	GI(St. Scrap)	Sing	Everett	13/4	19/4	3541
J/7	Yong Jiang	GI	Inch	Cosco	18/4	22/4	877
J/8	CEC Delta	Def.cargo	Oktya	Seabird	16/4	--	--
J/8	OEL Enterprise	Cont	Col	PSSL	18/4	21/4	--
J/9	Banga Bijoy	Cont	Col	Baridhi	14/4	20/4	197

Vessels due at outer anchorage date: 19/4/2006

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Midas	19/4	Sing	ASLL	C. Clink	Cemex
Romy	19/4	Sing	PI(BD)	Cont	Sing
Eminence	19/4	Lagos	JF	Scraping	--
Tug MLC Nancy-2	19/4	Trinc	Rship	Towing Spirit Of Yaveh	D/Vessel
Spirit Of Yaveh	19/4	Trinc	Rship	Scraping	--
Prety Flourish	21/4	Novo	Mutual	Wheat	--
Brave Royal	20/4	Kant	BRSL	C. Clink	Royal
Dolphin-II	20/4	Visa	Sunshine	GI(St. Bil)	--
Pu Trusty	20/4	Col	Seacon	Cont	Col
Seiyo Spirit	20/4	Hong	H&S	GI(St.)	9 Units
Phu Tan	21/4	PTP	PSSL	Cont	Sing
OEL Wisdom	21/4	Col	PSSL	Cont	Col
Zorina	21/4	--	Seacon	C. Clink	17500 Ctg
Esham	22/4	P. Kel	CEL	Cont	Sing
Selatun Megah	24/4	Sing	PI(BD)	Cont	Sing

Tanker due

Stolt Orchid	19/4	Isabela	Bdship	Phos. Acid	CUFL
Al Deerah	19/4	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/JP-1	--
Asia Lion	21/4	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD	--

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready:

Amer	Cont	P. Kel	CEL	15/4
Banga Biraj	Cont	Sing	Bdship	16/4
Coastal Express-1	Cont	Kol	BSCA	16/4
New Sea Star	Cont	Sing	QC SL	16/4
Kotaria	Cont	Sing	PI(BD)	17/4
Marisa Green	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	17/4
Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	18/4
Cape Henry	Cont	Sing	APL	18/4
Eastern Star	Cont	Sing	PML	18/4
OEL Freedom	Cont	PTP	PSSL	15/4
Sakura	Cpol	P. Guda	MTCL	18/4
Western Star	Cont	Sing	Vega	18/4
Banga Borat	Cont	Sing	Bdship	14/4
Emily-C	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	19/4
Pakinee	CPO	Lumut	Rainbow	19/4

Vessels awaiting employment / instruction:

Bumi Jaya	--	Visa	Unicom	10/11/2004
Xpress Manaslu	--	P. Kel	Seacon	R/A (21/12)
Express Resolve	--	Col	Seacon	R/A (21/12)
Banga Barta	Ballast	Col	Baridhi	10/3

Vessels not entering:

Ocean Heart	Salt	Kand	Sigma	13/2
Freedom	Raw Sugar	Sant	USL	2/4
Nancy	C. Clink	Nant	Move	2/4
Ocean Hope	C. Clink	Keng	Bashun	9/4
C. Emerald	GI/m.s.	Cana	USL	11/4
Sarim	C. Clink	Lumut	Litmond	14/4
Dong Hai	C. Clink	Chin	KSM	17/4

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

CURRENCY

Following is Wednesday's (April 19, 2006) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell	BC	Currency	TT Clean	Buy	OD Slight Doc	OD Transfer
70.5700	70.6000	USD	69.5000	69.4768	69.4305	
88.3819	88.4194	EUR	84.7205	84.6823	84.6358	
126.5873	126.6211	GBP	122.5216	122.4807	122.3990	
53.4144	53.4371	AUD	50.6933	50.6764	50.6426	
0.6110	0.6113	JPY	0.5902	0.5900	0.5896	
56.2087	56.2326	CHF	54.2037	54.1856	54.1495	
9.7490	9.7531	SEK	8.8719	8.8690	8.8631	
62.5399	62.5665	CAD	60.3456	60.3255	60.2852	
9.1202	9.1240	HKD	8.9407	8.9378	8.9318	
45.0869	45.1061	SGD	43.3228	43.3093	43.2805	
19.3698	19.3780	AED	18.7691	18.7628	18.7503	
18.9664	18.9744	SAR	18.3838	18.3777	18.3654	
12.1714	12.1766	DKK	11.0424	11.0388	11.0314	
238.3029	238.4063	KWD	236.3729	236.2965	236.1438	

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
45.03	59.9	102.675	37.785	6.3635	0.619	3.67

STOCK