

Amended garments quota rules to be effective soon

Star Report

The restructuring of quota system of the garment sector, which has already been approved by the cabinet, is now in the process of implementation.

According to Commerce Ministry sources, the amended quota rules will be given effect soon through a gazette notification for which some official formalities are now being completed.

The Commerce Ministry's proposal to amend the Textile Trade and Quota Administration Rules, 1991, was earlier approved at a cabinet meeting held on November 14 last year.

The move to amend the quota rules was initiated more

than two years ago to facilitate a balanced development of the country's garment industry.

A draft proposal for amendment of quota rules was placed before the cabinet by the Commerce Ministry on November 9, 1992 and a committee was formed by the cabinet to examine the proposal.

The committee made the recommendations in March 93 but the cabinet again constituted a coordination committee headed by the Labour and Manpower Minister to review all the proposals and suggestions in this regard. This committee submitted a report containing 19-point recommendations.

The Commerce Ministry

then prepared an eight point recommendations on the basis of its original proposal and the report of the coordination committee.

The eight point proposal was examined by the Cabinet Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. On the basis of this committee's suggestions, the Commerce Ministry finally prepared its proposal containing seven point recommendations that obtained approval of the cabinet.

Details of the amended quota rules are yet to be made public by the government. However, official sources said that the amended rules will provide incentives to those who export garments fully made of local textiles and such

exporters would get quota allocations not less than 5000 dozens. But, if the exporter fails to export the allocated quantity in a year, his quota will be curtailed in the following year.

Quota allocated for any category can be transferred under the amended rules but the transfer will be allowed in a maximum of two instalments.

The amended rules also incorporate provisions to control sale and purchase of quota allocations.

Reduction of over-programming on quota allocations from the existing 20 per cent to 15 at base level has also been included in the amended rules.

Singapore urges India to bolster reforms

CALCUTTA, Jan 6: Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong urged India today to pursue and strengthen its free-market reforms to help eliminate poverty and become a "leading economic powerhouse," reports AFP.

"India will join the Asian newly industrialised economies, China and Southeast Asia if the bold reforms are followed through," Goh said in his keynote address on the last day of an international business conference here.

The Singapore Premier, the chief guest at the three-day conference marking the centenary of the country's oldest trade body, the Confederation of Indian Industry, said India had no alternative but to liberalise.

"Economic deregulation is a necessity if you are to avoid being left behind in the new world order," he said. "There is no other credible option if India is to relieve itself of poverty."

Goh said the focus of global economic activity was shifting to Asia and the region would overthrow western dominance in the next century.

Some 29 Pakistani firms including 12 export houses are participating in the Dhaka International Trade Fair beginning today.

Director of Exhibition of Pakistan Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) Mohammad Mohsin said, addressing a press conference yesterday at the National Press Club.

The goods, which will be put on display by the firms during the fair, include household goods like washing machine, electric water cooler, geysers, cooking range, textile products, leather and leather goods, audio and video products, carpets, glass bangles and publications.

The Pakistan official said keeping into consideration the requirement of Bangladesh for engineering and capital goods for setting up labour intensive industries, some models of cement and sugar manufacturing plants were also decided to put on display in the fair.

The Heavy Mechanical Complex (HMC) Taxila, which

has earlier helped some Bangladeshi parties in erection of these plants in Bangladesh, has sent the models of the plants, Mohsin said.

Focussing on Bangladesh-Pakistan bilateral trade, Mohsin said Bangladesh is an important trading partner of Pakistan. In 1993-94, Pakistan's export earnings from Bangladesh was 102,000 US dollars, while it paid 28,000 US dollars to Bangladesh as import bills, official said, adding the trade fair would help develop mutual trade contracts and increase two way trade between the two countries.

The major export items of Pakistan for Bangladesh include fabrics, rice, cotton yarn, raw cotton, chemicals, sport goods, marble and onyx products, while it imports jute, jute goods and tea from Bangladesh, the official said.

Minister (Press) of Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, Hossain Malik was also present at the press conference.

China asks 400 firms to clean up or stop operation

BEIJING, Jan 6: The government in China's central Henan province has taken drastic steps to curb pollution, serving more than 400 local firms with ultimatums to clean up or close down operations, a report said today, says AFP.

Some 133 companies have been given a two-year deadline, while a further 292 industrial units "which discharge excessive pollutants" have until the end of 1997 to reform, the China Daily said.

The strict measures have been taken in response to a state-sponsored campaign to clean up the Huaihe river — a long stretch of which passes through Henan — by 1997.

Plans have been made to invest 950 million yuan (113 million dollars) in treating major pollutants and building urban domestic waste water treatment plants — with the ambitious target of making the waters of both the Huaihe and Yellow river drinkable.

29 Pak firms to take part in Dhaka Int'l Trade Fair

By Staff Correspondent

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BRIEFS

China launches check on meat products

BEIJING, Jan 6: China has launched a national check on meat products to curb widespread abuses, including sales of contaminated product and unfair practices to boost the weight of traded goods, a report said today. The 15-day inspection, which began Thursday, is to look at practices used in breeding, butchering, processing, transporting and marketing of meat as well as examining the management of units involved in such areas, the China Daily said. Anyone caught engaging in illegal activity would be punished, it said, reports AFP.

UK industry watching Indian politics

CALCUTTA, Jan 6: The British industry is keenly watching the Indian political scenario to reassess the New Delhi's determination to continue with opening up of the economy and reform process. Concerned over the results of the recent assembly elections, and its possible impact on the economic measures in India, a high level delegation of Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has come on an "assessment mission", the Director General of CBI, Howard Davies, told PTI in an exclusive interview.

Int'l lenders relieved at Yeltsin's decision

WASHINGTON, Jan 6: Officials at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are apparently relieved at news that Russian President Boris Yeltsin had decided to get rid of a strict limit on exports of oil. "The situation has been festering for months," one official, who asked not to be named, said Thursday. "Now it's settled, at least until the Russians change their policy again. The policy will apply only to the first three months of the year and is due for review in February," reports AP.

Taiwan-US aircraft venture

TAIPEI, Jan 6: Taiwan has signed a 96 million US dollar joint venture contract with the American Swearingen Aircraft Inc. to produce business jets, in the first such venture by Taiwanese businessmen. The Sino-Aerospace Investment Corp. set up last month by seven Taiwanese companies, will invest US 48 million dollar in the new company, called Sino-Swearingen Aircraft. The deal is a significant step forward in cooperation between our two countries' aerospace industries," Vice Economics Minister Yang Shih-chien said Thursday night during twin signing ceremonies in Taipei and Martinsburg, West Virginia, which were televised live, reports AP.

Russia's central bank raises rate

MOSCOW, Jan 6: The Central Bank of Russia increased its key refinancing rate from 180 per cent to 200 per cent on Friday in an apparent attempt to curb inflation. The bank's acting head, Tatiana Paramonova, ordered the increase late Thursday, the Interfax news agency said. Bank officials consider it vital for the rate, which is applied to all credits granted to commercial banks, to remain above inflation in order to prevent massive borrowing that would push spiraling prices even higher, reports AP.

Kim vows to develop South Korea

SEOUL, Jan 6: President Kim Young-sam promised Friday to build South Korea into one of the world's top 10 trading nations. At a New Year's news conference televised nationwide, Kim also promised further economic deregulation to create greater competition and vowed to keep prices down in the coming year, reports AP.

Bahrain seeks to ease unemployment

NICOSIA, Jan 6: Bahrain seeks to give more jobs to its own people, to ease the unemployment believed to be a main cause of last month's Shiite Muslim unrest, diplomats posted in Manama said yesterday. In a bid to ease grievances, the labour and social affairs ministry has called on both the public and private sectors to hire Bahraini nationals in place of foreign employees, they said, contacted by telephone from Nicosia, reports AFP.

British Airways starts int'l fare sale

NEW YORK, Jan 6: British Airways on Thursday started an off-season air fare sale on flights from the United States to London and beyond, says AP.

The fares, which discount New York-London round trips 12 per cent to 298 dollars, are subject to government approvals.

Tickets must be bought by January 18 for trips between January 15 and March 24. Other restrictions include seven day advance purchases and a Saturday night stay. Trips to the Middle East, Far East or Africa require a seven-day stay.

While British Airways started the sale, other airlines typically match competitors' fares.

Discounts in the sale reach as high as 62 per cent with a New York-Nairobi round trip selling for 934 dollars.

Asian stock markets close lower

HONG KONG, Jan 6: Asian stock markets closed mostly lower Friday, with share prices tumbling in Hong Kong because of worries about the slumping local property market, reports AP.

The Hang Seng Index, the Hong Kong market's key indicator of blue chips, fell 235.13 points, or 3.0 per cent, closing at 7,683.25. On Thursday, the index gained 31 points.

Brokers attributed the tumble to reports that major Hong Kong developers have cut residential property prices because of the slump in the property market.

They said investors were selling property shares on fears of a further slump.

In Tokyo, share prices closed lower for the third straight day.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average shed 96.65 points, or

0.49 per cent, closing at 19,519.46. On Thursday, the index fell 67.93 points, or 0.35 per cent. The Nikkei lost 39.02 points on Wednesday, the first trading day of the year.

The Tokyo Stock Price Index of all issues listed on the first section fell 11.71 points, or 0.76 per cent, to 1,535.64. The TOPIX lost 5.99 points, or 0.39 per cent, the day before.

WELLINGTON: New Zealand share prices closed little changed in quiet trading. The NZSE 40 capital index rose 2.10 points to 1,903.53.

TAIPEI: Share prices closed lower for the second straight day because of continued profit-taking. The market's Weighted Index fell 132.18 points, or 1.9 per cent, to 6,919.31.

MANILA: Share prices

closed higher after two straight days of declines. The Philippines' unified composite index of 43 selected issues rose 26.65 points to 2,756.22.

SEOUL: Share prices closed lower for the fourth consecutive session in relatively active trading. The Korea Composite Stock Price Index fell 0.74 points to 975.32.

SYDNEY: Australian share prices closed lower in directionless trading, with gold stocks dampening sentiment by continuing their recent declines. The All Ordinaries Index fell 1.8 points to 1,867.7.

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian share prices closed lower on profit-taking. The KLSE Composite Index fell 10.46 points to 955.43.

SINGAPORE: Share prices closed lower in reaction to the slumping Hong Kong stock market as well as concerns over interest rates. The 30-share Straits Times Industrials Index fell 22.31 points to 2,209.37.

BANGKOK: Thai share prices closed lower in thin trading. The Stock Exchange of Thailand index fell 10.75 points to 1,363.10.

JAKARTA: The stock exchange's Composite Index rose 3.402 points, closing at 481,222.

Tight world rice market likely in '95: FAO

BANGKOK, Jan 6: A volatile international rice market is likely to tighten further as China, which has seen its agricultural output shrink, buys into reduced world export reserves of 14.9 million tons — about 700 thousand tons short of actual needs, says a press release.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) sketched out this preliminary forecast at the 37th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Rice.

FAO's Chan Ling Yap, a petite scientist from Malaysia, cautioned rice traders eager for a windfall: International rice prices in 1995 may not strengthen to the extent such a deficit usually brings.

Next year, the rice buyers are likely to be: China and Indonesia, and to a lesser extent, Bangladesh, the United Nations officer pointed out. Unlike affluent Japan, which bought heavily this year, these three have financial constraints. In addition, Beijing, Jakarta and Dhaka may patch up some of the 1994 crop damage, by expanded plantings.

"All three grow more than one rice crop," the UN agency pointed out. This is unlike Japan where only one paddy crop is grown. Therefore, any shortfalls must be met through imports.

FAO recalled 1994 has been an exceptional year for the world rice economy.

Global rice trade rose to record levels. "The increase was mainly in the Far East — a result of exceptionally large purchases of rice by Japan: This was to meet a domestic shortage caused by the failure of its 1993 paddy crop. In 1994, Japan accounted for 45 per cent of the region's total imports," FAO reports.

Indonesia and China made substantial purchases to stave off damage inflicted on their rice crops. This reversed the hard-worked-for self-sufficiency status achieved by Jakarta and Beijing in 1993.

Exports from Thailand and the United States, the two largest rice exporters suffered setbacks. Together, those two countries account for almost half of the world export trade. High US prices dampened sales. Thai shipments declined. "Decline in global rice stocks would be the fourth in successive years," FAO said.

As the curtains drop on 1994, international rice prices remain volatile.

The heaviest draw-down on rice stocks will be in China. Production there is not likely to keep pace with the projected increase in demand. "This decline in global rice stocks would be the fourth in successive years," FAO said.

At the October FAO Regional Conference in Manila, Regional Representative AZM Obaidullah Khan cautioned: If a nation of 1.2 billion rice consumers like China turns to the world cereal market for imports prices everywhere will be affected. China's agriculture is, therefore, of concern worldwide.

Global rice consumption, for the moment, is expected to remain virtually stagnant. "In many countries, especially in the Far East, per capita consumption will most likely decline." Where reduction is a result of scarcity or a tightening of supplies, domestic prices for rice will continue to rise.

FAO said strength of the international market is likely to be confined to trade in long grain indica rice.

In contrast, prices for medium grain rice may weaken substantially. Japan had an exceptionally large increase (50 per cent) in its 1994 paddy harvest. Tokyo is likely to keep its purchases to 0.4 million tons. This is what Japan is committed to make under the GATT Agreement.

Supplies of medium grain rice have increased. The US boosted its 1994 production of medium grain rice by 0.3 million tons (18 per cent) to nearly 2 million tons (milled). Australia's 1995 paddy production (almost all of which is medium grain) is forecast to rise slightly.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Facilities Department, Ministry of Education, Tangail Zone, Tangail Re-Tender Notice

Re-Tender Notice No: 04/ADB/FD/TZ/94-95, Date: 26-12-94

Sealed tenders are hereby invited in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 from the enlisted Contractors/Firms of Facilities Department of category A-1 & A-2 for construction of one multipurpose science laboratory and two class rooms at selected non-govt high school under Secondary Education Development Project assisted by ADB.

GROUP NO	NAME OF DIST	NAME OF THANA	NAME OF INSTITUTE
126	TANGAIL	BHUAPUR	MOBARAK MAHMOOD HIGH SCHOOL
127	"	MA	MATIKATA HIGH SCHOOL
128	"	SADAR	BAGHIL K K HIGH SCHOOL
129	"	"	TANGAIL GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
130	"	GOPALPUR	NANDANPUR R.R. GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
131	"	GHATAIL	CHAITHA TRA HIGH SCHOOL
132	"	"	GHATAIL S.E. GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
133	"	DELDAUR	ATIA UNION DARSHA GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
134	"	DELDAUR	DR. ALIM-AL-RAJJI GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
135	"	NAGARPUR	N. BORHANUDDIN HIGH SCHOOL
136	"	"	ARRA KUMED HIGH SCHOOL
137	"	MIRJAPUR	KUNEE JALAL UDDIN HIGH SCHOOL

GROUP NO	NAME OF DIST	NAME OF THANA	NAME OF INSTITUTE
138	JAMALPUR	SHARISHABARI	SHARISHABARI GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
139	"	"	KUTIRHAT HIGH SCHOOL
140	"	"	PINGNA GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
141	"	SADAR	BANARER PARA JAINAB WAHED GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
142	"	SADAR	IQBALPUR GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

GROUP NO	NAME OF DIST	NAME OF THANA	NAME OF INSTITUTE
143	SHERPUR	SREEBORDI	RANI SHIMUL GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
144	"	"	VATPUR HIGH SCHOOL
145	"	NALITABARI	ANDAR PARA HIGH SCHOOL

- Last date & time for purchase of tender : Up to office hour on 15/01/95, documents.
- Last date & time for submission of tender : Up to 12.00 Noon on 17-01-95, documents.
- Date & time for opening of the tender : Up to 12.30 PM on 17-01-95, documents in presence of the tenderers if there be any.
- Sales of tender documents: Tender documents may be purchase from the office of the Executive Engineer, Facilities Department, Tangail/Mymensingh/Dhaka/Narayanganj/Faridpur Zones & undersigned also from office of the Assistant Engineer, Facilities Department, Tangail/Jamalpur/Sherpur District on all working days during office hours on each payment (Non-refundable) of Tk 400/- (Four hundred) only for each set of tender documents against each group of work.
- Estimated cost : 7,81,669/- (For each Group).
- Earnest money : 16,000/- (For each Group).

Each tender must be accompany a Bank Draft/Pay Order from any scheduled Bank of Bangladesh for the amount as mentioned against respective work as earnest money in favour of the EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, FACILITIES DEPARTMENT, TANGAIL ZONE, TANGAIL.

- Completion time : 90 (Ninty) days.
- Drawing and other relevant paper from the concerned office on all working days during office hours.
- Instruction:**
 - Insertion of any additional clause in the tender by the tenderer will render his tender to summary rejection.
 - The tender will quoted on percentage basis for Part-I and will quoted item-wise rate both in figure and in words in Part-II supported by rate analysis in separate sheet. The sum total of Part-I and Part-II will considered as tendered amount.
 - All other terms & conditions laid on schedule.
 - The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Executive Engineer
Facilities Department
Tangail Zone.

Lanka won't raise income tax

COLOMBO, Jan 6: The government will not raise income tax to battle its budget deficit, but a truce with Tamil guerrillas will yield big savings, President Chandrika Kumaratunga said Friday, reports AP.

"There will be no increase in taxation on corporate and personal incomes, wealth or capital gains, and no stamp duties on share transactions," she told Parliament in her first policy statement since her election.

Instead, the government would cut spending except in education, health, vocational training, environmental protection, and rural infrastructure, she said.

She also did not rule out increases in indirect taxes.

Mrs Kumaratunga's message was intended to reassure the business community that her

leftist coalition would not reverse the pro-market policies of the previous government that she defeated in November.

Announcing a truce with Tamil Tiger guerrillas starting Sunday, Mrs Kumaratunga said about two per cent of the gross domestic product would be saved.

"The conflict absorbs a quarter of our national savings. The indirect costs are much higher," she said of the 11-year ethnic war that has claimed more than 34,000 lives.

The government aims to reduce the deficit to less than four per cent of the GDP by the year 2000. The deficit was 10 per cent in 1994, up from eight per cent in 1993.

"The government has taken steps to eliminate wasteful expenditure," she said.

Mohammad Mohsin (L), Director of Exhibition of Pakistan Export Promotion Bureau, addressing a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Minister (Press) of Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka Mohammad Hossain Malik is also seen. — Star photo

Exchange Rates

Following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates, to public for some selected foreign currencies effective as on January 6, 1995. (Figures in Taka)

Currency	Selling		Buying	
	TT & OD	HC	TT Clean	OD Slight Transfer
US Dollar	40.37	40.40	40.10	40.01
JPY	63.41	63.46	62.01	61.88
DM	26.19	26.21	25.49	25.43
FF Franc	7.61	7.61	7.40	7.39
C Dollar	29.16	29.18	28.37	28.31
S Franc	31.16	31.18	30.31	30.24
Jap Yen	0.41	0.41	0.39	0.39
IR\$	1.29	1.30	1.27	1.25
Pak Rupee	1.31	1.32	1.29	1.27
Jordan Ryal	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
A) T T (DOC) US Dollar Spot Buying Tk	40.0512			
B) Usance Balc.				
30 Days	60 Days	90 Days	120 Days	180 Days
39.7447	39.4607	39.1767	38.8927	38.3247
C) US Dollar sight bill 3 months forward purchase Tk	40.0100			
D) US Dollar sight bill 3 months forward sale Tk	40.6045			
Currency	Selling		Buying	
	TT & OD	HC	TT Clean	OD Slight Transfer
S Riyal	10.77	10.77	10.63	10.63
UAE Dirham	10.99	10.99	10.85	10.85
Kuwaiti Dinar	134.81	134.81	132.92	132.92
D Gulfidrs	23.13	23.13	22.34	22.34
S Krona	5.41	5.41	5.34	5.34
Malaysian Ringgit	15.83	15.83	15.63	15.63
Singapore Dollar	27.79	27.79	27.43	27.43