

Dubai expects 10.5pc rise in non-oil trade
DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Feb 15: The Gulf emirate of Dubai, dubbed the Hong Kong of the Middle East, expects its non-oil trade to hit a record in 1995 due to a business upturn in the Gulf, reports AFP.
Trade is projected to rise by 10.5 per cent to 80.37 billion dirhams (21.89 billion dollars) this year from 72.73 billion dirhams (19.81 billion dollars) in 1994, the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry said on Tuesday.
Imports will grow by 11 per cent to 64.24 billion dirhams (17.50 billion dollars) from 57.89 billion dirhams (15.77 billion dollars) and exports by 10 per cent to 4.37 billion dirhams (1.19 billion dollars) from 3.97 billion dirhams (1.08 billion dollars), the chamber said in a study.
Re-exports are forecast to increase by 8.2 per cent to 11.75 billion dirhams (3.20 billion dollars) from 10.86 billion dirhams (2.95 billion dollars).
This year will be a record year for trade due to an economic upturn in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other Gulf countries," a chamber official told AFP. "Another factor is the opening of new markets for our exports and re-exports, including East Europe and former-Soviet Union."
Dubai is the main trans-shipment centre in the region, handling more than one fifth of the non-oil trade of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

UK firms need to develop production techniques
LONDON, Feb 15: British industry needs to overhaul production techniques and management practices to withstand growing competitive pressure from the far east," a report by leading academics and industrialists said on Monday, reports Reuter.
The report, from the British-based foundation for marketing and industry, said British firms must develop a more efficient and flexible strategy to allow them to react quickly to changing trends and produce the right product for consumers.
"British companies are far worse than their international competitors at taking a long-term view of their manufacturing strategy," the report said.
The report, part of an action programme to develop long-term competitive strategies and best practices, found Britain trailing on a number of counts.
Far Eastern workers are as productive as European ones and work the equivalent of two months extra per year, but at a labour cost a third lower than Europeans, the report said.

Seminar ends 'Africa can learn for East Asia'
PARIS, Feb 15: Talks among aid officials and African countries ended on Tuesday with foreign officials concluding that liberal economies, drawing on lessons of the East Asian business boom, were the 'best' cure for poverty, reports Reuter.
At the end of a two-day seminar, Haruhiko Kuroda, a senior Japanese finance ministry official, reported consensus that development should focus on basic infrastructure, health and education, while African governments should strike to foster private enterprise.
"The highly successful experience of the East Asia economies over the past 20 years — founded on outward-oriented, market-based policies — suggests that the rest of the world, Africa included, may have something to learn," Kuroda said.
Jack Boorman, an International Monetary Fund official who chaired the seminar jointly with Kuroda, told a news conference: "We think there's a great deal in the Asian experience that can be utilised."

Clinton's advisers see increasing emphasis on new trade areas
WASHINGTON, Feb 15: The Clinton administration wants to take aim at the practices of private firms that inhibit sales of US goods in foreign markets, according to President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA), says USIS.
In its annual report, released February 13, the CEA also cited as future trade agenda items investment, labour standards, environment and services. Though much of the report concentrates on domestic US policies, a 51-page section lauds trade reforms negotiated in the Uruguay Round and in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and outlines what the administration sees as the new issues for trade negotiations.
It says that as tariffs and other formal trade barriers have fallen in recent years, market access continues to be an issue, which the report attributes, in part, to certain practices of private firms outside the jurisdiction of global trade rules.
These practices, may include control over distribution channels, exclusive sales arrangements, rebates on sales, close affiliations among firms within corporate groups or refusals to deal, all effectively impeding entry.
In Japan, it says, "control over distribution channels, group affiliations, or share crossholdings, make it difficult for foreign firms to sell or invest in Japan. The fact that the barriers vary from industry to industry, and are often opaque, means that negotiations are extremely detailed, sector-specific, and time-consuming." CEA said that to the extent that restrictions in home markets keep out imports and create monopoly power, they create conditions for firms to "dump" — sell at below a fair market price — goods in foreign markets.
"Collusion among domestic producers in the home market to maintain prices in the face of declining demand, perhaps under the auspices of an officially sponsored recession cartel, can result in venting of surplus production in foreign markets, increasing the instability and operating risks in markets that are open," the report says.
The report says that administration efforts to address competition policy will focus on trying to expand consultation and cooperation among countries on antitrust issues. It also says the Clinton administration is preparing to negotiate antitrust mutual assistance agreements that would provide a framework for joint prosecution of international cartels.
The CEA also notes that it is still calling for a June 1995 launch of negotiations within the 25-member Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to establish a multilateral investment accord.
Under this agreement, the report says, the United States would seek removal of existing barriers to investment in all OECD countries.
"The report cites the close link between trade and investment: roughly 60 per cent of US exports are sold by US firms that have operations abroad, and nearly 20 per cent of dollar sales by US companies abroad is earned by American sales affiliates or wholesaling companies that have established local facilities to sell US exports."
The report says that the Clinton administration will push for international recognition of core labour standards — freedom of association, right to organize and bargain collectively, freedom from forced labour, and minimum age for the employment of children — under US trade laws and within a multilateral trade framework.
Many Republican members of Congress have already said they will oppose any link between labour standards and trade should the administration try to enhance its negotiating powers when seeking fast-track negotiating authority either later this year or next.
The report also says that it expects the new World Trade

Good demand marks tea sale in Ctg
CHITTAGONG, Feb 15: The weekly tea sale held here on Tuesday was marked by good demand for different grades of teas and their stable prices, market sources said, reports BSS.
Poland, Jordan and other out-markets operated for large and bold brokers with some support from Pakistan mainly for fannings.
Internal buyers including major packers were fairly active, specially for good liquoring brokens and fannings.
Large and bold brokens were readily absorbed at a drop of Tk one per kg. Medium brokens were similarly easier but the small grainy types were about steady and occasionally slightly dearer following quality. A small quantity of popular types sold well between Tk 48/ and 52.10 per kg.
Fannings continued to meet with a good demand but generally eased slightly except for the few clean liquoring types which were firm to occasionally dearer. A small weight of popular types were slightly lower selling between Tk 45.50 and Tk 53 per kg.
Fifty chests of green tea were on offer which were readily sold at Tk 39.20 per kg.
A total of 3,300 chests of dust on offer met with a strong demand at firm to slightly dearer rates. Well made good liquoring teas attracted more competition and sold at dearer rates. Others also sold well at around last levels following quality.
Internal buyers lent good support with little interest from export buyers.
There were 14,869 chests of teas on offer.

Indonesian textile millers refused to be exempt from wage increases
JAKARTA, Feb 15: Indonesian textile manufacturers have been told to move their factories to cheaper provinces if they cannot afford government imposed pay rises for workers, press reports said yesterday, reports AFP.
Minister for Manpower Abdul Latief refused a request from West Java textile and garment manufacturers to exempt them from minimum wage increases in their area set for April 1, the Jakarta Post Daily reported.
The minimum daily wage will rise from 3,800 rupiah (1.72 dollars) to 4,600 rupiah (2.09 dollars).
Latief suggested the textile factory owners move their plants to central and east Java, where the minimum wages will be 3,000 rupiah and 3,700 rupiah respectively, the newspaper reported.
"The regulations for the minimum wage are regional, not sectoral," Latief was quoted as saying by the Jakarta Daily.
More than 70 garment and textile companies in West Java are threatened with bankruptcy because of the rise in the minimum wage, according to Bambang Yoa Soegomo, Chairman of the Association of Indonesian Textile Enterprises.
A slump in exports last year hurt many textile factories, he said.
Shoemakers are also experiencing a crisis, said Anton Supit, Co-Chairman of the Indonesian Shoemakers Association.
The Indonesian government decided in November to increase the government set minimum daily wage standard throughout the country except for Batam Island.
The government said the current minimum wage was enough to meet 95 to 99 per cent of basic physical needs of a single unmarried worker and the increase was expected to meet 100 to 105 per cent of physical needs.



IOM DG meets four ministers
The visiting Director General of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) spent a busy day here yesterday, meeting four ministers and discussing with them all matters related to migration as well as cooperation between his organisation and Bangladesh, reports BSS.
He met Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali and Food Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.
Purcell discussed with them the migration of Bangladesh labour force, their problems and possibilities of further cooperation between this country and the IOM.
The International Organisation of Migration rendered valuable assistance to Bangladesh in the aftermath of the Gulf War when it organised repatriation of the stranded Bangladeshis from Kuwait and Iraq.
The organisation is also involved in several projects here including imparting necessary training like language skills to the nurses for suitable jobs abroad.
The IOM Director General arrived here on Tuesday on a three-day visit.
He expressed willingness to the ministers he met about exploring new areas for cooperation with Bangladesh, which is a member of the Geneva-based organisation.

BIBM workshop on 'rehabilitation of projects' ends
A four-day workshop on 'rehabilitation of non-performing projects', conducted by Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), concluded yesterday, says a press release.
The workshop aimed at identifying the symptoms and causes of non-performing projects and suggesting measures for rehabilitation of sick projects.
Bank executives participated in the course.
AHM Nurul Islam Choudhury, Director General, BIBM, presided over the concluding session of the workshop.
Choudhury in his speech underscored the importance of early rehabilitation of non-performing projects for economic growth.

Moderate economic growth predicted in China this yr
SHANGHAI, Feb 15: China's economic growth will moderate this year to about nine per cent, while inflation should show a marked decline to an annual rate of 17.5 per cent, Merrill Lynch has forecast, reports AFP.
"If the next budget due in March proves to be a hard-headed one, it could further moderate economic growth and inflation," the US brokerage house said in its February Asian economic commentary.
It said that after three consecutive years of double digit growth rates, China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) would fall to between nine and 9.5 per cent, down from 11.8 per cent in 1994.
Without unwarranted monetary and fiscal relaxation, inflation should decline significantly in the second half of 1995 to register an annual rate of 17.5 per cent, down from last year's 21.7 per cent.
Merrill Lynch's GDP forecast was in line with the Chinese official forecast, while its inflation estimate was 2.5 per cent above Beijing's prediction.
Many foreign economists doubt the government will come anywhere near achieving either of its targets, citing the present situation as well as precedent. GDP last year overshoot official estimates by nearly three per cent while inflation was more than double the target.
The Merrill Lynch report said sustained export growth should keep the trade and current accounts in marginal surplus, but added that the slowing growth of foreign capital inflows might limit the build-up of foreign exchange reserves to five to six billion dollars this year.
It predicted that the Chinese currency, which has strengthened slightly over the past year to \$41 yuan to the dollar, would be supported at its current trading range for the next three to six months.
Without any further deval-

KLM briefing travel agents on products
One hundred travel agents of Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet are being briefed by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines on its products including the Flying Dutchman programme of frequent fliers of KLM, says a press release.
The briefings for 60 agents of Dhaka were held in four batches on February 11, 12, 14 and 15 at the KLM office here while briefings for travel agents of Chittagong will be held on February 18 and for travel agents of Sylhet on February 22.
The travel agents are being told to request passengers to report to the Zia International Airport by 6-30 am as its 'jumbos' can accommodate over 400 passengers and their check-in has to be completed by 8-15 am when the KLM counters are closed. Because of the large number of passengers KLM will install computerised check-in system soon.
The travel agents were asked to examine travel documents carefully, so that no ticket is issued against forged ones. This will help avoid harassment of bonafide passengers at the airport. Staff fines are imposed on airlines flying deportees, they were informed.
The travel agents were also informed of the World Business Class product jointly developed with Northwest Airlines, the third largest carrier in US in which KLM has 25 per cent stake. World Business Class offers advance seat reservations of the passengers' choice, new comfortable seats, three-course meal, personal video set, fresh blankets. KLM/NW business lounges and complimentary snacks in these lounges.

ITT to sell another part of services for \$1.8b
NEW YORK, Feb 15: ITT Corp, the insurance and manufacturing conglomerate that has been expanding aggressively into entertainment, has agreed to sell another part of its financial services business for 1.8 billion dollars, reports AP.
General Electric Capital Corp signed a preliminary agreement to buy ITT's equipment finance, small business finance and commercial real estate services businesses, ITT said Tuesday. GE Capital is based in Stamford, Connecticut.
The deal follows ITT's announcement in late December that it had signed separate agreements to sell its consumer and commercial finance businesses to two banking companies, Norwest Corp. and the US arm of Germany's Deutsche Bank AG, for a combined 3.7 billion dollars.
Unloading from 3 ships begins at Ctg Port
Unloading from three ships carrying 63,500 tonnes of foodgrains has started at the Chittagong Port, an official press release said here Monday night, reports BSS.
The ships, M V Montis carrying 13,000 metric tonnes of rice and two others M V Superlatas and M V Fedorovsk carrying 50,500 metric tonnes of wheat, earlier berthed at the port, it said.
Officials said that the foodgrains would reduce and stabilise rice price in the market.

Move to stop Hollywood's advance on Euro movie France won't give up fight to tighten quota system
BORDEAUX, France, Feb 15: France bucked its European partners Tuesday, refusing to back down in its fight to tighten a quota system designed to stop Hollywood's advance on the European movie and TV industries, reports AP.
Culture ministers from the European Union closed their informal two-day meeting agreeing that the audiovisual sector needed special help to compete with Hollywood.
"But after a heated debate France was all but isolated in its bid to strengthen a quota system viewed by most other nations as insufficient, ineffective or undemocratic."
Quotas are essential for the existence and the identity of Europe," French Culture Minister Jacques Toubon said at a final news conference.
"He expressed confidence he could convince other EU nations to change their minds. "Those who are cold will become more ardent," Toubon said. "Those who are idealistic will become more realistic."
France, which last month took over the EU's rotating six-month presidency, has made strengthening the quota

France won't give up fight to tighten quota system (continued from page 4)
system a priority of its tenure.
But Swedish Culture Minister Margot Wallstrom told the Swedish news agency TT that the quota issue was virtually dead.
"It will be very, very difficult for the French to pass any quotas after this meeting," she said.
Toubon said Monday that France would "go to the end" to get its way. He stuck to that statement Tuesday.
The EU's audiovisual commissioner, Marzelino Oreja, said all 15 nations agreed the 1989 directive on quotas needs revisions but remained divided over how to revise it.
"He said he hoped to present a new text to the full commission before the end of March that could be voted on by the Council of Culture Ministers at their April 3 meeting in Luxembourg."
The scenario appeared overly optimistic to some EU commissioners are divided among themselves over the issue.
Toubon on Monday envisioned an extraordinary meeting of the Council in June.
Oreja said that some coun-

tries would like to do away with the quota system, while others want to phase it out, clean it up or make larger revisions.
The current directive calls on all EU nations to carry a majority 51 per cent of made-in-Europe productions. But the directive is non-binding and enforced to varying degrees.
Toubon said some countries backed his bid to put teeth in the system but it was not known which they may be.
"There is a clear majority against tightening the quota system, Britain's culture minister, Stephen Dorrell, said at the close of a three-hour meeting on the issue. Asked if France had any explicit support, he replied: "None."
Britain, Germany and Denmark were among nations opposing the system.
"We find it in a certain way undemocratic," said Per Voetmann, Denmark's EU cultural counselor. "And we see no proof of a benefit so far."
Up to 60 per cent of broadcast time on EU TV is currently non-European.

Clinton's advisers see increasing emphasis on new trade areas (continued from page 4)
Organization (WTO) to make progress this year in addressing key issues related to trade and the environment, such as whether countries may use their trade policies in a way that discriminates between products on the basis of the processes and production methods used, the circumstances under which countries may use trade measures to protect the environment, and the relationship of the WTO to international environmental agreements.
In the near term, CEA says that much of the trade agenda over the next several years will be devoted to completing four sectoral trade negotiations in financial services, basic telecommunications, audiovisual services and maritime transport services.
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