

## China's textile mills closed for cotton shortage

BEIJING, May 7: Most of China's large and medium-sized state textile mills are closed or working half-time because of a worsening shortage of cotton, an official newspaper seen in Beijing today said, reports Reuter.

All the mills in Yantai in Shandong province, a major cotton producer, have closed, as have one third of those in Jinan, the provincial capital, the China Market Economic News reported.

Shortages are also serious in Henan province and the three northeast provinces, it said.

In 1994, China's cotton harvest was 4.25 million tonnes, up 13.6 per cent on 1993, official figures show.

But as of the end of March the state had purchased only 2.9 million tonnes of this, with farmers and local areas retaining the precious material to use in local factories or sell later at higher prices, the newspaper said.

As a result, prices for one tonne of high-grade cotton are at least 17,000 yuan (2,024 dollars), against and officially set ceiling of 14,000 yuan (1,667 dollars), with many instances of low grades being sold as high grades, it said.

It said 40 major mills in Henan recently made a protest to the provincial government, saying that they could no longer tolerate excess prices and sales of illegally graded material.

The shortage has made China a major importer. In the first quarter of 1995, imports of cotton were 220,000 tonnes, up from 10,000 in the same 1994 period, customs figures show.

**DPKR's foreign trade falls in 94**

SEOUL, May 7: North Korea's trade with foreign countries fell last year as the isolated communist country confronted the world over its suspected nuclear weapons programme, a senior South Korean official said, reports Reuter.

Yoo Chong-ha, a senior Secretary to President Kim Young-Sam on Foreign and Security Affairs, said in a weekend report to Kim that the North's trade with the outside world totalled 1.8 billion US dollars last year, a presidential spokesman said.

In 1993 North Korea's foreign trade stood at 2.64 billion US dollars according to figures from South Korea's Central Bank.

Yoo said the North's trade volume, which has fallen since 1988, was smaller last year than in 1978 when it was just over two billion US dollars.

The fall is due to a reduction in its trade with Russia and China, he added. China, North Korea's last remaining ally, and Russia have increasingly pressed North Korea to settle trade in hard currency, cutting back barter trade.

In 1994, Washington and its allies threatened sanctions against North Korea over its refusal to allow outside inspection of its nuclear facilities. The North said such sanctions would be tantamount to war.

The crisis was defused when the United States and North Korea reached a landmark deal last October.

## White House set to consider sanctions against Japan

SHILLER, British Columbia, May 7: The White House was set to consider sanctions against Japan after negotiations on cars and car parts broke down in conflict, reports Reuter.

Japanese and US negotiators meeting at this mountain ski resort failed to reach an agreement on opening up the Japanese market more to foreign suppliers, despite a threat on Thursday from President Bill Clinton to impose sanctions.

The Japanese government adopted a rigid ideological stance that appeared bent on failure, US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor told a news conference.

"It is regrettable," Japanese Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto told a separate news conference. "The US insistence on voluntary plans has remained as an insurmountable stumbling block to a negoti-

ated agreement."

The concept of "voluntary" Japanese of foreign parts to go into new cars was one component of the US drive to try to correct a 37 billion dollar American trade deficit in the automotive sector.

We would welcome a review by the two of Japanese practices," Kantor said, adding it would be good for the world to understand the situation.

The talks overshadowed a trade meeting that included Canada and the European Union, both have expressed concern with anything that might smack of managed trade, but both would also like the Japanese market to be deregulated and opened up.

It seemed unlikely the two sides would come together soon. Hashimoto expressed a willingness to continue negotiations, but only if Washington would drop the voluntary plan idea.

As for Kantor, he said of continuing negotiations: that's up to the Japanese government. They have my phone number."



Representatives of twenty top travel agents from Bangladesh left Dhaka on May 4 on a five-day educational tour of Amsterdam at the invitation of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. Members of the team are seen at the ZIA International Airport before their departure with Cees Ursem, General Manager of KLM Bangladesh.

## India reviewing power project contract with US investors

NEW DELHI, May 7: In a test case closely watched by international investors, local authorities have begun reviewing a contract for massive power project criticized as too secretive, too expensive, and possibly corrupt, reports AP.

Bulldozers and more than 4,000 labourers already have begun to clear a hilltop site on the wild coast overlooking the Arabian Sea in Maharashtra, India's most industrialized state.

Going up is a 695-megawatt gas-fired station for the Dabhol Power Co. formed by Enron and its junior partners, Bechtel Enterprises Ltd. and the General Electric Capital Corp.

But the state government says if wrongdoing is uncovered, it's not too late to cancel the deal — the largest foreign

investment ever made in India — even if it had to pay a \$100 million penalty.

Gopinath Munde, the new Maharashtra power minister, said after Wednesday's meeting that his committee has collected documents regarding the negotiations and will hear Enron officials and political leaders.

Implying an investigation into possible graft, Munde said it also will scrutinize travel expenses in the United States of officials from the state electricity board, which will buy the power.

The project took 2 1/2 years to negotiate with Houston-based Enron and to work out the financing and Indian government guarantees. Controversy from the start, it went through nine court cases and innumerable public debates.

Then it became a campaign issue in the state election last March. A coalition of right-wing parties, opposing the deal, ousted the long-entrenched Congress Party government in Maharashtra. Mindful of India's heritage of socialism and self-reliance, the winning alliance of the Shiv Sena and the Bharatiya Janata Party announced it will give preference to Indian companies over outsiders whenever possible in awarding contracts.

US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin was concerned enough about the cancellation threat to raise the issue in talks in New Delhi and Bombay last month.

The sources also said that Indian rice is in demand in overseas markets, including Bangladesh and West Asia due to crop failures in Indonesia, Thailand and Australia.

## Delhi plans to export 4.5m tons of foodgrain

NEW DELHI, May 7: The Indian government plans to export 4.5 million tons of foodgrain — 2.5 million tons of rice and 2 million tons of wheat — to earn 25 billion rupees (806 million US dollars) in foreign exchange this year, says Xinhua.

According to official trade sources here, the reasons for exports are both internal and external. Food Corporation of India godowns are overflowing with 17 million tons of wheat, so room has to be made for fresh foodgrain.

And Indian wheat has become price competitive as the US and the European Union have begun cutting export subsidies, they said.

The sources also said that Indian rice is in demand in overseas markets, including Bangladesh and West Asia due to crop failures in Indonesia, Thailand and Australia.

## Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer Civil Division-III, Kurmitola, Dhaka

## Re-Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the enlisted B-Class and above (Civil) Contractors of CAAB for the work: Annual repair and maintenance works services at Jessore Airport during the year 1994-95 (SH-Renewing the painting of centre line and threshold marking of Runway). Tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 1200 Noon on 16.5.1995 and opened on the same date at 1230 PM in presence of the contractors, if any. Tender documents can be had on all working days during office hours from the office of the Superintending Engineer, P&D/QS Circle, Cash Section, CAAB HQ and the undersigned on cash payment of Tk. 250/- only (Non-refundable). Earnest money @ 2.50% of total quoted amount to be deposited along with the tender in the shape of Bank Draft/Pay Order from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of the Executive Engineer, Civil Division-III, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka. Intending tenderer shall have to attach attested photocopy of VAT registration and Income tax payment certificate along with the application for purchase of tender paper. No tender form will be sold on the date fixed for opening of the tenders. Other terms and conditions may be seen from the office of the undersigned. The Authority reserves the right to accept/reject part/whole of the tenders without assigning any reason and is not bound to accept the lowest tender.

Executive Engineer

Civil Division-3, CAAB, Dhaka.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Directorate of Women's Affairs  
373 Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka.

Memo No. DWA/ATPCRW/Feed/2/94-95/6410/95 Dt. 29.4.95

## Tender Notice

Various ingredients of poultry feed & paddy husk will be purchased for "Agro-based Training & Production Centre for Rural Women" at Zirani, Gazipur under the Directorate of Women's Affairs. For this, sealed tenders are invited from intending bona fide suppliers/traders/contractors. Tender schedule with detailed description, other information and terms & conditions will be available against cash payment of Tk. 400/- (four hundred) only (non-refundable) from head office (Room No. 391) & local office up to 15.05.95. Tenders will be received in the tender box at head office & local office up to 12.00 Noon of 16.05.95. The received tenders will be opened on the same day at 1:30 pm by the tender committee at the head office. The authority reserves the right to accept/reject part/whole of the tenders without assigning any reason and is not bound to accept the lowest tender.

Director (Acting)

Directorate of Women's Affairs

Dhaka.

## China to import 20m MT of wheat per year

BEIJING, May 7: China will import about 20 million tonnes of wheat a year in the first two decades of the next century, up from an actual 7.18 million in 1994, a foreign trade official was quoted as saying today, reports Reuter.

Exports of corn will grow in the short and medium term but will gradually end

tonnes of corn and 1.52 million tonnes of rice.

China must primarily rely on itself to satisfy its huge domestic demand for grain, Qiu said.

The projects, arranged by the central authority and financed by both the state and other provinces are estimated to cost to 2.38 billion yuan, according to local officials.

The projects cover agriculture, forestry, irrigation, transport, telecommunications, industry, education, health care, television services and urban construction.

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