

Iran restores balance of payments thru' drastic cut in imports

TEHRAN, Aug 26: Iran, facing a foreign debt of around 35 billion dollars, has managed to restore its balance of payments at the expense of a drastic cut in imports, reports AFP.

After a three-year deficit, the balance of payments registered a surplus of 3.3 billion dollars from the year up to March 1995, according to official figures published this week.

The surplus has allowed the country to pay back part of its foreign commitments and recover from a state of semi-insolvency in the past two years, central bank Governor Mohsen Nurbakhsh said.

The government has also used the surplus to replenish its hard currency reserves, raising it from 3.2 billion dollars to 4.4 billion dollars in one year, according to central bank figures provided to foreign economic experts in Iran.

Nurbakhsh said his country had exported goods worth 19.1 billion dollars last year, including 14.6 billion dollars in oil and gas sales, while imports stood at 12.7 billion dollars.

Immediate lifting of UN ban on Iraq unlikely

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 26: The Security Council is far from lifting sanctions against Iraq despite Baghdad's disclosures about its secret weapons programmes, including a plan to produce a nuclear weapon by April 1991, the US Ambassador said Friday, reports AFP.

US Ambassador Madeleine Albright said the latest revelations by Iraq said more about its credibility and the threat it poses than about the possibility of lifting sanctions. She made the remark after a meeting of the UN Security Council.



A week-long Mexican food festival began at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. It will continue at the Cafe Bazaar till September 1 from 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm every day at dinner time. The cuisine of Mexico, like all other great cuisines, has always been open to outside influences. —Star photo

grim for Iranian industry," said a European expert.

Echoing the concerns of Iranian industrialists, parliament urged the central bank last month to ease restrictions on industrial imports. Deputies also warned President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani that the situation could hamper efforts to achieve economic prosperity.

Six months before the parliamentary elections, a debate has unfolded within the political establishment as to whether to continue to economize at any price to pay back the country's debts.

Industrialists have argued that sluggish production in Iran could risk further blows to the economy and cause social and political unrest.

Despite the austerity programme and numerous sacrifices, prospects for a financial recovery remain sombre. Starting in 1996, the

country has four years to pay back some 12 billion dollars in back payments on its debt to main trade partners.

Move to stem abuse of garment workers in US

WASHINGTON, Aug 26: Labour Secretary Robert B Reich has invited major retailers to a New York City summit meeting designed to stem abuse of garment workers labouring under sweatshop conditions, reports AP.

The announcement Friday followed a raid earlier this week in Los Angeles that turned up evidence of immigrants paying off passage to the United States by working in sweatshoplike conditions to make clothing for big-name stores.

It was the second such raid in less than a month.

Clinton admn criticised on dispute settlement system

WASHINGTON, Aug 26: A bi-partisan group of senators, including Majority Leader Bob Dole, is criticizing the Clinton administration for agreeing to a system for settling trade disputes with Mexico, reports AP.

The senators say, in a letter to US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, that the dispute settlement system was to be temporary and applied only to Canada.

In addition, the letter says, panels of experts were to be subject to strict conflict-of-interest rules and their findings would be binding under US law.

"It is clear that these conditions have not been met," the senators wrote. "Despite earlier assurances to the contrary, the system was extended to Mexico and effectively made 'permanent' with respect to Canada and Mexico in the NAFTA."

given they came when President Bush's administration was negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, and officials in the current administration have no way of knowing what they were.

Dole and the other senators also opposed extension of the procedure to Chile or any other country that might join NAFTA. Negotiations are under way to extend membership to Chile.

The complaint was in a letter dated August 9. Kantor's office said Friday that he may have received it just before going on vacation and that no reply has been prepared.

The dispute settlement rules provide for a Trilateral Trade Commission which can create panels of trade experts from the private sector to settle disputes. To avoid national bias, each government may appoint members of a panel only among citizens of the other countries.

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on August 26, 1995

Index falls by 3 points

The Dhaka Stock Exchange All Share Price Index fell to a new low of about three points on Saturday while the transactions rose.

The price index dropped to 772.72 from Thursday's 775.46, registering a decline

of 2.735 points. Total market capital fell to Tk 47.86 billion from Tk 48.03 billion.

The transactions in volume rose by 26.20 per cent and the value showed an increase of 16.215 per cent. A total of 53415 shares worth Tk 9.14 million changed hands as against 42324 shares valued at Tk 7.87 million.

Hill Plantation led the gainers with a rise of Tk 55.00 per share, while Bangladesh Lamps incurred a loss of Tk 62.27 per share, leading the losers in terms of value.

The number of issues traded rose to 95 from 78, in which 32 gained, 50 suffered losses and the share prices of 13 issues remained unchanged.

Table with columns: DSE All Share Price Index, Market capital Tk, Transaction in volume, etc.

Table titled 'Trading at a glance' listing various companies and their share prices.

Exchange Rates

Following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates to public for some selected foreign currencies effective on 26th Aug 95.

Table showing exchange rates for various currencies like US Dollar, GBP, DM, etc.

Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong port Berth position and performance of vessels as on 26.8.1995

Table with columns: Berth No, Name of vessels, Cargo, L port call, Local agent, Date of arrival, Leaving.

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Table with columns: Name of vessels, Date of arrival, L port call, Local agent, Cargo, Loading port.

The above were the shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berth sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

India's foreign currency assets dip further

BOMBAY, Aug 26: India's foreign currency assets have continued to fall since the first week of August, according to figures released here on Friday by the country's central bank, reports AFP.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its statistical update for the week ended August 19, said India's foreign currency assets were 19,272 billion dollars on August 11, down by 1.38 per cent from 19,543 billion dollars on August 4.

The foreign currency assets on August 4 were 1.16 per cent lower than those at the end of the previous week, which was the last week of July.

The central bank did not give any reasons for the dip, but its figures showed that the foreign currency reserves on August 11 were

9.1 per cent higher than the reserves a year earlier, when the figure was 17,664 billion dollars.

India's present foreign currency assets are, however, considerably better than in 1991, when the country had only about 3.5 billion dollars — barely enough for a couple of weeks' imports.

The country then faced a severe payments crisis, compelling New Delhi to begin radical pro-market economic reform which reversed nearly four decades of quasi socialist policies.

The RBI said India's total foreign exchange reserves, which include gold, SDRs and foreign currency assets were worth 23,82 billion dollars on August 11, down by 1.12 per cent from 24,100 billion dollars on August 4.

OFTEC deputy minister Sun Zhenyu pointed out that China and Indonesia enjoy a sound foundation for economic co-operation and that there is great potential to be exploited in this regard.

Of that figure, China's export volume came to 624 million US dollar worth, and the import volume was 902 million US dollars worth up, per cent and 48.1 per cent, respectively, compared with the corresponding period of last year.

In 1994 the trade volume between the two nations topped 2.64 billion US dollars-worth, more than six times the 1985 figure. Since the signing of the direct trade understanding memorandum 10 years ago, their accumulated trade volume has amounted to 14.8 billion US dollars-worth.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the memorandum, a 10-member delegation of the Indonesia-China economic, social and cultural association led by its president Sukamant Gitosardjono is now paying a visit to China. The delegation, mainly

Advertisement for 'খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিঃ' (Khulna Shipyard Ltd) with contact information and services.

Advertisement for 'Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD) Ferry Division, Tufkhana, Sylhet' with a tender notice.

Advertisement for 'Bilateral trade between China, Indonesia rises' with details on trade volume and government statements.



Participants of a cargo agents educational tour (AET) to Thailand, arranged by Thai Airways International—Dhaka in July, are seen on the eve of their departure, at the ZIA with Md Ataullah (3rd from left). Thai's Cargo Manager here, Thai Airways organises two AETs a year for both their leading cargo and passenger sales agents.