

Experts oppose introduction of social clause in GATT

Leading social activists and experts of the South Asia region, at a two-day meeting here, yesterday opposed the introduction of a social clause in the International Trade Agreement GATT and called for the revival of the proposed United Nations code of conduct of Transnational Corporation (TNCs), reports BSS.

They also demanded that the developed countries should not unilaterally impose their own labour standards on developing countries without concomitantly addressing issues of over-consumption, armament trade, debt and development assistance.

The consumer activists and economists from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives were here to attend a two-day regional summit-conference on implications of international trade agreements on South Asian countries. Organised by the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) and Consumer Association of Bangladesh.

It was sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation of Germany. The participants were unanimous in their view that a unified approach of South Asian countries was crucial to ensure that developed countries through international trade agreements such as the new general agreement on tariffs and trade do not ride roughshod over their economic interests.

"We have to put up a united front," said Javed Sakhawat, a Dhaka-based development consultant, echoing the views of participants who agreed that a South Asian trading bloc may be a counter to unilateral and multilateral pressures.

The South including SAARC nations should take a pro-active stance on such issues rather than react to ev-

ery non-tariff barriers such as social clause or environmental clause that are sought to be sneaked into GATT," observed SAWTEE programme coordinator and consumer activist from India, Pradeep S Mehta. "For instance, if the west talks about a social clause to impose labour standards, we should demand lessening of social distress in their own countries. Anyway, a trade agreement is not the right route to impose such blatant protectionist measures," he added.

Explaining how the introduction of a rational drug policy led to the exit of pharmaceutical ingredients from Pakistan, Tahir Mehdi of the network, Islamabad, stressed the need for more transparent discussions on the implications of GATT agreements on the countries of the region. "We also have to build up institutions which understand and provide the solutions to cushion the im-

act of adverse effects of international trade agreements," Mehdi noted.

Stressing the need for a transparent economic liberalisation policies in the name of liberalisation, Ratnakar Adhikari and Prakash Sharma, both from pro-pub-lic, Kathmandu, Nepal pointed out how their government was selling off its profit-making industries instead of loss-making units.

"The wrong prescriptions are being either forced on us or we are learning the wrong lessons," they said. With or without multilateral or unilateral pressures, governments should implement various social welfare and minimum labour standards, the Nepalese development experts said.

Tracing the history of economic liberalisation process which began in the early 1980s in Sri Lanka, Darshini Mahadeva from law and society trust, Colombo said that

market-friendly policies have resulted in significant reduction in the inflation rate leading to a better deal for consumers and common people alike.

"We have a lot to learn from other South Asian nations' experiences," said Asim Ahmed from the Maldives Ministry of Planning. Because, the smallest SAARC members traditional economy based on fishing and tourism is now beginning to be influenced by the global changes. Pleading for a continuation of government moderation to ensure equitable development, he said consumers needed protection from the unleashing of market forces. Elaborating the point, Dr Arif A Waqif of India stressed that the "invisible hand of the market needs to be guided by the visible arms of the government and audible and vigilant fingers of NGOs."

US trade deficit tops \$43b: Worst in decades

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: The US current account trade deficit widened to \$43.6 billion dollars in the second quarter, the worse figure in decades, the Commerce Department said yesterday, reports AFP.

This compared to a revised 39 billion dollars deficit for the first quarter. The first quarter deficit was initially estimated at 40.5 billion dollars.

The Commerce Department said the second quarter deficit was the highest since 1960.

The previous record of 43.2 billion dollars was set in the fourth quarter of last year.

The consensus forecast had been for a second quarter deficit of 45.5 billion dollars.

The current account is the broadest measure of trading performance, including merchandise, services, investment flows and foreign aid

payments. The current account deficit, for the first half of the year, is running at an annual rate of 165.24 billion dollars, well above the 1994 deficit of 151.25 billion dollars.

Over the second quarter, the deficit in merchandise climbed to a record 49.04 billion dollars, from 45.1 billion dollars in the first quarter.

The surplus in services was up to 15.67 billion dollars, 62 million dollars more than in the first quarter.

In other categories, the deficit on investment earnings was 2.87 billion dollars and the deficit on unilateral transfers was 7.38 billion dollars, including foreign aid.

The increase in the deficit was primarily attributed to the weak dollar which fell to a record low against the Japanese yen in April at the start of the second quarter.

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on September 13, 1995

9-point rise in index

The Dhaka Stock Exchange All Share Price Index registered another tremendous rise of 8.81 points and stood at 809.80 on Wednesday.

The transactions in volume increased by four per cent reaching 187438 from 180890 and the value increased by eight per cent to Tk 30.07 million from Tk 27.94 million. Total market capital reached Tk 50.24 billion from Tk 49.69 billion.

The leading gainer of the day was Anam Sea Food with a rise of Tk 104.67 per share while Eastern Housing led the losers with a loss of Tk 100.00 per share.

The volume leaders of the day were Beximco Pharma (37750), Apex Weaving (15856), Quasem Drycells and Beximco Ltd (10,300).



Trading at a glance

Table with columns: DSE All Price Index (809.80003), Market capital Tk (502981265.89), Transaction in volume (187438), Transaction in value Tk (30073017.50), Total issues traded (104), Issues gained (2), Issues incurred losses (2), Issues unchanged (14).

Table of Company's Change Number (per share) of shares Tk. Lists companies like Salfam Textile, Modern Dyeing, Padma Cotton, etc.

Exchange Rates

Following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates to public for some selected foreign currencies effective on 13th Sept '95.

Table of Exchange Rates for US Dollar, GBP, Franc, etc. Columns include Currency, TT & OD, BC, T.T. Clean, OD, Slight Transfer.

Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong port berth position and performance of vessels as on 13.9.95

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

Vessels due at outer anchorage

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

Tanker Due:

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

Vessels at Kutubdia

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

Vessels at outer anchorage:

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

Movement of vessels for 14.9.95

Table with columns: Outgoing, Incoming, Shipping.

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

DSE Shares and Debentures

Table with columns: Company, PV/ML, Closing Rate, etc.

BCIC Tender Notice

বিন্যাসহিসর পণ্য শিলায়নে জাতীয় অগ্রগতির প্রতীক

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the bonafide contractor by the Managing Director, Jamuna Fertilizer Co. Ltd, Tarakandi, Jamalpur for

(1) Loading of bagged Urea to Truck/Wagon (2) Carrying Urea from Railway station/siding to godown and stacking for the year 1995-96. Tender No. JFCL/MKTG-27/FMC/202 to 204 dated 4.9.95 will be received concurrently up to 11-30 AM on 21-9-95 by the General Manager (Comm.), Jamuna Fertilizer Co. Ltd, Tarakandi, Jamalpur, General Manager (FMC), BCIC, BCIC Bhaban (18th floor), 30-31, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka, Regional Manager (Fert.) BADC, Bogra, Regional Manager (Fert.) BADC, Rangpur, Dy. Commissioner, Gaibandha. Tenders will be opened immediately after closing of the tender in presence of the tenderers (if any). No tender schedule will be sold on the date of opening of the tender. Tender schedule with detailed terms and conditions will be available on payment of Tk. 100/= (One hundred) (Non-refundable) on all working days from the Controller of Accounts, BCIC, BCIC Bhaban (6th floor), 30-31, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka, Addl. Chief Accountant, JFCL, Tarakandi, Jamalpur and Officer-in-charge, JFCL Sales Centres (BADC godown), Bogra, Rangpur and Gaibandha.

JFCL Management reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders partly or fully without assigning any reason thereof.

BCIC-946-7/9/95 DFP-21878-10/9 G-1339

Saudi economy likely to stabilise in short term

ABU DHABI, Sept 13: The Saudi economy looks likely to stabilise in the short term as the Gulf oil heavyweight pushes ahead with reforms to offset weak crude prices and expand non-oil sectors, experts said on Tuesday, reports AFP.

The kingdom, which controls more than a quarter of the world's crude reserves, has slashed an alarming budget deficit and announced a five-year spending plan that could absorb any fluctuation in oil prices.

This will help attract foreign capital and encourage the private sector to maintain its push into the state-controlled economy, the experts

said. "The Saudi economy is expected to stabilise in the short term following external economic and security shocks that have slowed down growth rates," the Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee (ACIG) said in a study.

Such stability means the government is determined to adopt rational policies to manage the economy.

The study, published in ACIG's 360-page Arab report for 1994, said Saudi Arabia had managed to cut the budget deficit to 3.3 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995 from as high as 8.8 per cent in 1994.



SAARC Trade Union Coordination Committee brought out a procession on the occasion of SAARC Trade Union Solidarity Day in the city yesterday.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

জেলা ও দারার জজের কার্যালয়, সোয়াখালী

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

যেহেতু নিম্ন তফসিলে উল্লিখিত আসামীর বিরুদ্ধে গ্রেফতারী পরোয়ানা জারী রাখিয়াছে এবং যেহেতু কৌশলী কার্যবিধি আইনের ৮৭ এবং ৮৮ ধারার বিধান মতে আসামীর বিরুদ্ধে কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হইয়াছে এবং যেহেতু অত্র আসামীরে নিম্ন তফসিলে বর্ণিত মামলার বিচারের জন্য অত্র বিচারিক জারী হইবার ৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিনের মধ্যে অত্র টাইকুনালে হাজির হইবার নির্দেশ দেওয়া হইয়াছে।

অন্যথা তাহার অনুপস্থিতিতেই বিচার কার্য সমাধা করা হইবে।

Table with columns: আসামীর নাম ও ঠিকানা, মামলার নম্বর ও ধারা. Lists names like মোজাম্মেল হক পি-৩, নসিরুল হক পি-৩, etc.

এস. এ. কুইয়া দারার জজ সোয়াখালী

সেপাল টাইকুনাল নং-১ সোয়াখালী

D-891

Honda to invest \$ 280m in Indian car venture

NEW DELHI, Sept 13: Japan's giant Honda car-maker said on Tuesday it would invest 280 million dollars over seven years in an Indian car venture, joining a growing list of world majors seeking a slice of an expanding market, reports Reuter.

Honda Motor Company will hold 60 per cent and India's Siel 40 per cent of a joint venture that envisages an investment of 8.5 billion rupees (280 million dollars) over the next six or seven years, company officials said.

The joint venture, named Honda Siel Cars India, will be capitalised at 1.33 billion rupees (42 million dollars). Honda said in Tokyo.

The venture will invest 1.50 billion rupees (48 million dollars) in a plant to be located 30 to 40 miles (50 to 60 km) from Delhi.

Discussions were underway with neighbouring states, company officials said. "The timing is not so important for us. The sooner the better," Honda's Executive Vice-Chairman, Mune-kuni, told a news conference.