

DPRK urges US for urgent rice aid

TOKYO, May 8: North Korea has urged the United States for an urgent but small shipment of rice aid to cope with immediate food shortages and has warned of the dangers of unrest, the Sankei Shimbun said today, reports AFP.

Ri Jong-Hyok, Deputy Head of North Korea's committee for the Asia-Pacific peace committee, had an informal meeting with a senior US government official in Washington last week and asked for emergency rice aid of 3,000 tonnes, said the paper quoting unnamed informed sources.

The amount is only a fraction of the 1.2 million tonnes Ri said North Korea would need in the coming year.

The paper suggested that the request for such a small but urgent amount of aid showed how severe the food shortage was in North Korea which was hit by massive floods last year.

The lack of assistance might "cause riots and revolution," Ri was quoted as saying at another meeting during his US visit.

On May 1 Ri said North Korea would need 600,000 tonnes of rice by the autumn harvest and a total of 200,000 tonnes for May and June alone. But he mentioned 3,000 tonnes as "the amount needed immediately and by all means," the Sankei said.

The United States was reportedly ready to provide additional batch of humanitarian aid to North Korea, following two million dollars worth of rice sent in February through the UN World Food Programme, the paper said.

Certificate on Selling Skills distributed

A certificate awarding ceremony for the participants of the 4-day residential training course on Selling Skills for the sales officers of Social Marketing Company was held on Monday at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Savar, Dhaka, says a press release.

The ceremony was attended by Waliur Rahman, Managing Director of SMC, as the chief guest who distributed certificates to the participants.

Salim Akbar, Marketing Manager, Shahid Ahmed, Sales Manager of SMC M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport Bangladesh Limited addressed the function. Sheraul Islam, Deputy Director, BPATC, also spoke on the occasion.

Thai cabinet okays pipeline to carry gas from Myanmar

BANGKOK, May 8: Thailand's Cabinet has approved a pipeline project to carry natural gas from Myanmar to Thailand, the state-run radio said today, reports AFP.

The pipeline would bring in gas from the Yadana and Yatagan fields in the Andaman Sea to refineries in Ratchaburi province, 95 kilometers (59 miles) west of Bangkok.

The project has been opposed by Thai environmentalists because it would run through a conservation area, and by Myanmar pro-democracy advocates who say profits from the pipeline will help prop up the country's military regime.

Members of Myanmar's Karen ethnic group, who have been fighting the government in Yangon for autonomy, have vowed to attack it if the pipeline, which runs through an area where they live.

The project still must be approved by Thailand's National Environmental Board.

The Cabinet approved a budget of 660 million dollars for the Petroleum Authority of Thailand to build the Thai portion of the pipeline.

It also ordered the Petroleum Authority to pay compensation to and relocate villagers who live in the area.

Construction is scheduled to be completed in July 1998.

The French company Total and the American oil company Unocal are handling the Burmese portion of the pipeline.

Forecast for oil demand revised downward

PARIS, May 8: The International Energy Agency (IEA) yesterday revised downward its forecast for world demand for crude oil in 1996 to 71.6 million barrels a day, reports AFP.

In its previous forecast, the Paris-based agency had spoken of a 2.4 per cent rise of world demand for the year.

In its monthly study, the agency also said crude demand by members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for the second quarter would remain unchanged at 39.8 million barrels a day. Demand for the first quarter was revised downward 0.1 million barrels to 41.9 million barrels a day.

The IEA forecast that output by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) would reach 26.1 million barrels a day, slightly up over the March output.

Key donor countries set new goals for development aid

PARIS, May 8: Key Western donor countries and Japan adopted a set of specific goals for development aid over the next two decades yesterday, based on the notion of partnerships between donors and less developed countries, respectively.

A high-level meeting in Paris of the OECD's development Assistance Committee (DAC), in what United States foreign aid Chief Brian Atwood described as a "Breakthrough," adopted a series of six targets to be achieved by 2015.

He was briefing correspondents before the end of the talks, which brought together 21 donor countries from the 28-nation Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as well as the European Union (EU) Commission.

DAC donors have accounted for about 60 billion dollars worth of Official Development Assistance (ODA) annually in recent years, but the total fell eight per cent to 59 billion dollars in 1992 and dropped by a further five to ten per cent in 1995.

Atwood said ministers and agency heads of DAC countries committed their countries to move together over the next two decades:

To help halve by 2015, from 1.3 billion at present, the number of people living in extreme poverty across the world. These people are at present surviving on an annual per capita income of less than about 370 dollars — or one dollar a day.

Atwood said there was a consensus — although this was seen more as a "method" than as a condition — that governments ought to be democratic, open, transparent and accountable to their peoples.

What is significant about this set of goals is that they relate to the self-interest of the development nations as well as the developing na-

tions," he said.

It was the first time that donor countries had agreed on goals that "relate to our own economic well-being, and the development of future markets, to global stability and the advancement of democratic practice," he said.

Atwood said the declaration — which he stressed was written in simple, understandable language — was bound to induce more cooperation among the donors and with the recipients of aid.

The new strategy, he said, set out the mutual responsibilities of both donors and developing countries in what he described as development partnership — including the pursuit of appropriate economic policies.

It also set trade and investment as a final goal of development.

Many poor countries, especially African countries, had fallen behind in the competition for capital flows, and sustainable development would imply creating an environment that would attract trade and investment, Atwood said.

He also stressed that the goals set out in the declaration would shift the focus away from what he described as the OECD's "fascination" with the aid volumes mobilised by donor countries.

Preliminary OECD data show that the US contribution to overall ODA last year was down from 0.15 per cent of GNP — half the DAC average — to an all-time low of about 0.11 per cent, the lowest in DSE.



Waliur Rahman, Managing Director, SMC, seen distributing certificate to a participant of the training course on Selling Skills organized by Rapport Bangladesh at BPATC, on Monday.

BSE index plunges by 46 points over political tension

BOMBAY, May 8: Indian markets were jittery about possibility of a weakened ruling Congress forming a coalition with Communists and socialists after an exit poll pointed to a hung parliament, reports Reuters.

The 30-share index of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the country's premier bourse, was down 45.86 points, or 1.24 per cent, at 3,667.01 in late morning trade.

People are scared," said Vijay Bhatia, chief dealer with brokers Pashupati Advani. "Everyone's waiting and watching."

The Tuesday night exit poll conducted by state-owned Doordarshan TV gave the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the largest number of seats in the new parliament, but most analysts see little chance of the Hindu nationalists forming a government.

Members of Myanmar's Karen ethnic group, who have been fighting the government in Yangon for autonomy, have vowed to attack it if the pipeline, which runs through an area where they live.

The project still must be approved by Thailand's National Environmental Board.

The Cabinet approved a budget of 660 million dollars for the Petroleum Authority of Thailand to build the Thai portion of the pipeline.

It also ordered the Petroleum Authority to pay compensation to and relocate villagers who live in the area.

Construction is scheduled to be completed in July 1998.

The French company Total and the American oil company Unocal are handling the Burmese portion of the pipeline.

ANKARA, May 8: Turkey, fearing exclusion from Caspian oil projects, said Tuesday it was ready to fully finance construction of a pipeline to take petrol from the Caspian to the Mediterranean Sea, reports AFP.

"We can build the whole pipeline from (Azerbaijan's capital) Baku to (the Turkish Mediterranean Sea terminal of) Ceyhan," Turkish Foreign Minister Emre Gonensay was quoted as saying.

According to last week's agreement, the planned pipeline from Kazakhstan's Tengiz oil fields through Novorossiysk is projected to have a maximum capacity of 60 million tonnes per year in 20 years.

Future Azeri oil to be extracted from the Caspian zone is also set to reach 50 million tonnes per year within 10 years.

Citing environmental concerns, Ankara also objects to the export of all the oil through Novorossiysk as the Black Sea's only opening into international waters is through the Turkish Straits.

"We can't risk the future of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles by subjecting them to a highly increased flow of oil through them," Gonensay said.

This will pose a great environmental dan-

on Wednesday. A clear picture of the party standings is expected by Subra Subramanian, a director at securities firm HG Asia, said markets would be volatile but not necessarily subdued.

At this point I'm cautiously optimistic, he said. There's a possibility of a stable (coalition) government with a common mini-programme."

Trivedi was also optimistic the markets would generally be positive despite a weak coalition emerging.

Others disagreed, however. The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The BJP has far fewer

BSE president MG Damani said he was optimistic that the BJP, assuming it won about 200 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament), would be able to cobble together a coalition.

Elections in India began on April 27 and are staggered over six days until May 30. But voting in all but six constituencies was completed by Tuesday and counting of ballots began

Wednesday.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The BJP has far fewer

BSE president MG Damani said he was optimistic that the BJP, assuming it won about 200 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament), would be able to cobble together a coalition.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The BSE president MG Damani said he was optimistic that the BJP, assuming it won about 200 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament), would be able to cobble together a coalition.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The BSE president MG Damani said he was optimistic that the BJP, assuming it won about 200 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament), would be able to cobble together a coalition.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.

The clear impression we get is that there'll be a period of uncertainty, said Alok Sethi, a director at Crosby Research. When there's uncertainty some investors will keep away, fresh they will not come in, but there won't be outright selling.</