

ICC to announce
rules for Internet
transaction soon

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) will announce guidelines for ensuring trustworthy "digital transactions through Internet" in Paris early next month, reports BSS.

"Commerce on the Internet could total tens of billions of dollars by the turn of the century," the ICC said in a release received here from Paris.

The new ICC rules for Internet transaction are known as GUIDEC (general usage in international digitally ensured commerce).

The chief Internet Policy Advisor to President Bill Clinton, Ira Magaziner along with other experts will hold a press conference on the topic in Paris on electronic commerce on November 6 at International Secretariat of ICC.

Magaziner is the author of "A framework for global electronic commerce".

UCB opens booth
at BRAC centre

United Commercial Bank Ltd has opened a booth in the office of TM International Bangladesh Ltd at the BRAC centre in the city on Tuesday, says a press release.

The step has been taken for the convenience of the clients for depositing bills and other charges for availing AKTEL Mobile Telephone facilities of TM International of Malaysia who are marketing AKTEL Mobile telephone as a joint venture with AK Khan Group of Companies, Chittagong.

The BRAC centre booth will remain open on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, besides normal banking hours on weekdays.

G-15 officials meet
to prepare for
Nov summit

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29: Economic officials of the Group of 15 developing countries met Tuesday to lay the groundwork for the trade and development cooperation talks of the G-15 summit here Nov 3 to 5, says AP.

Discussions will focus on joint approaches to multilateral trade issues such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Geneva next May.

The total trade of G-15 members in 1996 rose 8.8 per cent to 796 billion dollars, accounting for seven per cent of global trade.

Trade among G-15 countries totalled 72 billion dollars last year, up from 64 billion dollars in 1995, but there is great scope for increasing this trade, Malaysian delegation officials said.

They said conclusions from the first round of meetings will be further examined at the inaugural meeting of G-15 economic ministers, who will then pass on their recommendations for adoption by the summit.

WTO director-general Renato Ruggiero and the deputy secretary general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Carlos Fortini, will hold discussions with the economic ministers during their meeting on Friday.

G-15 now comprises Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Kenya will be admitted during the summit.

US-Japan shipping
dispute settled

WASHINGTON, Oct 29: The Federal Maritime Commission approved Monday a settlement with Japanese carriers on ending a dispute that had threatened to close American ports to Japanese cargo ships, reports AP.

State Department spokesman James P. Rubin said the settlement was consistent with the terms the administration had been seeking.

He said the agreement will promote competition and increased efficiency at Japanese ports.

A crisis in US-Japan shipping was touched off earlier this month when the commission announced it would bar certain Japanese ships from US ports.

Japan's three major shipping lines had declined to pay four million dollars in commission-imposed fines after the Japanese government refused to reform port practices.

US and Japanese officials reached agreement on most aspects of the dispute not long after the commission announcement, but a gap remained on whether the fines should be paid.

Rubin said the Japanese carriers agreed to a payment that satisfied the commission, but he refused to provide details, saying the matter was between the commission and the carriers.

He added that the agreement requires final approval of the two governments.

Rubin said that for the first time, US carriers will be able to obtain licenses to run their own terminal operation in Japan.

Analysts, fund managers warn of more volatility ahead

Major stock markets bounce back quickly

LONDON, Oct 29: Wall Street's rally spread euphorically through Asian and European stock exchanges Wednesday, reversing the losses from Tuesday's panic-selling but leaving traders wondering whether the rebound was for real, reports AP.

Key stock barometers racked up big gains, some in the double digits, as markets bounced back from Tuesday's wild dealings. But analysts warned that more volatility lay ahead.

"I don't think anybody can be sure if it's a real recovery until we see it last more than a day," said Michael Sunder, an economist at the investment bank Salomon Brothers in London. "There's too many possible hurdles to cross to be sure."

Stocks roared back to a record gain on Tuesday, with volume topping one billion shares for the first time in

vestors swooped into the market, apparently convinced the impact of Asia's financial crisis on Wall Street would be limited, according to a Reuters report.

The Dow yesterday ended up 337.17 points, or 4.7 per cent, at 7,498.32, beating the record point gain of 257.36 set on September 2 this year. The percentage gain was the largest since October 29, 1987, when the Dow gained 4.95 per cent.

Prices bounced back quickly Wednesday on the London Stock Exchange. Europe's biggest market, erasing the remaining losses from Tuesday's tumultuous session.

After an hour of trading, London's Financial Times Stock Exchange 100-share index was up by 90.2 points, or 1.9 per cent, at 4,845.6.

On the other top European markets, Frankfurt's DAX index jumped 4.6 per cent in early floor trading and the CAC 40 in

Paris rose by 3.2 per cent in the first half hour.

Tuesday's 337-point rally by the Dow Jones industrial average looked like an instant antidote for what traders had been calling the Hong Kong flu — a steep drop in Hong Kong shares set off by a speculative attack on the territory's currency last week.

Hong Kong's blue-chip Hang Seng blue-chip index soared 18.8 per cent on Wednesday to close at 10,765.3 points, up 1,705.41 points as it wiped away the huge losses from Tuesday's plunge — the worst since 1989.

Stocks in Hong Kong property and banking companies had been hardest hit, but they bounced back strongly to lead Wednesday's rally.

In Tokyo, the benchmark Nikkei Stock Average of 225 selected issues closed the day up 544.35 points, or 3.34 per cent, at 16,857.04 — recovering from most of Tuesday's 725.67-point loss.

Markets also climbed steadily in Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Taiwan was the only exception, with significant selling in the technology sector.

No one was sure, however, whether the rebound would end the global market jitters that had their roots in the Southeast Asian financial crisis, where traders succeeded in pushing several currencies lower before setting their sights on Hong Kong.

Chain-reaction sell-offs hit Hong Kong last week, New York on Monday, and Hong Kong plus the rest of Asia again on Tuesday.

European stocks plunged as well Tuesday, with some big markets off by as much as 10 per cent. They bounced back after New York stocks moved sharply into positive territory on Tuesday morning — easing the fears of a collapse after the Dow fell a record 554 points on Monday.

The New York rally began when International Business Machines announced it was buying back up to 3.5 billion

dollars worth of its stock, which had been dragged down nearly 15 per cent since Thursday morning. Investors read this as a big vote of confidence in the market's future and began snapping up other discounted share prices.

The sell-off on Tuesday also hammered a number of developing markets. In Moscow, the Russian Trading System Index showed early gains on Wednesday, after suffering a loss of 19 per cent on Tuesday.

A summary of other Asian

markets:

BANGKOK: The Stock Exchange of Thailand index rose 9.09 points in the first 14 minutes of trading, or 2 per cent, to reach 469.89. It had closed down six per cent Tuesday at 460.80 points.

JAKARTA: The Jakarta Stock Exchange index was up 18.938 points, or 4.23 per cent, to 466.934 at the midday break, a slight decline from its early morning level.

KUALA LUMPUR: The Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange's benchmark Composite Index, which tracks 100 blue-chip stocks, closed at 662.48, up 15.16 or 2.3 per cent.

MANILA: Shares closed 4.3 per cent higher on a technical rebound. The Philippine Stock Exchange index was up 73.97 to 1,814.15 after hitting a four-year low Tuesday.

NEW ZEALAND: The NZSE-40 capital index finished nine per cent higher, its biggest gain ever, recovering much of Tuesday's loss. It rose 214.87 to 376.88.

SEOUL: The Korea Composite Stock Price Index closed at 506.64, up 11.36 points or 2.3 per cent.

SYDNEY: The All Ordinaries index of share prices closed at 2,443.19, up 143.08 points or 6.3 per cent, from Tuesday's close of 2,299.2. It was the index's largest increase in percentage terms since 1980. Trading activity was so heavy that the market closed early because the stock market's system was nearing its capacity.

SINGAPORE: The Straits Times Industrial Index, the 30-stock benchmark index of the Stock Exchange of Singapore, ended 44.36 points or 2.9 per

cent higher at 1,541.39.

TAIPEI: The lone exception to the regional rally, the Taiwan Stock Exchange Weighted Index closed down 120.45 points, or 1.7 per cent, to 7,089.56 points, after Tuesday's 452.52-point drop. Taiwan shares shot up at the opening but were pulled down by heavy selling in technology shares.

AFF says: Fund managers warned today of more harrowing turmoil ahead for Asia-Pacific stock markets, even as bourses region-wide rallied on the back of a record points jump on Wall Street.

"It's really a reaction to Wall Street. We are seeing the dog wagging the tail again," said James Osborn, institutional sales manager at Ing-Barings in Hong Kong, which had set the lead for US stocks Monday.

Ailing share markets from Tokyo to Sydney, on a dizzying roller-coaster ride for the past week, rebounded Wednesday after US blue chips posted their biggest ever jump of more than 300 points Tuesday.

"We may not have seen the worst," said Vasu Menon, research manager at Keppel Securities in Singapore, noting that regional economic and currency problems responsible for volatile market activity were still present.

Osborn said regional markets were being dictated by emotions rather than fundamentals and "it's going to remain that way until we get to a point where we know what the fundamentals are."

At the moment we don't know what the fundamentals are," he said.

Pundit predicted the plunge

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 29: A South African pundit who warned last month that world stock markets would collapse in October said on Tuesday the current global rout tallied closely with his predictions and forecast more gloom, reports Reuters.

Fred Crooks, armed with a complex theory mixing ancient mathematics — weather patterns and the turns of the ocean tide, appeared on South African television in September announcing that share markets would plunge on October 17.

Although his ideas were dismissed by analysts, small

South African stock investors — who were already jittery in the days ahead of the tenth anniversary of the last Wall Street crash — dumped shares, causing falls on the Johannesburg markets.

Crooks said his targeting tool pointed to further upheavals on the Dow Jones index until the end of next week.

"I am expecting a horrific drop into next Friday. This is certainly not the end of the so-called crash," he said, adding that the current punishment of shares heralded the start of period of depression that would carry on into the next century.

Indian textile exports accused
of using child labour

Alfred de Tavares writes from Stockholm

Stockholm, Oct 29: A Swedish television documentary focussing on use of child labour in the Indian textile industry and a spotlight on the issue during the UN Child Conference under way in the Norwegian capital of Oslo are likely to affect Indian garments exports to the region.

The highlight of the Swedish TV 2's Rapport news programme, which was aired last weekend in the Scandinavian countries and Germany and Holland as well, showed that two Indian export companies, which supply goods to the Swedish mega-multinational trading company IKEA, "make massive use of child labour under conditions of slavery in their factories that manufacture products exported to Western markets."

Quoting facts reportedly provided by N. Radha, an activist of an anti-child labour organisation called LEAD, Rapport showed two IKEA suppliers — Prem Textiles and R.K. Textiles — from the southern Indian town of Karur, Tamil Nadu, whose labour consists of children aged below 14. While Prem Textiles apparently employed 15 children, R.K. Textiles had 23 on its staff.

Some leading importers and even a few social workers have dismissed the allegations as either false or biased towards vested interests.

"The timing of the charges lend to suspicion," said Lena Andersson, a Swedish social worker dedicated to child welfare. "With the U.N. Child Labour Conference in session in Oslo, where the plight of exploited Indian children features prominently, such accusations could go a long way to impair trade with India."

"If LEAD's information proves correct, we will not hesitate to take due action against manufacturers who use, or continue to use, child labour," IKEA's spokesperson Cecilia Svensson said. "But by no means shall we resort to such measures in response to TV disclosures. We will also be the judge of the nature of any action taken."

Asked whether IKEA had reason to doubt the veracity of the charges, Svensson told India Abroad News Service: "We have to make sure. We have been burnt very badly once before, two years ago. Also that time with similar charges levelled against another of our suppliers from northern India."

In response to their disclosures we acted immediately and stopped imports from that company only to learn later that the charges had been completely false and baseless. Only after severe damage had been done."

Svensson said: "Imports from India are of vital significance to IKEA. We cannot antagonise our suppliers by responding to casual, or irresponsible, accusations. On our part we do not enter into commercial negotiations with parties in India, or in other countries, at all casually. Serious efforts are made to ensure that child or other enforced labour is not used to manufacture products supplied to us."

Outlining measures IKEA will take to enquire into the latest charges, the spokesperson said, "IKEA has already instructed our Indian purchasing office in Delhi to make a thorough enquiry into the matter. Only after that is done we will act, if any action is required. In Karur alone we have a dozen suppliers and we have so far had no reason to question their integrity."

— India Abroad News Service

Service exports under
GATS stressed

Commerce Secretary Syed Alamgir Farouk Chowdhury yesterday said that Bangladesh had great potentials of raising export earnings by trading services under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), reports BSS.

He was inaugurating a two-day workshop on "Increasing service exports under the GATS," organised by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) and trade service unit of UNCTAD and World Trade Organisation (WTO) at DCCI auditorium here.

DCCI President ASM Quasem, Geneva-based ITC's Slessor, ITC consultant Dr Dorothy Riddle and DCCI Vice President Manzur Hossain also spoke.

The commerce secretary emphasised the need for sensitising policy makers and private sector entrepreneurs about the opening up of a new horizon of trading opportunities in exporting services in the global marketplace under the GATS.

"We must not make any mistake in seizing the opportunity of raising our export earnings by trading services," he said.

He also referred to the concern of the government of Bangladesh in meeting the challenges arising out of globalisation of production and liberalisation of trade as a result of the Uruguay Round Agreement particularly GATS.

DCCI President ASM Quasem said Bangladesh as a resource scarce country must try to develop its services sector and increase its service exports.

He said the workshop would provide the forum for private sector firms, service industries and trade associations, export financiers, export skill trainers and the government officials to discuss how best to ensure competitive service exports in the context of trade liberalisation under the GATS.

ANZ opens int'l
service unit

ANZ Grindlays Bank has recently launched its international services unit from upgraded premises, says a press release.

These premises are designed with a view to segregating front and back office functions and they incorporate the ergonomic 'work-station' concept that is prevalent in most international office places.

The bank has already completed renovation of branches in Dilkusha, Dhanmandi, Sheraton and Gulshan in Dhaka and Nasirabad and Agrabad in Chittagong.

Asian currency
crisis hits Aussie
tourism industry

SYDNEY, Australia, Oct 29: One million Australians dependent on tourist spending will be threatened by job losses if the government fails to protect them from the Asian currency crisis, the tourism industry claims, says AP.

Tourist numbers from Southeast Asia already slumped 12.5 per cent across the board in August, the Tourism Task Force said.

Task force chief Executive Chris Brown said last week's stock market rout in Hong Kong and subsequent developments are only likely to worsen the trend.

Tourism is expected to be the most severely affected aspect of Australia's economy due to the crisis, Brown said in a statement.

"The government must act now to mitigate employment losses that will occur here as the currency crisis affects Australian industries that meet Southeast Asian demand," he said.

"Tourism is one of the central pillars of Australia's links to the region, providing well over two billion Australian dollars (1.36 billion US dollars) per annum in export revenue."

Brown said government inaction to protect Australian tourism would spell widespread job losses among 1 million Australians dependent on tourism expenditure.

Of urgent need was for the government to institute a series of advertisements in Southeast Asia highlighting the fact an Australian holiday remained the least expensive Western experience, he said.



General Manager of ANZ Grindlays Bank Bangladesh, Muhammad A (Rume) Ali, is seen with some senior members of the management after inauguration of the new international services office at the bank's main office in the city.

Exchange Rates

The following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 29th Oct '97.

Buying			
TT	OD	OD	
Clean	Sight	Transfer	
US Dir	44.8350	44.6545	44.5580
GB Pound	74.5001	74.2001	74.0398
D Mark	25.6251	25.5220	25.4668
F Franc	7.6504	7.6196	7.6031
C Dir	31.8512	31.7230	31.6544
S Franc	31.3278	31.2017	31.1343
J Yen	0.3678	0.3663	0.3655

The following are the Janata Bank's dealing rates (BD Tk for one unit of Foreign Currency) to public as on 29/10/97.

Buying			
TT	OD	OD	
Cu-	Sight	Transfer	
US Dir	44.8350	44.6506	44.5410
GB Pound	74.4898	74.1747	74.9927
D Mark	25.6261	25.5178	25.4551
FR Franc	7.6509	7.6185	7.5998
J Yen	0.3696	0.368	0.367
C Dir	31.8506	31.7159	31.6381
S Franc	31.3294	31.1969	31.1204

Shipping Intelligence

CHITTAGONG PORT
Berth position and performance of vessels as on 29-10-97

Berth	Name of vessels	Cargo	Local agent	Date of Leaving
J/1	Brasil	Oil	MBL	26/10
J/2	Stella-F	Oil	MBL	27/10
J/4	Alam Selaras	Wheat(G)	Sing	22/10
J/6	Albatross-III	Urea(G)	Rawa	15/10
J/7	Xuan Cheng	Urea(G)	Chin Seagull	22/10
J/9	Golden Ocean	Urea(G)	CP	30/10
J/11	Banglar Asha	Wheat(G)	CP	30/10
J/12	Mykola Movchan	M Seed	Ukra	12/10
J/13	Hermes	Urea(G)	Indo Seacom	21/10
OC/2	Leorot	Cont	Sing	25/10
OC/3	Yanasea	Cont	Sing	25/10
RM/14	Great Best-1	Cement	Sing	16/10
OCJ	Banglar Shobha	C Clink	Sikka	14/10
TSP	Senicoli Sierra	R Phos	Sing	23/9
RM/3	Shao Shan	Cement	Delmure	23/9
RM/5	Sandgate	HSD	Mina	27/10
DD	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil	MBL	26/10
DD	Banglar Kakoli	Repair	BSC	15/11
DDJ/1	Tanary Star	Idle	Para	25/10
DDJ/2	Banglar Kiron	Wheat(G)	Mong	25/10
RM/8	Star Glory	Cement	Lans Delmure	29/10
RM/9	Banglar Robi	Repair	BSC	6/11
CM	Tug AH	P Mat	MBL	30/10
Kafco (U)	Tug Ocean Echo	P Mat	Sing	30/9

Vessels due at outer anchorage			
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	Last port call	Local agent
Sing Hai 12/10	29/10	Sing	Qsl
Voyager	29/10	Sing	Simni
Bislon	29/10	Sing	B Bay
Agia Philothei	29/10	Yant	Jaycee
QC Teal 19/10	30/10	Sing	Seacom
Sea Horse	30/10	Indo	Sunshine
Rings	30/10	Mong	Shin
Da Fu2/10	30/10	Sing	Apil(B)
IB Everest	30/10	Sing	Everett
Banglar Maya	30/10	Sing	GLICOND
Ultima 19/10	31/10	COI	Baridhi
Penguin	31/10	Yang	Cross
Sea Elegance 20/10	31/10	Sing	Oil(BD)
Sumsun Light	31/10	Mad	Pswl
Feng Qing	1/11	MBL	GL
Song Lin	1/11	Prog	GL

Alan Tenaga	1/11	P Kel	Rainbow	GI	
Banglar Maya 19/10	2/11	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
M Regina 22/10	2/11	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing
QC Pintail 23/10	1/11	Sing	Qsl	Cont	Sing
Hai Mao	2/11	Mong	Mbl	Scraping	
Diligence Cont 26/10	2/11	Sing	Qsl	Cont	Sing
Padma 27/10	2/11	Sing	RSL	Cont	Sing
Dragon Sentosa 4/9	3/11	Cal	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Kota Bintang 26/10	5/11	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing
Sarah-1	5/11	Mumb	Cross	GI	
Ocean-1	5/11	Cal	Cross	GI	
Larmphun Navee 27/10	5/11	-	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Express					
Resolve 27/10	6/11	Sing	RSL	Cont	Sing
TM Regulus	6/11	-	Bdship	Ballast	
Hafez (E)28/10	8/11	Sing	SSL	E/L	
Kota Berjaya 26/10	9/11	Sing	PUL(BD)	Cont	Sing