

UNICEF for Proper Utilisation of Emergency Relief Supplies

UNICEF has compiled a set of "Highest Priority Survival and Health Messages for Children and Women" which includes the following messages about the supplies UNICEF is providing:

ORS: The full contents of the ORS sachet should be dissolved in half a litre (two full glasses) of safe, clean water and given to children with diarrhoea to counter dehydration.

High protein biscuits: These biscuits are to supplement other food. Four biscuits contain the minimum daily requirement of proteins, vitamins and minerals for an adult. They should be given on a priority basis to children, pregnant and lactating women. For children under 5 years, one or two biscuits each day, in addition to normal food, will provide sufficient protein for the child. The biscuits can be softened in clean water to



Children in Britain Raise Flood Relief Funds with Imagination

by Julian Francis

HERE are many heart-warming and moving accounts appearing in the media at the moment detailing how flood-affected people have coped and helped their neighbours, in both urban and rural areas, come through the worst floods of this century. We have also been reading of the feeding centres which have sprung up spontaneously with the initiatives of housewives in a number of Dhaka's residential colonies.

In schools in Britain, the devastating floods in China, India and Bangladesh have been studied in geography and other lessons, trying to understand the future dangers posed by global warming and the effects of weather phenomena like El Nino. Children at school, able to see the dramatic TV pictures of the floods in Bangladesh, have been moved to do something to help children who have suffered so much.

My nieces who live in Manchester, England, and whose ancestors lived for generations in Munshiganj, have sent me a moving message detailing how they and their

young school friends have joined hands to support the flood relief work in Bangladesh and I thought that I should share this with The Daily Star readers with the hope it may inspire others to live and work unselfishly.

Dear Julian Uncle, We saw you on the Channel 4 and BBC news a few days ago. Quite a few events are being held in school to support the charities helping the people affected by the Bangladeshi flood crisis. Tomorrow, Muslim Society and Hindu Cultural Society (of which I am a member) are holding a cake sale all the proceedings of which will go to helping the people in Bangladesh. Members of the societies are asked to bake or buy cakes or make a donation (a box will be placed outside the common room for people to make their donations). It is also the chosen cause of our form. A few people will be doing things to help raise money. A friend of mine, Katie Lee is doing a sponsored 24-Hour Silence and another friend, Shaila Haque, is doing a Sponsored Silence at the same time and also a Sponsored Vegetarian Week. This means that she is not allowed to eat any

meat for an entire week. I have sponsored then '£1 each' and I will be making a donation tomorrow. We are appealing for funds by saying things like this:

- I will cover enough rice for one family for a week
- I will pay for one saree
- I will pay for vegetable seeds (like spinach, radish, tomato, pumpkin)
- I will pay for the medical costs of three patients. Diarrhoea is the biggest problem but also respiratory infections and lots of fungal skin problems

I have printed out your e-mail and intend to show it to the two sixth-formers who run the Hindu Cultural Society and also to a few people in my form.

Shaila was in Bangladesh visiting her relatives in the summer, but I'm not sure how they have been affected by the current crisis.

Thanks for the useful information and keep us updated. Let us know if you will be appearing on the TV in future.

Love
Amrita and Priya
Julian Francis is Disaster Preparedness Delegate, IFRCS, based in Bangladesh

Recalling Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal O' Death, Where is Thy Sting?

by A R Shamsul Islam

Hard to believe that long nine years have run out since the demise of Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal. Still harder to accept that death could snatch him away so untimely. The protest is not against death being so cruel. The resentment is that death could be so unwitty.

This is because Abu Hena was unmitigatingly lively. He could cheer out against gloom till it thinned and disappeared. He did cheat us a lot of our grief. But we have now none to alleviate our sorrow that his demise has delivered us.

He was an infallible humourist. His humour shot from the commonplace to the classic. The magic is that when he talked classic it was done so masterly that the classic, without losing dignity, eased to the commonplace that even a layman could understand and enjoy. In a group of men the role of the kingpin was unmistakably his. Neither anybody grudged it nor the assured monopoly of position could slacken vigourity of the role. The boredom of a journey, languidness of a sitting would go as soon as Abu Hena got in with customary ripples of smile on face.

Abu Hena was fiercely outspoken. His face and mind dangerously synchronised. Ours is a society where many a high position is occupied by the unworthy. It is got through multiple management and manipulation. This kind of social 'pilferage' Abu Hena could not stand. He attacked the 'phones' with biting remarks. It might have increased the rank of his enemies. But he cared little for it.

His friends knew how passionately a friend could be. He loved them very dearly and was ready to sacrifice a lot for them. Litterateurs, poets are not necessarily unworthy. But Abu Hena was astoundingly quite the contrary. He had not left behind any home, land, bank deposit, that a man of his rank and remuneration did generally have. He had no thinking on that line. Even he was quite casual and callous about appropriating his paternal property that he inherited.

Abu Hena's genius was many-sided. He was a poet, litterateur, research scholar,

teacher, educationist, lyricist. To evaluate them is the task of critics and scholars, certainly not mine. I would not make any vain attempt if that.

When called upon to act as a D G of the Shilpakala Academy and Bangla Academy he delighted us by displaying a fine piece of administrative acumen.

In financial matters Abu Hena was a stern disciplinarian. He would never allow misuse of money. He had rather make scores of enemies than

His last moments at Suhrawardy Hospital were as much pathetic as meaningful. In the hospital he became restless to return home. On the fateful morning of September 23 his eagerness to go back home grew irresistible. He screamed, "Tulu, call chauffeur to place the car. I'll go home." Lying prostrate on ICU (Intensive Care Unit) bed he was caught by a short nap. After a while he woke up, looked at bedside where Tulu bhabhi stood and shifted his gaze with eyes wide open to the vacant headside in utter bewilderment and panic as if he had seen that inexorable "Azrail" had arrived to seize his life. He closed his eyes never to open again.

His death created a void in our personal, social, literary and cultural lives never to be filled up. Wednesday (Sept 23) was his anniversary of death. Profoundest respect to the undying memory of Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal.

Death conquers man. But there are a few who conquer death instead. It is by their landmark deeds. Abu Hena also ranks among them. He can ringingly challenge: "O' death, where is thy sting?"

The writer is retired principal, Gout Mohila College, Pabna.



Halima Mustafa Kamal told me that shortly before death one night Abu Hena saw a strange dream. It was like this: He along with his wife and children was led in to a golden house. After resting a while all others left the house but he alone remained there. He vehemently requested others to take him with them but none paid any heed to his entreaties. The following morning he enquiringly asked his wife and children what did the dream signify? Further in his book of poems entitled "Akranza Gazar" he composed some poem that spoke of death as clearly knocking at his door:

এবুনি হেন আসবে বাজার মতো,
কিবা বিজয়ী মতো অনিবার্য
তার তীব্র শাল চোখের সম্মুখে আদি
একা চলে যাবে
পদ্মবাহিনী কোন পদ্মবো
(দুঃ যাত্রার পারানি)

Would Planting Ban on Eucalyptus and Akashmoni be Wise?

by Dr M A Quddus

IT is learnt that the government is going to ban planting of eucalyptus and akashmoni trees in Bangladesh. Sajeda Choudhury, Minister for Forest and Environment unfolded this information while inaugurating a tree fair in Dinajpur on July 23, 1998. She informed that the Prime Minister has given such an instruction in a review meeting of the Ministry of Forest and Environment.

The reason stated is that eucalyptus uptakes soil moisture at a heavy rate and thus depletes soil fertility while akashmoni causes serious disease of human lung. However, it is not clear whether the ban would be limited to planting programs in public lands or it would also include farmers' tree farming or agroforestry activities in their own homestead and crop fields (i.e., private land).

In fact, the restriction on planting eucalyptus on public lands has been in effect since 1994. Although it is not known whether there has been any formal order of the government, the Forest Department officials have been observing such restriction in afforestation and reforestation programs.

The field-level staff of the Forest Department as well those of the Department of Agriculture even forbids farmers to plant eucalyptus on their own land by saying that it has been banned by the government. But, during 1986-1994, these species were extensively and successfully used in the participatory afforestation and reforestation programs in the encroached forests, particularly in the 'sal' forests.

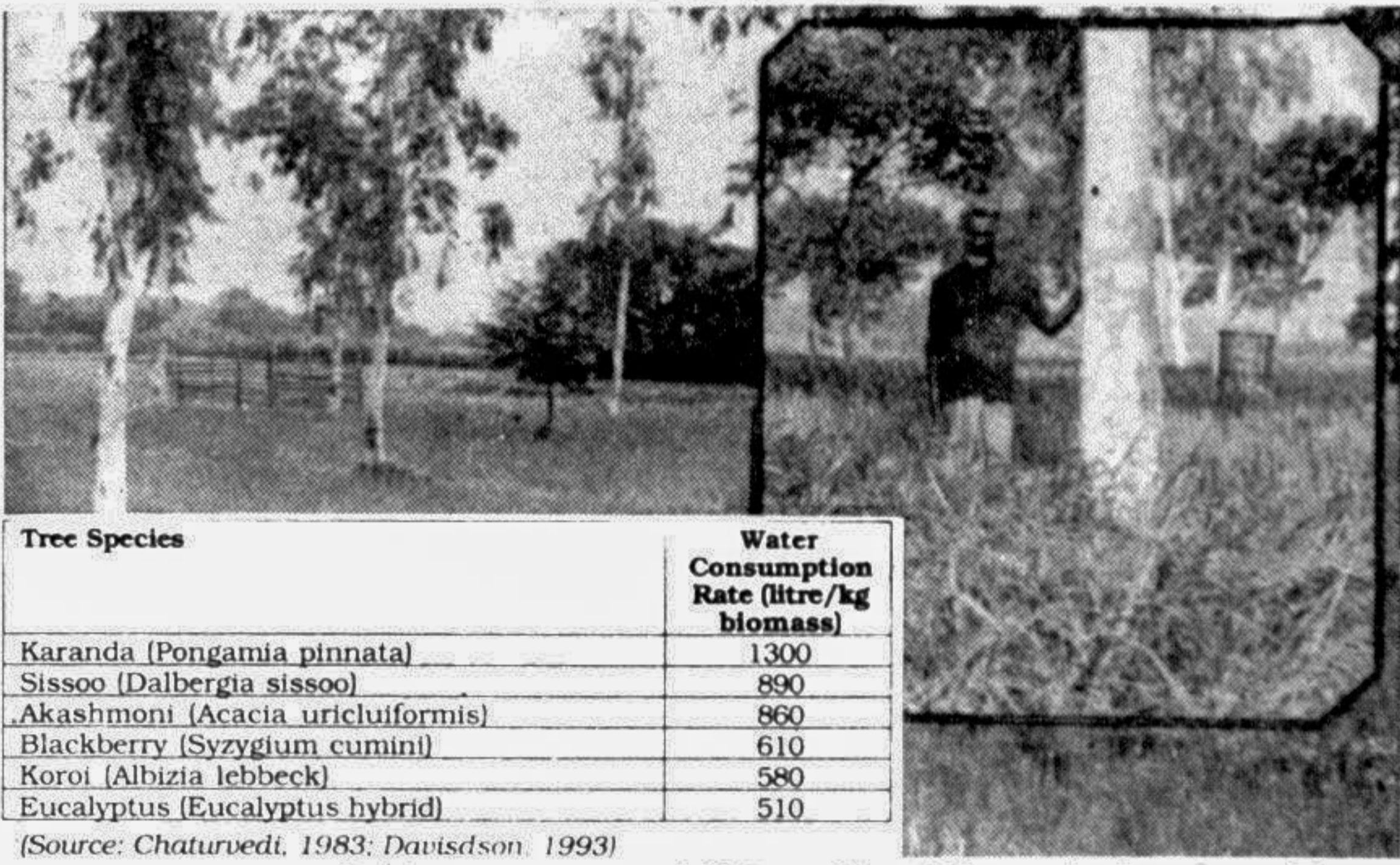
In reforesting denuded forestlands, silviculturists generally recommend these species for least one or two rotations, to create favorable soil environment before planting premium species. These species are so used because of their short rotation, quick growth and, above all, for their ability to thrive in poor soils. Planting of these short-rotation species restores fertility of the topsoil through the mechanism of nutrient pumping from sub soil zone.

On the other hand, these species have also been proven suitable for cropland agroforestry because of their favorable attributes. In a country with very little per capita forestland like Bangladesh, the importance of cropland agroforestry need not be explained. Cropland agroforestry means planting trees on crop fields in thin stand for production of timber, fuelwood, fodder and forgrains from the same unit of land.

The farmers of the north-west Bangladesh have been increasingly adopting cropland agroforestry practices in the recent years to combat crisis of fuelwood and timber and to maximize income from the land.

Eucalyptus has become a popular species for cropland agroforestry, particularly in the districts of Bogra, Joypurhat, Serajgonj and Gaibandha. Tree planting monitoring data of the SDC-sponsored Village and Farm Forestry Project (VFFP), implemented by several local NGOs showed that about one-fifth of the tree seedlings planted in croplands in these districts in 1996 were eucalyptus which closely followed the number of sissoo (25.2%) and mahogany (22.4%) seedlings.

Similarly, 14.4% of the seedlings planted in croplands



Tree Species	Water Consumption Rate (litre/kg biomass)
Karanda (Pongamia pinnata)	1300
Sissoo (Dalbergia sissoo)	890
Akashmoni (Acacia urticuliformis)	860
Blackberry (Syzygium cumini)	610
Koroj (Albizia lebbek)	580
Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus hybrid)	510

(Source: Chaturvedi, 1983; Davidsom, 1993)

by the farmers in the operational areas of the Bangladesh Seed Foundation in Mymensingh are eucalyptus and another 15.3% akashmoni where the two most favorite species raintree and mahogany accounted for 25.49% and 24.28%, respectively.

In other areas, these species have not yet gained such popularity but seem to have prospects for extension. Under such circumstances, it is necessary to rethink whether a total planting ban on eucalyptus and akashmoni would be wise or not.

Problems and Prospects of Eucalyptus

On April 16, 1994, BARC organized a seminar to synthesize research findings and expert opinions about the problems and prospects of eucalyptus in Bangladesh. In that seminar, the leading forestry and agroforestry specialists of the country presented a number of scientific papers on the issue, based on their research work, field experience and information gathered from secondary sources.

All the papers concluded that eucalyptus might be a suitable species for afforestation/reforestation in denuded forestlands, for roadside plantation and for agroforestry purposes. The papers ruled out the possibility of any significant adverse effect of eucalyptus on soil environment.

Regarding the issue of excessive water uptake by eucalyptus trees, the scientists have explained that although it uptakes more water than most other species due to its faster growth and higher biomass yield, its water use efficiency is much higher than the other species. The light crown and the waxy coating on the leaves of eucalyptus keep its evapo-transpiration loss of water at minimal.

Thus it actually requires less quantity of water per unit of biomass production as compared to other tree species. The data presented in the table clearly demonstrate the superiority of eucalyptus in terms of water use efficiency.

It is interesting to note that the water consumption rate of eucalyptus is even lower than that of rice plants. Rice plants consume 600 liters of water for

production of one kilogram of biomass (grain, straw and roots).

Above all, the high water consumption of eucalyptus plantations is not a constraint for Bangladesh, even for its lowest rainfall areas like Barind Tract. Calculating the water consumption and evapotranspiration rates of eucalyptus and the water balance in the soil, Davidson (a renowned silviculturist) has opined that there should not be any restriction on planting eucalyptus in areas where the annual rainfall is 1200 mm or more.

He suggested that eucalyptus should not be planted in areas where the annual rainfall is less than 400 mm while it should be planted thinly and in mixture with other species where the annual rainfall ranges from 400-1200 mm. But, there is no place in Bangladesh where the annual rainfall is less than 1200 mm.

Scientists have also ruled out the possibility of lowering of ground water table by eucalyptus as its root system remains confined within the top 3 meter of the soil. In fact, eucalyptus is a very hardy species capable of thriving even in dry and unfertile soils where the prospect of other species is very little.

The Controversy about Akashmoni

The pollen of Akashmoni is thought to be allergic in nature causing asthma to some people. It may be true. But, it is not the only tree species whose pollen is allergic to asthma patients. The allergy is person-specific. All asthma patients are not allergic to akashmoni pollens. Rather, many of them are allergic to the pollens of other plants.

Therefore, planting ban only on akashmoni is not likely to solve the problem to any significant extent. On the other hand, it has been proven a good reforestation and agroforestry species in Bangladesh. It is also a fast growing and high biomass yielding species with excellent timber quality.

Besides, as a nitrogen-fixing species, it improves soil fertility. Research findings of the Village and Farm forestry Project of SDC depict that crop yields are not reduced under the canopy of akashmoni trees. Rather, it has been found to be increased by 5% and 4% in T Aman rice and wheat, respect-

ively. Besides, the average value of the timber and fuelwood received from an akashmoni tree in 12-13 years is about Tk 1800.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The above facts suggest that eucalyptus and akashmoni are prospective species for afforestation, reforestation and agroforestry purposes, rather than harmful, particularly in the context of Bangladesh.

Therefore, it is appealed that no general ban should be imposed on the planting of these trees in Bangladesh. Planting of these trees by the farmers themselves on their own land should particularly be exempted from such a ban.

—CCN
The writer is an Agroforestry Specialist

Eighty-five Countries Ranked for Perceived Corruption

Phillip Kurata writes from Washington

THE world's leading non-government organization fighting corruption says the battle to secure democracy, alleviate poverty and sustain investment and commerce hinge on curbing corruption in developing nations and across Central and Eastern Europe.

In releasing its 1998 corruption perceptions index, Transparency International Chairman Peter Eigen says the index should serve as "an incentive to governments to confront the corruption in their countries. The new index illustrates how serious the global cancer of corruption really is. This has to change."

This year's corruption perception index ranks 85 countries in the group's most comprehensive survey since it was founded in 1993. Transparency defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain. The Berlin-based organization compiled its index from multiple surveys of expert and general public views in many countries. Transparency says its index deals with the perception of corruption, not corruption itself, which Transparency says it does not have the means to quantify.

The group urges the legislatures of the 29 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and five other countries in South America and Eastern Europe to ratify a treaty that would criminalize bribery of foreign officials by multinational corporations.

With its pioneering 1977 Foreign and Corrupt Practices Act, the United States is the leading supporter of the OECD anti-corruption treaty. Leaders of the US Congress say they intend to approve its ratification and pass legislation to implement it before the current session ends in October.

"The first thing businesses should do is stop paying bribes. Most of the major bribes in what we call grand corruption around the world are the result of international corporations paying bribes to get contracts," Transparency International Vice Chairman Frank Vogl said.

He says a huge silent majority of multinationals oppose the OECD treaty. Transparency International says it wants to compile an index ranking OECD governments for their tolerance of foreign bribery by their multinational companies, but lacks sufficient data to do so. Germany, for example, allows its corporations to write off foreign bribes as tax deductions.

Following is Transparency International's 1998 corruption perception index:

Country Rank	Country	1998 CPI Score	Standard Deviation	Surveys Used
1	Denmark	10.0	0.7	9
2	Finland	9.6	0.5	9
3	Sweden	9.5	0.5	9
4	New Zealand	9.4	0.7	8
5	Iceland	9.3	0.9	6
6	Canada	9.2	0.5	9
7	Singapore	9.1	1.0	10
8	Netherlands	9.0	0.7	9
9	Norway	9.0	0.7	9
10	Switzerland	8.9	0.6	10
11	Australia	8.7	0.7	8
12	Luxembourg	8.7	0.9	7
13	United Kingdom	8.7	0.5	10
14	Ireland	8.2	1.4	10
15	Germany	7.9	0.4	10
16	Hong Kong	7.8	1.1	12
17	Austria	7.5	0.8	9
18	United States	7.5	0.9	8
19	Israel	7.1	1.4	9
20	Chile	6.8	0.9	9
21	France	6.7	0.6	9
22	Portugal	6.5	1.0	10
23	Botswana	6.1	2.2	3
24	Spain	6.1	1.3	10
25	Japan	5.8	1.6	11
26	Estonia	5.7	0.5	3
27	Costa Rica	5.6	1.6	5
28	Belgium	5.4	1.4	9
29	Malaysia	5.3	0.4	11
30	Namibia	5.3	1.0	3
31	Taiwan	5.3	0.7	11
32	South Africa	5.2	0.8	10
33	Hungary	5.0	1.2	9
34	Mauritius	5.0	0.8	3
35	Tunisia	5.0	2.1	3
36	Greece	4.9	1.7	9
37	Czech Republic	4.8	0.8	9
38	Jordan	4.7	1.1	9
39	Italy	4.6	0.8	10
40	Poland	4.6	1.6	8
41	Peru	4.5	0.8	6
42	Uruguay	4.3	0.9	3
43	South Korea	4.2	1.2	12
44	Zimbabwe	4.2	2.2	6
45	Malawi	4.1	0.6	4
46	Brazil	4.0	0.4	9
47	Belarus	3.9	1.9	3
48	Slovak Republic	3.9	1.6	5
49	Jamaica	3.8	0.4	3
50	Morocco	3.7	1.8	3
51	El Salvador	3.6	2.3	3
52	China	3.5	0.7	10
53	Zambia	3.5	1.6	4
54	Turkey	3.4	1.0	10
55	Ghana	3.3	1.0	4
56	Mexico	3.3	0.6	9
57	Philippines	3.3	1.1	10
58	Senegal	3.3	0.8	3
59	Ivory Coast	3.1	1.7	4
60	Guatemala	3.1	2.5	3
61	Argentina	3.0	0.6	9
62	Nicaragua	3.0	2.5	3
63	Romania	3.0	1.5	3
64	Thailand	3.0	0.7	11
65	Yugoslavia	3.0	1.5	3
66	Bulgaria	2.9	0.6	3
67	Egypt	2.9	0.6	12
68	India	2.8	1.2	4
69	Ukraine	2.8	1.6	6
70	Latvia	2.7	1.9	3
71	Pakistan	2.7	1.4	3
72	Uganda	2.6	0.8	4
73	Kenya	2.5	0.6	4
74	Vietnam	2.5	0.5	6
75	Russia	2.4	0.9	10
76	Ecuador	2.3	1.5	3
77	Venezuela	2.3	0.8	9
78	Colombia	2.2	0.8	9
79	Indonesia	2.0	0.9	10
80	Nigeria	1.9	0.5	5
81	Tanzania	1.9	1.1	4
82	Honduras	1.7	0.5	3
83	Paraguay	1.5	0.5	3
84	Cameroon	1.4	0.5	4

Notes
1998 CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people, risk analysts and the general public and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt).
Surveys used refers to the number of surveys that assessed a country's performance. 12 surveys were used and at least three surveys were required for a country to be included into the 1998 CPI.
Standard Deviation indicates differences in the values of the sources; the greater the standard deviation, the greater the differences of perceptions of a country among the sources.

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