

# Malaysia posts first trade surplus in four years

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 6: Malaysia logged a trade surplus of 58.4 billion ringgit (15.4 billion dollars) in 1998, its first in four years, the statistics department said Friday, reports AFP.

The positive trade balance reversed a 45-million-ringgit deficit incurred in the previous year, the department said in data released through the official Bernama news agency.

In December, a surge in exports led the country to record its 14th monthly consecutive trade surplus of 6.7 billion ringgit, it said.

The figure was up nearly six-

fold from one billion ringgit logged in the same period a year earlier, and up 31 percent from 6.5 billion ringgit in November.

For the whole of 1998, exports surged 30 percent year-on-year to 286.8 billion ringgit, outpacing a 3.3 percent rise in imports to 228.3 billion ringgit, the department said.

If imports and re-exports of big-ticket items such as aircraft and ships were excluded, Malaysia would have posted a higher trade surplus of 64.6 billion ringgit last year.

Electrical and electronic products remained Malaysia's largest export earner, with a 35 percent surge in total receipts to

152.1 billion ringgit or over 53 percent of earnings for the year.

This was trailed by palm oil and palm-based products, which represented eight percent or 22.6 billion ringgit of total exports.

During the year, imports of intermediate goods accounted for 160 billion ringgit or 70 percent of total trade, followed by capital goods with 16 percent and consumption goods 5.8 percent.

Malaysia's major trading partners continued to be the United States, Singapore and Japan, collectively accounting for 51 percent of the country's total trade.



Sena Kalyan Sangstha Managing Director Brig Shah Jalal, PSC, briefs Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina about the Sangstha during her visit to Sena Kalyan pavilion after inaugurating the Dhaka International Trade Fair '99 on February 2.

# No BT plan for new investment in India

NEW DELHI, Feb 6: British Telecom does not have plans for making new investments in India because of red tape, a company official said on Friday, reports AFP.

"We have been recording losses on all investments made so far in the country," Arun Seth, head of the company's Indian operations told a telecommunications conference.

"There is a lack of political will to sort out complex issues plaguing the telecom sector. Foreign investors have too many choices now and India has a poor track record of return on investments," Seth said.

British Telecom has a joint venture with Bharti Cellular which is providing cellular telephone services in capital New Delhi and three other firms including one for Internet services.

India's private cellular telephone firms are facing huge losses because of high service costs and licence fees to the government and steep import duties on handsets.

The Cellular Operators Association of India has demanded radical steps, including a two-year freeze on licence fees, to bail out the companies saying private operators were paying about 80 percent of their revenues to the government.

Seth said British Telecom had been "trying to create a sub-continental hub for long-distance phone calls" alongside the state-run Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd.

# Colombo int'l garment accessories fair in Mar

A three-day international display on garment accessories will be held in Colombo next month under the aegis of the Sri Lanka Apparel Institute, reports BSS.

Chairman of the Sri Lanka Apparel Institute said this while giving a presentation on the exhibition at Sonargaon hotel in the city yesterday.

Prof Lakdas D Fernando said the fair, dubbed as AISEX (Apparel Industry Suppliers Exhibition), will be held in Colombo from March 18 to 20, to give a befitting exposure of the readymade garment industries of the region to the international community.

He said the exhibition aims at showing the top accessories producers of the region cannot be ignored.

Fernando said the exhibition would create an opportunity for suppliers of fabric, accessories and services related to the apparel industry to display their latest product ranges and development.

He said besides the participants from the region, over 20 leading global manufacturers of different kinds have confirmed their participation in the exhibition.

President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Mostafa Golam Quddus and second Vice President of the BGMEA Engr Nurul Huq Sikdar spoke on the occasion.

A good number of garment manufacturers attended the presentation.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Bangladesh E.G. Dayananda and Country Representative of AISEX for Bangladesh Syed Farhad Ahmed were present on the occasion.

# Biggest Japanese bank to end overseas business

TOKYO, Feb 6: Japan's largest regional bank the Bank of Yokohama Ltd, has decided to completely withdraw from overseas banking, a major business newspaper reported Saturday, reports UNB.

The bank of Yokohama plans to give up the banking license of its Belgium-based operations, and close all other overseas branches by the end of March, the Nihon Keizai financial daily reported.

The bank intends to ask the government for 100 billion to 200 billion yen (\$ 892 million to 1.78 billion) to recapitalize, the paper said.

The Bank of Yokohama is just one of many Japanese financial institutions struggling to write off massive amounts of bad loans from the collapse of the nation's "bubble" economy in the late 1980s.

Those problem loans and sweeping deregulation in the country's financial industry have prompted many banks to restructure or form alliances to survive.

Recently, several other major banks, including Mitsubishi Trust and Banking Co, Yasuda Trust and Banking Co, Nippon Trust and Banking Co, Chuo Trust and Banking Co, and Daiwa Bank Ltd, have also decided to close their overseas operations.

# Strong US job report shows sustained momentum

WASHINGTON, Feb 6: The American economy entered the new year on a tear, keeping the unemployment rate at a 28-year low of 4.3 per cent and pushing the jobless rates for blacks and Hispanics to their lowest on record, reports AP.

"It's a great time to be an American worker," said economist Bill Cheney of John Hancock in Boston. The job market, except for manufacturing, remains remarkably vibrant.

The US government's first major economic report for this year, issued Friday by the Labour Department, showed that 245,000 new jobs were created in sales, construction, computers and other fields. That put January's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate at the level achieved in December, last April and, before that, in 1970.

The unemployment rate for whites was unchanged at 3.8 per cent in January. But the rates for blacks, 7.8 per cent, and Hispanics, 6.6 per cent, fell to their lowest levels since the government began tracking them in the early 1970s.

The increase in employers' payroll was nearly 100,000

more than expected by economists and came on top of a 298,000 increase in December.

"Sluggish (corporate) earnings and weak growth in the rest of the world should eventually temper the US economy," said economist Gerald D Cohen of Merrill Lynch. "However, that is not yet evident."

The report, along with private reports on auto and retail chain sales and manufacturing activity, shows the US economy last month had considerable momentum after growing during the final three months of 1998 at the fastest rate in 2 1/2 years.

It raises questions about how much longer the Federal Reserve can resist raising short-term interest rates. At Fed policy-makers' most recent meeting, they decided to hold rates unchanged.

But Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan expressed concern in congressional testimony last month that labour shortages would propel faster wage increases, which in turn would drive inflation.

But Labour Secretary Alexis Herman said he wasn't worried about a rate increase.

"There are no signs of infla-

tion... Productivity is in line with real wage gains. That's exactly the kind of balance you want to see," she said.

Friday's report showed the average hourly wages of non-supervisory workers rising 6 cents in January to \$ 13.04. It was the largest monthly increase since August. Over the past year, hourly earnings have increased 50 cents, or 4 per cent.

In a separate report, the Federal Reserve said consumer borrowing advanced at strong 6.9 per cent annual rate in December, to \$ 1.34 trillion. The gain was led by auto loans, up at 15.9 per cent rate, the fastest in a year.

January job gains were led by services. Engineering and management continued their strong growth.

Finance and real estate each added 11,000 jobs. Retail employment rose by 30,000. Payrolls increased by 13,000 at trucking firms, 11,000 at communications companies and 36,000 in local government.

The booming construction industry added a seasonally adjusted 15,000 jobs even though severe weather in the Midwest and Northeast halted some work.

Finance and real estate each added 11,000 jobs. Retail employment rose by 30,000. Payrolls increased by 13,000 at trucking firms, 11,000 at communications companies and 36,000 in local government.

# Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong port						
Berth position and performance of vessels as on 4-2-99						
Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving
J/1	Asian Ruby	Rice(P)	Vish	USTC	28/1	7/2
J/2	Banglar Urm	GI	Sing	BSC	24/2	5/2
J/3	Al Quamar	Rice(G)	Hald	SL	24/1	8/2
J/4	Topaz	C.Clink	Cosh	MBL	28/1	8/2
J/5	Ostfriesland	Rice(P)	Kand	MHCSL	5/1	5/2
J/6	Mariupol	R.Seed	Pen	Seacomd	9/1	4/2
J/7	Banglar Mamata	Wheat(G)	Everett	BSC	R/A	8/2
J/8	Iran Salan	GI	Dubai	Everett	31/1	6/2
J/9	Amftritt	GI	Caga	Oil	23/2	7/2
J/10	Blue Angel	Wheat(P)	MAD	AASS	11/1	10/2
J/11	Banglar Shobha	Wheat(G)	Everett	BSC	R/A	5/2
J/12	Banga Biraj	Cont	Sing	Bdship	28/1	5/2
J/13	Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	ISC	30/1	8/2
CCT/1	Diligence Cont	Cont	Sing	QCSL	28/1	5/2
CCT/2	Dragon Malimatan	Cont	Sing	Nol	27/1	9/2
CCT/3	Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	PI(BD)	27/1	7/2
RM/14	Youngly	C.Clink	Sing	PSAL	10/1	5/2
RM/15	Arktis Blue	GI	Hazi	RSA	21/2	4/2
GSJ	Viva Treasure	Cement	Sing	USTC	1/2	10/2
TSP	Viva Swamru	GI	Hazi	ASLL	R/A	7/2
RM/3	Katubara naree	Sulp	BABB	Seacom	23/1	9/2
RM/5	Patok Marun No.2	LSD	Sing	MSTPL	1/2	9/2
RM/5	Marol	HSD	Jaba	FCSL	2/2	4/2
DDJ/1	Tanary Star	IDE	Para	PSAL	28/1	4/2
RM/8	Meghna	Repair	Sing	Bdship	11/1	4/2
RM/9	Banglar Jyoti	Repair	Everett	BSC	R/A	8/2

Vessels due at outer anchorage				
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo Loading port
Xing Ye	5/2	-	MHCSL	Rice(P)/GI
Grigoriy Kovalchok	6/2	Kaki	SMSL	Rice
Dos Oriente	6/2	Thai	MBL	GI
Bo Tong Gang	8/2	-	USTC	Rice(G)
On San Tok	6/2	-	USTC	Rice(G)
Bunga Maslaplan (Cont)	27/1	5/2	EOSL	Cont/Sing P.Kel
Olympic Mentor	5/2	Turk	OWSL	Wheat(P)
Ever Cheer (48) 31/1	5/2	-	RMLG(St.Coll)	Cont
Apil	6/2	Hong	Frank	-
Ever Cheer	5/2	-	RML	GI
Hafina	8/2	-	MHCSL	Rice(G)
Spring Trader (24) 26/1	5/2	Sing	Everett	Loco
Commencement	6/2	Sing	Anavent	Rice(G)
Dine An	6/2	Sing	RML	GI
Sunista	6/2	Sint	FSAL	c.Clinker
Taraman Bibi	10/2	-	USTC	Cement
Bhavabhuti	9/2	Cinn	SSLL	-
Kota Naga (Cont) 28/1	7/2	Sing	PI(BD)	Cont
Banga Btrot (Cont) 25/1	7/2	Sing	Bdship	Cont
Budi Teguh (Cont) 1/2	8/2	Sing	RSL	Cont
Bunga Mas Enam (Cont) 31/1	8/2	Sing	EOSL	Cont
Makassar Express (Cont) 31/1	8/2	Sing	RSL	Cont
Cortesia Duckling	8/2	Kaos	UMTL	Scraping
Martina	10/2	-	Viking	Cement
Ge Test (Cont) 27/1	10/2	Sing	QCSL	Cont
Albatross-III	12/2	Kand	SMSL	Rice
A.A. Venture	10/2	-	Cla	Rice(P)/GI
Sea Coral	10/2	-	USTC	Rice(G)
Acacia	10/2	Sing	Baridhi	Sing
Teresa Prestise	11/2	-	Everett	GI
Dragon Brant (Cont) 1/2	11/2	Sing	Nol	Cont
Norbuk Seraya	11/2	-	Prog	Cont
Sarah-1	13/2	Kara	Smsl	Rice/GI
Asian Prosperity (Roro) 24/31	11/3/2	Sing	JF	Vehi
Ingenuity (Cont) 17/1	14/2	Sing	RSL	Cont
Kota Berjaya (Cont) 1/2	15/2	Sing	PI(BD)	Cont
Brisa Azul	24/2	-	Everett	GI
Amrita-VII	26/2	-	Everett	GI

Tanker due				
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo
Larissa Dwitya	4/2	Sing	CTPL	F.Oil
Pranedyta Dwitya	5/2	Sing	CTPL	F.Oil
Al Badiyah	8/2	-	MinaAtlantic	Sko

Vessels at Kutubdia				
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Prot call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Seabloom Command	Wheat(G)	Texas	IBS	R/A(25/10)
Champion	Wheat(G)	Texas	SST	2/2
Banglar Mookh	Wheat(G)	Texas	Frank	R/A(2/2)
Akra Sounion	Wheat(G)	Texas	Lams	2/2
Sea World	Wheat(G)	Texas	CCNL	R/A(2/2)

Vessels at outer anchorage				
Ready on				
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Prot call	Local agent	Date of arrival
General mojica	R.Seed	Sing	Dolphin	18/1
Ecaterina	GI	Muni	Sunshine	24/1
Saukung	GI	Walu	Seaglor	21/1
Mawlamyine	GI	Yang	MTA	26/1
Golden D	Wheat(G)	Mong	Lams	28/1
Diligence Cont	Cont	Sing	QCSL	28/1
Meraks	TSP/HPSP	Qinz	USTC	8/1
Sylvia	Rice(G)	Kand	USTC	30/1
Sea Gallang	Cont	Sing	PI(BD)	2/2
Multan	Rice	Kara	BSC	30/1
Ge Pntal	Cont	Sing	QCSL	3/2
Ervillea	HAD	Sing	ECSL	2/2

Vessels awaiting instruction				
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Prot call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Karya Sentosa	Rice(G)	USTC	R/A(18/9)	-
Rutz	Rice(P)	Kaki	Cross	R/A(24/9)
Delta Stear	-	-	RSA	R/A(7/7)
Iran Shahamat	Bunker	Mong	BSC	2/2
Surabaya Express	-	-	OLM	R/A(30/1)
Banglar Shourabh	-	-	BSC	R/A(3/2)
Ocean-1	-	-	SMSL	R/A(2/2)
Tug as Enterprise	-	-	Cla	R/A(29/1)
Island Pirnces	-	-	ILAPSL	R/A(29/1)
Tug Tb Ocean Silver-8	-	-	Karma	R/A(30/10)
Barge: Wombat/Le Macareux/PDC-1ham-91/F-22A/c Developing road	-	-	Karan	R/A(30/10)

Vessels not entering				
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Prot call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Palau Mawar	GI	Bang	OLM	8/1
Shingobu	Scraping	Falm	Ar1	25/1
Al Salamas	-	-	ASSL	R/A(28/11)

Movement of vessels for 5. 8 & 7.2.99		
Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
05/01:		
J/2 B Urm	J/11 Eka Talina	RM/3 Talana to RM/6
J/5 Ostriesland	J/2 Saikung	
J/11 B. Shobha	GSJ Golden-D	
J/12 B. Biraj	J/5 Al Borak	
J/13 B. Shikha	J/13 B Borak	
GSJ Al Swamru	DD Prosrich	
	DOJ Larisa	
	RM/5 Ultima	
	J/12 Seepre	
6/2		
J/8 I. Salam	J/12 Spring Trader	J/12 Ultima to J/8
CCT/2 D.Kallimantan	CCT/2 QC Mellard	RM/4 Sceptor to RM/3
RM/14 Youngly	RM/4 P. Dwitya	CCU V. Treasure to RM/14
RM/15 Ervillea		
DJ Porsrich		
7/2:		
J/1 A. Ruby	J/8 Every Cheer	J/11 Eca Talina to J/9
J/7 B. Mamata	CCT/3 X.resove	
J/9 Amftritt	J/14 Kota Abadi	
CCT/3 Kota Sing	Elikon	
J/12 Spring trader	J/11 Solya	
DOJ Larissa	J/1 Mawlamyine	
J/8 ultima	RM/3 Dalia-2	
	CCJ Sunsin	

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

**Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority**  
141-143, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000

## Tender Notice

Sealed tenders in prescribed form are invited from bonafide Printing Press for printing & supply of various kinds of forms, pads, registers etc.

- Tender No : Croy-03/99 dated 27.1.99.
- Earnest money : 2% of the quoted total amount (refundable) through Pay Order/Call Deposit/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank in favour of BIWTA to be submitted along with the tender as earnest money.
- Price of tender schedule : Tk 100/- (one hundred) (Non-refundable).
- Place where tender schedule will be sold : BIWTA, Accounts Deptt, 9th floor, "BIWTA Bhaban", 141-143, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.
- Place, date and time of receiving tender : Purchase & Stores Deptt, Regional Office, 1st floor, "BIWTA Bhaban", 141-143, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka and Room No. 817 (8th floor), Bhaban No. 6, Ministry of Shipping, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka up to 15:00 hours on 15.2.99.
- Opening date and time of tender : At 15:15 hours on 15.2.99 in presence of the tenderer (if any).  
No tender schedule will be sold on the opening day and no tender will be received after schedule date and time. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

PR-9/99 Md Golam Mollah  
Director  
DPP-2007-2/2/99  
G-209 Purchase & Stores Deptt

**Sales of Square Pharma grow 18pc**  
Star Business Report

The sales of Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd grew by 18 per cent in 1998 over the previous year.

It was disclosed at the company's two-day annual sales conference 1998 at the BCIC conference room, which concluded yesterday, said the firm in a press statement.

Managing Director Tapan Chowdhury who presided over the conference, discussed the future plan of the company.

Dr ARQ Baksh, Executive Director, NEA Shibly, Head of Operations, Dr Jiben Roy, General Manager (Research & Development), Arshad-ul-Alam, Marketing Manager and Md Ismail, Sales Manager, delivered their speeches on performance and activities of different functional areas of marketing and presented the future plan of the company at the conference.

About 450 field officers and office personnel including Area Managers, Field Supervisors, Senior Medical Promotion Officers and Medical Promotion officer participated in the conference.

**ANNUAL SALES CONFERENCE, 1998**  
Venue: BCIC Auditorium, BCIC Bhaban, Dhaka  
Date: February 08, 1999.

**SQUARE PHARMACEUTICALS LTD**  
Dedicated to Advanced Technology

Dr A R Q Baksh, Executive Director of Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd, speaks at the company's annual sales conference-1998. Arshad-ul-Alam, Marketing Manager, Tapan Chowdhury, Managing Director, and Md Ismail, Sales Manager, are also seen in the picture.

—Square Pharma photo

**Thai Siam Cement emerges as major petrochemical enterprise**

BANGKOK, Feb 6: Siam Cement is poised to become a major player in Southeast Asia's petrochemical industry following the completion of a multi-billion dollar plant, a newspaper reported Saturday, says AP.

The company's \$620 million olefins complex and five other petrochemical plants and support facilities are due to begin commercial operations this month in the southeastern province of Rayong, according to the Bangkok Post.

The integration of the new facilities with the company's old petrochemical plants are expected to significantly improve the competitiveness of Siam Cement's products.

At \$195 per ton, costs at the olefins complex would be the lowest in Asia, according to the newspaper's sources.

**Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Ferry Division, Barisal**

## RHD Tender Notice

- Tender Notice No : 24 of RHD, Ferry Division, Barisal/1998-99.
- Name of work : As per group list.
- Estimated cost : As per group list.
- Earnest money : As per group list.
- Eligibility of contractor : "A to D" for Group No 1 of general category contractor of RHD, for Group No 2,3,4 & 5 for "A to E" general category contractor of RHD, as per financial capacity & territorial jurisdiction.
- Availability of tender schedule : 1) Executive Engineer, RHD, Planning Divn, Sarak Bhaban, Dhaka.  
2) Executive Engineer, RHD, Ferry Divn, Barisal/Khulna.  
3) Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Divn, Patuakhali.  
4) Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Ferry Sub-Divn, Barisal only office hours. No tender will be sold on the date of receiving of tender schedule.
- Tender receiving officer : 1) Superintendent Engineer, RHD, Monitoring & Evaluation Circle, Dhaka.  
2) Superintendent Engineer, RHD, Mechl Ferry Circle, Khulna.  
3) Executive Engineer, RHD, Ferry Divn Barisal/Khulna.
- Last date of selling tender documents : 16-2-99/4-11-1405 (only office hours).
- Last date of receiving tender in sealed cover : 17-2-99/5-11-1405 at 12:30 PM.
- Date & time of opening tender : 22-2-99/10-11-1405 at 1:00 PM.
- Date and time of lottery (if applicable) : 22-2-99/10-11-1405 at 3:00 PM.

Executive Engineer, RHD Ferry Divn, Barisal.

DPP-1873-1/2  
G-210

**200 UK offshore oil, gas fields active**

Britain now has 200 offshore oil and gas fields in production following the flow of first commercial gas from the Brown field in the Southern North Sea, some 90 kilometers (56 miles) off the east coast of England.

The 200th field comes on stream just 31 years after the first field entered production on the United Kingdom Continental Shelf. Since then, the number of both gas and oil fields has been steadily rising and by 1986, a total of 50 fields were in production, according to a report made available to UNB.

The 100th field was established in 1993 and today's figure of 200 is made up of 105 oil fields with the other 95 producing gas or gas condensate. Their development has involved a total investment in excess of 177,000 million pounds sterling, said the London Press Service report.

Although the Brown field is a small one