

Clinton moves to extend normal trade relations with China

WASHINGTON, June 4: As protesters marked the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, President Bill Clinton moved Thursday to extend normal trade relations with China, says AP.

The annual recommendation came at a time when allegations that China stole nuclear secrets from US research facilities and meddled in US elections have increased congressional criticism of administration policy toward China.

But Clinton argued in a letter to Congress that building better relations with Beijing is in America's national interest as well as the best way to promote reform within China. He renewed his pledge to press for even closer economic ties.

"We pursue engagement with our eyes wide open," Clinton said. "A policy of disengagement and confrontation would only strengthen those in China who oppose greater openness and freedom."

As Clinton's letter went to Capitol Hill, a small group of demonstrators gathered at the Chinese Embassy in Washington to mark the anniversary of the Chinese government's bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators 10 years earlier.

The protesters read the names of those killed in the

crackdown, called for the release of pro-democracy demonstrators still jailed and scolded policy-makers for putting trade ahead of democracy.

Under a 1974 law, the president must seek an annual waiver to extend normal trade relations to totalitarian states. Since 1980, every president has extended that status to China and, despite concern over human rights, Congress has approved.

Clinton acknowledged concerns about human rights in China, but insisted the only way to address them was through continued contact.

"Trade... remains a force for social change in China, spreading the tools, contacts and ideas that promote freedom," Clinton said.

The accusations leveled against China, coupled with NATO's errant bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade has tensions between Washington and Beijing running high.

"This administration's China policy, like that of the administration before it, has not succeeded in making trade fairer, people freer, or the world safer," Rep. Nancy Pelosi said in a statement.

Rep. Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, criticized Clinton for pursuing

"a strategic partnership with a country that is actively engaged in nuclear espionage activities."

"In our relationship with China, stopping proliferation should be no less a priority than protecting commercial interests," said Gilman, Republican from New York.

But Congress was expected to approve the extension after some stormy debate.

Negotiations to bring China into the World Trade Organisation have been stalled since the errant embassy bombing. But Clinton reassured his intention to seal a WTO deal.

"I am committed to bringing China into global structures, to promote China's adherence to global norms on human rights, weapons of mass destruction, crime and drugs, immigration, the environment, and on trade," he said.

Hong Kong said Friday it welcomed US President Bill Clinton's decision to seek unconditional renewal of China's Normal Trade Relations (NTR) status, reports AFP.

"President Clinton's decision to renew the mainland's NTR trading status is good news for Hong Kong. The decision is

conducive to boosting our business confidence," a government spokesman said in a statement.

The United States and the mainland are Hong Kong's two largest trading partners and good relations between them are of vital importance to Hong Kong as a trading, financial and investment centre.

"NTR is the normal basis for conducting trade between economies. We hope that this decision will strengthen the bilateral relationship between our two largest trading partners."

AmCham

The American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong also welcomed Clinton's decision, hoping "that it will provide the impetus for American and Chinese negotiators to conclude an agreement on the stalled World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks and pave the way for the US to pass legislation granting permanent NTR to China."

Sino-US talks on Beijing's WTO membership bid have so far failed to result in an accord.

"We are pleased with President Clinton's move. It signifies the president's willingness to put the US-China relationship back on track," said Jason Felton, AmCham chairman.

Weekly Currency Roundup

Local Market

During the first week of June, trading in the local foreign market was mostly sluggish. However, the last two days of the week saw higher demand for the US dollar due to import payments and active forward sale. In the interbank market, dollar traded in a range of BDT 48.65 to BDT 48.67.

Trading in the kurb market was dull and a unit of cash dollar noted traded between BDT 49.85 and BDT 50.00.

The money market was also quiet and the call rate ranged between 7.5 and 9 per cent.

Bangladesh Bank accepted Treasury Bills worth of BDT 7.51 per cent, BDT 8 crore for 91 days at 8.36 per cent, BDT 7 crore for 182 days at 8.95 per cent, BDT 5 crore for 364 days at 9.45 and 8.24 crore for 2 years at 9.75 per cent. On Monday, the call rate temporarily rose to the range of 9 and 11 per cent due to payment of Treasury Bills worth BDT 7.08 billion.

International Market

Euro fell to its all-time low against US dollar due to lack of strong Euro policy and poor economic conditions in the Euro Zone. The single currency failed to rebound convincingly despite Yugoslavia's acceptance of a peace plan in Kosovo and remained under downward pressure on a persisting belief that the European Central Bank (ECB) would not take decisive measures to halt its downturn.

— Standard Chartered Bank

Office of the Executive Engineer
Shariatpur O & M Division
BWDB, Shariatpur

Tender Notice

1. Name of work : Construction of Inspection Bungalow at Damudya under Shariatpur O&M Division, BWDB, Shariatpur during the year 1998-99.
2. Estimated cost : Total estimated cost Tk: 21,21,818/-
3. Earnest money : 1) $\frac{1}{2}$ % of the estimated cost.
2) 1% of the estimated cost for FD holder only.
4. Eligibility of contractor : Enlisted "A" & "B" class contractor of BWDB for the year 1998-99.
5. Standard tender documents available from : 1) Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka.
2) Sonali Bank, Main Branch, Puran Bazar, Madaripur.
3) Sonali Bank, WAPDA Building Branch, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.
4) Sonali Bank, Goalachammat Branch, Faridpur.
5) Sonali Bank, Gopalgonj Branch, Gopalgonj.
6) Sonali Bank, Shariatpur Branch, Shariatpur.
6. Standard tender documents will be received by : 1) Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Dhaka.
2) Executive Engineer, Gopalgonj O&M Division, BWDB, Gopalgonj.
3) Executive Engineer, Shariatpur O&M Division, BWDB, Shariatpur.
4) Executive Engineer, Madaripur O&M Division, BWDB, Madaripur.
5) Executive Engineer, Faridpur O&M Division, BWDB, Faridpur.
6) Executive Engineer, Shariatpur O&M Division, BWDB, Shariatpur.
7. Cost of tender documents : Tk: 750/- (Taka seven hundred fifty) only (non-refundable).
8. Last date for selling of standard tender documents : 15/6/99 during office & banking hours.
9. Receiving date of standard tender documents : 14-6-99, 15-6-99 during office & banking hours and 16-6-99 up to 12:00 noon.
10. Opening date & time : 16-6-99 at 12:30 PM in the respective offices.
11. Time allowed for completion of the work : 90 (ninety) days.
12. Address of the advertiser : Executive Engineer, Shariatpur O&M Division, BWDB, Shariatpur.

Abdur Rob Miah

Executive Engineer
Shariatpur O&M Division
BWDB, Shariatpur.

Sales in Tokyo down 35 pc

US auto deal with Japan far short of goals

WASHINGTON, June 4: A 1995 agreement aimed at boosting sales opportunities for US automakers in Japan is falling far short of its goals, with sales of American-made cars in Japan dropping by 35 per cent last year, the White House said, reports AP.

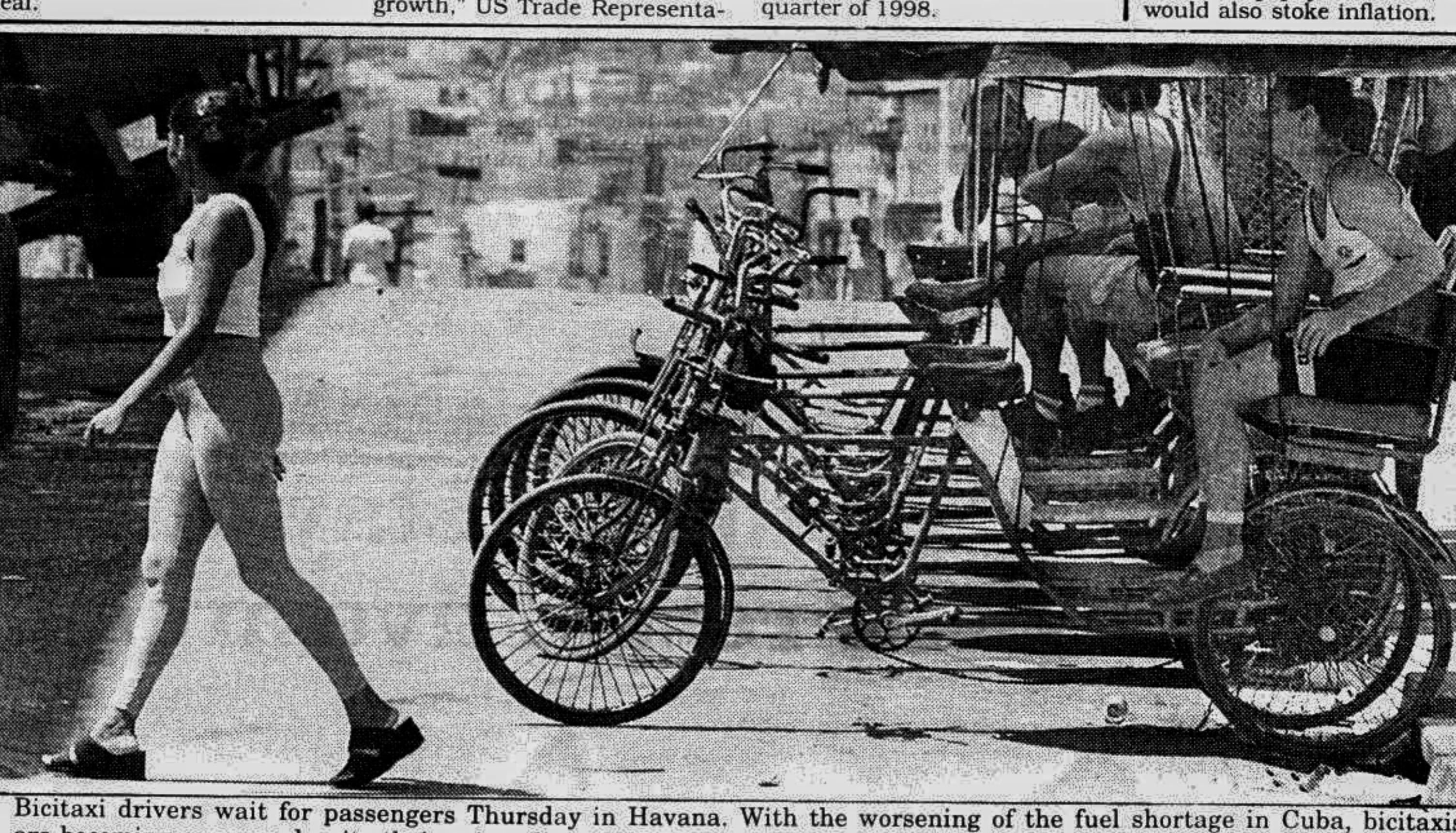
In addition to a plunge in sales of cars made by US automakers, exports of US-made automotive parts to Japan fell by 7.4 per cent last year, the first drop since the auto agreement went into effect, the White House said Thursday in releasing its latest assessment of the decline in sales.

"We strongly urge the Japanese government to further open and deregulate its auto and auto parts market to achieve the goals of the agreement and to help spur Japanese economic growth," US Trade Representa-

tive Charlene Barshefsky and Commerce Secretary William Daley said in a joint statement released with the report.

The two officials said the administration would continue pushing the Japanese government to adopt deregulation proposals made by US negotiators to expand sales opportunities for US automakers and parts suppliers.

The report said sales of US-made cars fell by 35 per cent in 1998 and declined 29 per cent during the first quarter of this year compared with the first quarter of 1998.



Bicitaxi drivers wait for passengers Thursday in Havana. With the worsening of the fuel shortage in Cuba, bicitaxis are becoming common despite their price of one USD per every 2kms travelled.

Belgian chicken scare

US to block poultry, pork imports from Europe

WASHINGTON, June 4: The United States will block imports of poultry and pork from the European Union to make sure the meat is not tainted with the cancer-causing chemical dioxin, the US Agriculture Department said yesterday, reports Reuters.

In response to the worst food safety scare to hit Europe since the mad cow disease outbreak earlier this decade, the United States also will review all imports of pork and poultry products from the EU since January.

The US action follows a decision by European leaders to destroy chicken and egg-based foods originating from Belgium and made between January 15 and June 1.

The crackdown was spurred by the discovery that 400 poultry farms in Belgium may have used animal feed contaminated with dioxin. The Belgium government said the feed also may have gone to 500 pig breeders. Cattle are also being tested for dioxin.

US inspection officials described the US action as a "hold," rather than an outright ban. It will apply to all products containing pork and poultry in addition to just the meats, the department said.

The review of imports since January will be to determine if any additional action is needed.

"These are precautionary steps. Americans enjoy the safest food supply in the world and we are committed to protecting it," said Mike Mira, acting administrator of the department's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

US officials did not say how long the hold would remain in effect, or what kinds of tests would be acceptable to win release of the commodities.

Only a small quantity of European poultry products, mostly pate, are shipped to US buyers.

But about \$250 million worth of European pork was imported last year out of total US imports of \$701 million.

Most of the 74.7 billion pounds (34 billion kg) of meat that Americans consume each year is produced domestically.

Pork imports account for about 700 million pounds (318.2 million kg) of US meat consumption and poultry imports only about 5 million pounds (2.27 million kg), according to US government figures.

A decision on whether EU pork and poultry would be hit with punitive duties is not expected until mid-July, when the World Trade Organisation is scheduled to rule on the US request to retaliate on \$202 million in EU goods.

Belgium bans slaughter, transport

Another report from Brussels says: Belgium yesterday banned the slaughter and transport of poultry, pigs and cattle for three days in its latest move to contain the country's food safety scare linked to dioxin contamination in meat and eggs.

Health Minister Luc Van den Bossche told Belgian television the ban would last until Sunday night to give the authorities

more time to draw up a full list of firms that could have bought contaminated feed and of meat that might have used it.

Slaughter of pigs had already been subject to a one-day ban on Thursday pending test results.

High levels of dioxin in chicken meat and eggs have been traced to contaminated fat, supplied by a Belgian oils and fats processing company, which were used to make animal feed.

Up to 70 cattle farms could have used suspect feed and the ministry was investigating the level of contamination.

The transport ban does not affect moving foreign livestock via Belgium.

Belgium and Europe have brought in progressively tighter controls on chicken, eggs and pork sales since it became clear last week that some meat and egg samples contained high levels of dioxin.

A decision on whether EU pork and poultry would be hit with punitive duties is not expected until mid-July, when the World Trade Organisation is scheduled to rule on the US request to retaliate on \$202 million in EU goods.

Belgium bans slaughter, transport

Another report from Brussels says: Belgium yesterday banned the slaughter and transport of poultry, pigs and cattle for three days in its latest move to contain the country's food safety scare linked to dioxin contamination in meat and eggs.

Health Minister Luc Van den Bossche told Belgian television the ban would last until Sunday night to give the authorities

Invitation for International/ Domestic Bids



Sealed bids are hereby invited from the domestic contractor, enlisted as Class-A contractors under Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), enlisted as Class-I civil contractors under Government Departments as well as from foreign contractors of eligible countries, individual or joint venture with domestic contractors in two-envelope system, one marked technical offer and the other marked financial offer for the construction of Main Building with some Auxiliary Structures (Lot-1) of 210 MW Siddhiganj Thermal Power Station Construction Project, Siddhiganj, Narayanganj.

Each set of detailed bidding documents, comprising one technical and two financial documents will be available for sale from 22 June, 1999 to 4 August, 1999 during office time of all working days at a cost of Tk. 10,000/- (Taka ten thousand) only (non-refundable) per set to be paid in the shape of Bank Draft or Pay Order drawn on any scheduled bank in Bangladesh in favour of Deputy Director (Accounts), Regional Accounting Office (RAO), Bangladesh Power Development Board, Siddhiganj.

1. Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Segun Bagicha, Dhaka.
2. Project Director (Addl. Chief Engineer), 210 MW Siddhiganj TPS Project, BPDB, Camp Office: Room No-515, Biddut Bhaban (4th Floor), Abdul Gani Road, BPDB, Dhaka.
3. Secretary, Bangladesh Power Development Board, WAPDA Building (1st Floor), Dhaka.

Intending bidders shall apply to the heads of the offices mentioned above for purchase of bidding documents with documentary evidences in support of their technical competence and experience in the construction of Main Building and auxiliary structures of power station/multi-storyed buildings/large industrial buildings/structures. Bidding documents will be sold to the bidder whose documentary evidences will be considered satisfactory and acceptable. Bidders who have no experience in similar nature of work mentioned above and did not perform such works worth Tk. 20.00 (Twenty) crore or above in a single contract need not apply.

No bidding document will be sold after expiry of the specified selling date of 4 August, 1999.

The bidders must furnish a bid security of Tk. 37.00 (Thirty-seven) lac in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/Call Deposit or unconditional Bank Guarantee (in prescribed form) from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh, drawn in favour of the Deputy Director (Accounts), RAO, BPDB, Siddhiganj, Narayanganj together with the photo copy of application form bearing the permission of the heads of the offices selling bidding documents. The bids and bid security shall have the validity of 180 (One hundred eighty) days from the date of bid submission.

Bids (Technical & Financial Offer) will be received in the same offices selling the bidding documents up to 11:00 AM on 9 August, 1999. The Technical Offer will be opened on the same day at 12:00 Noon in presence of the bidders or their authorised representatives, if any. The Technical Offer will be evaluated on the basis of an approved evaluation criteria to determine the technically qualified bidders. The Financial Offer of the technically qualified bidders will be kept in sealed condition. Financial Offer of the technically qualified bidders will be opened after proper notification in presence of their representatives, if any.

The Financial Offer of the technically qualified bidders will be returned unopened. Interested bidders may inspect the project site and collect any other information from the office of the Project Director (Addl. Chief Engineer), 210MW Siddhiganj TPS Project or Superintending Engineer (Civil Construction Circle), 210MW Siddhiganj TPS Project, BPDB, Siddhiganj.

All admissible payments will be made exclusively in local currency (in taka) from allocation of Annual Development Programme of Bangladesh Government.

The work has to be started immediately after the signing of contract and completed in all respect within 730 (seven hundred thirty) days.

Bangladesh Power Development Board is not bound to accept the lowest bid and may reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.



The Chairman of the board of the Nestle group, Helmut Maucher, addresses the shareholders during the general meeting of the group on Thursday in Lausanne. — AFP photo

UN bangs drum for global reform

BANGKOK, June 4: A senior UN official has warned the world should not use the apparent easing of the Asian crisis as an excuse to forget promises to overhaul the global financial system, says AFP.

UN Deputy Secretary General Louise Frechette cautioned in an interview with AFP that there was a risk that the drive abates as the region recovers.

"When the crisis was on there was a lot of focus on the moves to reform, strengthen, improve the international financial architecture, and there have been since then a number of initiatives taken, essentially within the IMF framework," she said.

"I think it is very important that this will continue," she added, warning that commitment to strengthening the system should not be allowed to subside.

"As Asia's financial crisis last year helped to set off the meltdown in the emerging markets of Brazil and Russia, many leaders issued calls for a sweeping remodeling of the global financial architecture.

However, some observers have charged that the West had paid