

US, Canada ban European meat on foot-and-mouth disease fears

AFP, Washington

The US and Canadian governments took measures Tuesday to prevent foot-and-mouth disease spreading to North America, temporarily banning imports of meat and livestock from the European Union after an outbreak of the disease was confirmed in France.

The US ban, announced here after foot-and-mouth disease was identified in six cows in Mayenne, northern France, came as a surprise to a top EU representative here.

"We are surprised to learn it from the media... We have not been informed," said Gerry Kiely, head of farm affairs at the European Commission mission here.

"We have a veterinary agreement saying that there should be prior notification and prior consultation," he told AFP.

And the measure, he said, would cost the European Union some 1.5 billion dollars.

The ban, according to Kiely, would primarily affect imports from the Netherlands and Denmark, notably in pork products.

Denmark exported some 68,000 tonnes of pork to the United States last year, he said.

The United States in February banned imports of meat and live animals from Britain where the current foot-and-mouth scare originated, and where cases have now risen to 200 since the disease was first reported three weeks ago.

The US move to step up security at ports and airports to implement controls, will include disinfecting the footwear of people who have been on farms inside the European Union.

The United States will also dispatch a team of 40 experts to the European Union to evaluate containment efforts, the USDA said.

Canada also extended its ban, which previously applied only to Britain, to the entire European Union, Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclief announced.

The Canadian ban includes livestock, farm products and even used farm equipment.

The US Agriculture Department said it was also increasing dog teams at airports to ensure no

food products were brought in by travelers, and that it required them to tell customs of contact with farms, warning of a fine of up to 1,000 dollars.

The US and Canadian measures were taken in spite of the European Union's decision to ban all exports of French meat after Paris reported the infection.

"FMD (foot-and-mouth disease) is a highly contagious and economically devastating disease of ruminants and swine," the USDA said in a statement.

"The United States has been free of FMD since 1929. It is one of the animal diseases that livestock owners dread most because it spreads widely and rapidly, and because it has grave economic consequences."

In Britain, vast swathes of countryside have been declared out of bounds, zoos, footpaths and parks are closed, making rural life all but impossible, since the disease broke out in northern England on February 19.

Cases of foot-and-mouth disease in Britain have now extended to more than 200 farms.

Britain has culled more than 116,000 animals so far.

In France, meanwhile, the limited outbreak represented the first confirmed case of its kind in continental Europe. France is the 15-nation EU's biggest agricultural producer and exporter.

The EU Standing Veterinary Committee announced on Tuesday a two-week ban on French meat exports and on the transport of milk and meat products from the departments of Mayenne and Orne.

In the French herd affected, 114 cattle were slaughtered, the agriculture ministry said. The herd had been at a farm in la Barouche-Gondouin, near a flock of imported British sheep which were slaughtered at the beginning of March as France imposed a strict safety regime.

The French National Agronomic Research Institute (INRA) said France last year exported 2,482,000 sheep, cows and pigs, earning 1.28 billion euros (1.17 billion dollars).



Shahudul Haque, Managing Director of SYSCOM (left), receives the Dell Asia-Pacific 2000 Over Achievement Award for Bangladesh from Jimmy Yam, Managing Director, South Asia Developing Markets Group, Dell-Asia Pacific Sdn, at a conference held recently in the Philippines.

ADB to adopt more selective anti-poverty lending strategy

AFP, Manila

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Wednesday it is to adopt a more selective lending approach in a major strategic shift in its long-term goal of reducing the region's massive poverty.

"The context in which ADB will operate over the next decade or so will be dramatically different from that of the 1990s," the ADB said in a statement issued at the launch of the bank's new long-term strategic framework.

Shoji Nishimoto, director of the ADB's strategy and policy department, said the bank "will continue to play a large role in helping its developing member countries" reach overall goals of reducing poverty by half between 1990 and

2015.

But he said that to broaden and deepen the impact of core poverty reduction interventions, the ADB would promote the role of the private sector in mobilizing resources to address the region's development needs.

"The development challenges of the region are far beyond the capacities of any one institution," Nishimoto said in the statement.

ADB's new agenda "will enable us to be selective in our investments and to take a long-term approach," he said.

It would "focus our resources on the things we do best, and to be more efficient in our operations."

Nishimoto said ADB operations would focus on achieving sustainable economic growth,

"inclusive" social development that targets women and disadvantaged groups, and "governance for effective policies and institutions."

The bank would provide support for legal and judicial reform and public accountability, he added.

Last year, ADB's total lending was 5.8 billion dollars, including concessional loans of 1.6 billion dollars. Nearly all loans were to governments.

Clay Wescott, ADB's senior public administration specialist, told AFP last month that under the new framework, the bank will put pressure on governments to improve their performance by tying soft loans to their effectiveness and reform efforts.

Syscom gets Dell Over Achievement Award again

Syscom, authorized distributor for Dell Computer Corporation for over 8 years, received the Dell Asia Pacific 2000 Over Achievement Award for the second consecutive year, at the recently concluded Annual Distributors Conference held in Cebu, Philippines, says a press release.

The award was given for substantial increase in sales volume over the set target and its excellent performance during 2000 was a major contributor to Dell business in the Asia-Pacific region during the year under consideration.

Shahudul Haque, Managing Director, and Zahir Karim, GM of Syscom, were present in Cebu to receive the award on behalf of the company.

Dell Computer Corporation, the 2nd largest PC manufacturer in the world with revenue of US\$32.00 billion, has customers in 170 countries, employs over 40,000 people worldwide and has daily internet sales of US\$50 million.

IMF sees pickup in Filipino economy

AFP, Washington

The Philippines should enjoy an economic rebound this year, with growth of about 3.3 per cent supported by calmer financial markets, lower interest rates and healthier consumer confidence, the IMF reported Tuesday.

But International Monetary Fund executive directors, according to a summary of their recent assessment of the Philippines, urged authorities to remain committed to budget discipline in order to shore up credibility and head off potential debt problems.

While overall growth firming in 2000 to just under four per cent, the country nonetheless suffered "a significant slowdown" beginning in October of last year in a political crisis brought on by allegations of corruption against former president Joseph Estrada.

With the peaceful transition to power of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in January 2001, according to the Fund, "the economic outlook for 2001 has improved..."

IMF economists foresee growth this year of 3.3 per cent, after an estimated 4.2 per cent in 2000, while the government expects an expansion in gross domestic product of between 3.75 and 4.3 per cent.

After falling to three to four per cent in the first half of 2000, inflation jumped to 6.7 per cent last month in response to higher oil and food prices and is projected to come to eight per cent by the second quarter of 2001.



A booth of Prophecy Furnishers Limited, the first and only participant from Bangladesh in the "International Furniture Fair Singapore 2001-18th ASEAN Furniture Show," was inaugurated by High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Singapore Ashfaqur Rahman recently. Among others, Managing Director S M Bakhtiar Alam (right) and Ong Chong Thor, Director (2nd from left) of the company, were present at the opening ceremony.

Dell bullish on Asia Pacific operations

AFP, Bangalore, India

US computer-maker Dell said Wednesday its Asia-Pacific operations were capable of weathering the slowdown in the United States economy.

"It has not affected the Dell's operations in Asia Pacific," Ron Goh, vice president Dell Asia, told reporters here.

"There is a lot of room outside the US to grow. We see the Asia-Pacific region as an area of expansion and are aggressively looking at every industry and businesses," Goh said.

Despite the economic challenges being faced by the industry, Dell clocked year-on-year revenue growth of 28 per cent to 8.7 billion dollars during the fourth quarter to January.

"We achieved this because of our focus on three key areas -- geographical expansion, opportunities in the enterprise space and our direct selling model," Goh said.

"I am bullish about continuing business growth, especially in India," he said.

K.S. Viswanathan, chief of Dell Computer India Private Limited said "sustained sales growth" was expected in enterprise servers, applications and solutions in India.



S M Ayub Ali Chowdhury, Chairman, Claim Committee of the Board of Directors of Northern General Insurance Co Ltd, hands over a cheque for Tk 8,08,593 to Haroon-or-Rashid, Managing Director of Star Padding Industries Ltd, towards settlement of a fire claim early this month. Abul Hossain, Vice President of Islami Bank (BD) Ltd, Agrabad Branch, and A S M Ahsanul Haque, Incharge of the Kadamtali Branch of the company, are also seen in the picture.

Decade-long Japan slump casts uneasy shadow over Asia

AFP, Singapore

The need for Japan to pull its anaemic economy out of a decade-long slump has taken on an increased urgency for the rest of Asia now the US economy is slowing sharply, according to economic analysts.

A meltdown of the world's second largest economy could be disastrous for Asian countries reliant on Japan as an export market, they say.

Japan is the largest importer in Asia and an economic collapse could trigger a new crisis similar to the 1997 meltdown that paralyzed momentum in Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia and ultimately affected Russia and Brazil, warned Rob Scott of the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute.

"If their (Japan) economy collapses, it will certainly have a negative impact on the region," said Scott.

The recovery from the 1997 crisis has been credited to a then-buoyant US economy hungry for cheap Asian imports, and providing the region with a buffer to the spluttering Japanese economy.

But the US crutch has gone and more than ever Asia needs an urgent reversal of economic fortunes in Japan, economists said.

In addition to being a major regional investor, Japan absorbed about 12 per cent of Asian exports last year valued at 158 billion US dollars. The US, the largest export

destination, took in 22 per cent of Asian goods and services valued at 293.3 billion US dollars.

"Japan is a bigger risk so much because the economy is sluggish but rather what the Japanese will do about it," said Gerard Teo, a Singapore-based strategist for Dutch bank ABN Amro's Asian Economics and Markets division.

Steve Brice, an economist with Standard Chartered Bank's global markets division, said: "Japan is not helping the regional economic situation at the moment. From a trade angle, there is significant exposure in the region."

Last year, Japan took in 23 per cent of Indonesian exports, 15 per cent of Philippine and Thai exports, and 13 per cent from Malaysia.

"It's a significant factor for all these countries," said Brice.

In Thailand, the first country to be hit by the 1997 crisis, analysts said Japan's problems could hamper both regional exports and new investment.

"It's going to be important because the Japanese are such a big investor and they consume so many Asian products," said Yuanta Securities investment analyst Pongpan Asapinyakul.

"It will filter down to the Thai market because Thai exports to Japan are huge and the Japanese are influential foreign direct investors," he said.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard said a weak Aussie dollar

had so far shielded Australia from the worst of Japan's slump by keeping its exports affordable in Japan.

Japan is Australia's biggest market for primary exports such as coal, steel and wool, and Howard admitted a further collapse could be damaging.

"Equally worrying for the rest of Asia is that Japan might devalue its yen in a desperate resort to put life back into its economy after other measures such as spending more than 100 trillion yen (830 billion dollars) in stimulus packages were given the thumbs down by investors."

Bank of Japan governor Masaru Hayami has acknowledged calls for a massive depreciation of the yen as one means of propping up the economy, but cautioned it would be "another drastic, unconventional policy."

A yen depreciation would spark a vicious cycle of currency depreciation from other Asian countries to protect their export competitiveness in third markets where they compete with Japan.

"Our view is that from a rational perspective, a weak yen doesn't solve Japan's problems," said Teo at ABN Amro.

The Dutch bank in a recent report warned that a weak yen would trigger a new round of competitive depreciation, given the high dependence on external demand and electronics in the region."

Thai economic woes worrying, admits PM

AFP, Bangkok

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra Wednesday admitted that the state of the ailing Thai economy was "worrying" as he announced plans for a deficit budget for 2002.

"We are worried about the economic situation," he said, adding that the weakening state of the world economy presented another major stumbling block for Thailand's hopes of recovery.

"The government is absorbing the country from a restricted position. We are trying to delay imports as long as we can in order to make the baht stable and at the same time we are also speeding up exports," he said.

The details of the budget for the year from October 2001 to September 2002 are likely to be unveiled in May, a month before the document goes to parliament for approval.

"It will be a deficit budget of about 200 billion baht (4.65 billion dollars) for the 2002 fiscal year," Thaksin said.



Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Managing Director of The Acme Laboratories Ltd, addresses the company's Annual Sales Conference-2000 at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. Among others, Deputy Managing Director Afzalur Rahman Sinha, Executive Director Hasibur Rahman, Marketing Manager Rafiqul Islam and Sales Manager Golam Rabbani Bhuiyan were present.

CURRENCY

Following are yesterday's Standard Chartered Bank rates of major currencies against Taka:

Central bank buying and selling band of USD: BDT 53.85/BDT 54.15

Selling		Currency	Buying		
TT/OD	BC		TT Clean	OD Sight	OD Transfer
54.2800	54.3100	USD	53.8300	53.6614	53.5929
50.4614	50.5483	EUR	48.6556	48.4722	48.3956
79.1212	79.1632	GBP	77.6359	77.3694	77.3148
27.7080	27.7325	AUD	26.6532	26.5608	26.4807
0.4570	0.4572	JPY	0.4452	0.4450	0.4440
32.4047	32.4292	CHF	31.8540	31.7595	31.6750
5.4466	5.4518	SEK	5.3548	5.3372	5.3212
35.3046	35.3291	CAD	34.7357	34.6421	34.5599
6.9635	6.9648	HKD	6.8998	6.8821	6.8647
30.959	30.9799	SGD	30.5187	30.4749	30.3602
14.9002	14.9178	AED	14.5064	14.5283	14.4879
14.5888	14.6072	SAR	14.2446	14.2079	14.1897

Usance Export Bills

TT Doc	30 Days	14.2446	14.2079	14.1897	180 Days
53.7190	53.3876	52.9451	52.4363	51.8833	50.6444

Exchange rates of some Asian currencies against US dollar

Indian Rupee	Pak Rupee	Thai Baht	Lankan Rupee	Indo Rupiah	NZ Dollar
46.64/46.6	59.00/60.90	43.61/43.64	85.00/85.3	9950/10150	0.4180/0.4187

US dollar LIBOR

	Buying	Selling	Months	1	3
Cash notes	53.6300	54.3100	USD	5.16375%	5.03375%
TC	53.5800	54.2900	GBP	5.58406%	5.59172%

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 14.03.2001.

Berth No	Name of Vessels	Cargo	L Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Leaving
J/1	Southern Queen	GI (COPRA)	Sing	Aeka	28/11	-
J/2	Le Chang Ling	C Clink	Koshi	RML	3/3	18/3
J/3	Naval Gent	Wheat(P)	Tui	Rainbow	3/3	14/3
J/4	Eltanin	GI (Log/Ma)	Yang	SMSL	05/03	18/3
J/5	Oriental Queen	C Clink	Kani	BSL	06/03	21/3
J/6	Triumph Chittagong	GI (St.C/LOG)	Yang	RML	08/03	16/3
J/7	Chop-2	Sugar (TCB)	Tuti	CCNL	2/2	16/3
J/8	Enos	GI (V/Ma)	Yang	SMSL	01/03	21/3
J/9	Banglar Maya	GI	P/PA	BSC	8/3	18/3
J/10	Storm Wind	C Clink	Jaka	MBL	3/3	19/3
J/11	Boxer Capt Cook	Cont	P Kel	ITL	6/3	14/3
J/12	Xpress Renown	Cont	P Kel	RSL	9/3	15/3
J/13	Banga Bijoy	Cont	P Kel	BDSHP	11/3	15/3
CCT/1	Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	7/3	14/3
CCT/2	QC Teal	Cont	P Kel	QC SL	9/3	15/3
CCT/3	Jaya Mars	Cont	C	Everbest	10/03	16/3
RM/14	Banglar Kallol	Idle	K Dia	Lams	27/1	16/3
RM/15	Banglar Urmi	Repair	-	BSC	R/A	17/3
TSP	Patchara Naree	R Phos	Xing	Atlantac	1/3	17/3
RM/4	Performance-9	CPO	Pada	Seacom	11/3	14/3
RM/6	Eagle Arles	MS/HSID	Sing	MSTPL	12/3	14/3
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil	-	BSC	R/A	14/3
DD	Banglar Robi	Repair	Sing	BSC	19/2	16/3
DDJ/1	Seabulk Command	-	K Dia	IBS	R/A	-
CUFLJ	Mary Nour	Cement	Lang	BSC	4/3	21/3
Kalco(U)	United Santosh	Urea	Hald	Everett	10/3	-

Vessels Due at Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	L Port Call	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Dea Captain	14/3	Sing	Arafeen	Proj Equip	-
KM Armada Ternak	14/3	Jaka	OTBL	Demolition	-
Samsun Honour	14/3	Naga	SSST	Rice (G)	-
Banga Bonik (Cont)9/3	15/3	CBO	BDSHP	Cont	CBO
Orto(72) 25/2	15/3	Yang	Everett	GI (St C)	-
Top Concord	15/3	Nago	SSST	Rice (G)	-
Kapitan Ivanchuk	16/3	-	Uniship	C Clink	-
Da Fa (Cont) 4/3	15/3	Sing	RSL	Cont	Sing
Joy Sky	15/3	Tanj	NWSL	C Clink (Aramit)	-
Ocean Blue (Roro)24/11/3	15/3	-	verett	Vehi	-
Hlope Glory	16/3	Sing	OTBL	-	-
Xpress Resolve(Cont)11/3	16/3	CBO	Everbest	Cont	Col
Trans Minerva	16/3	-	BSL	-	-
Clover Trust	16/3	-	Uniship	C Clink	-
Cendikiawan	16/3	Tuba	SSST	Cement	-
Ava	17/3	Yang	MTA	Rice(P)	-
Banga Birol (Cont) 9/3	17/3	P Kel	BDSHP	Cont	Sing
Al Muzruba	18/3	Kara	CLA	Rice(P)	-
Kabirdas(E)14/3	18/3	MGL	SSSL	E/L	-
Jaami (Cont)9/3	17/3	-	Cross	Cont	Sing
Banglar Moni (Cont)11/3	17/3	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Kuo Hsiung (Cont)11/3	17/3	-	QC SL	Cont	Sing
QC Lark (Cont)11/3	18/3	-	QC SL	Cont	Sing
Stavri	18/3	JAE	OTBL	-	-
Shiry	18/3	Yang	OTBL	-	-
Agia Kyriaki	18/3	Dunk	KSA	Wheat(G)	-
Axon Andriane (Liner)	18/3	-	Prog	GI (ST Paper)	-
Qc Pintail(Cont)4/3	19/3	-	QC SL	Cont	Sing
Kota Singa(Cont)11/3	19/3	Sing	Phi(BD)	Cont	Sing
Nadia J	20/3	-	Everett	Spl Cargo	-
San Pablo(Roro)24/4/3	20/3	P Kel	JF	Vehi	-
Xpress Nuptse (Cont)11/3	21/3	-	RSL	Cont	Sing
Jurong Balsam(Cont)11/3	21/3	-	NOL	Cont	Sing
Jin Cheng (Liner)	21/3	-	BDSHP	GI	-
Banga Biraj (Cont)12/3	22/3	-	BDSHP	Cont	Sing
Salzach (Cont)13/3	22/3	-	BDSHP	Cont	Sing
Kota Bantang (Cont)13/3	23/3	Sing	Phi(BD)	Cont	Sing
Tiger River (Cont) 11/3	25/3	-	NOL	Cont	Sing
Arabella (Cont) 11/3	26/3	-	QC SL	Cont	Sing
Kengtung	19/3	-	Everett	GI (ST C)	-

Tanker Due

Harting	15/3	Sing	MSTPL	Sko/JP-1
Bum Vn	16/3 <td>Dubai</td> <td>Seacom</td> <td>Cop</td>	Dubai	Seacom	Cop
Performance-9	17/3	-	Seacom	Cpo

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port Call	Local Agent	Date of Arrival
Energy Explorer-IV	-	-	BBAL	5/4
Ismaya	-	-	Arafeen	17/8
Dea Conqueror	-	-	Arafeen	R/A(31/12)
Dea Champion	-	-	Arafeen	R/A(1/3)
Mystras-II	C Oil	Rast	Unique	9/3
Banglar Shourabh	C Oil	-	BSC	R/A(13/3)

Vessels not Entering

Leopard-1	C Clink	Kushi	SBS	6/3
Agrios Anourios	C Clink	Kushi	Uniship	9/3
Minoan Hill	Scraping	Sing	Simni	26/2
Made Verona	Scraping	Iran	Simni	8/3
Kimizuru	Scraping	Chain	JF/Arl	10/3
Radiant Star	-	-	PSAL	R/A (10/3)
Al Bauraq	-	-	RML	R/A (11/3)
Accord	Cement	Sing	Viking	5/4
Revenge	-	-	Sunshine	R/A (9/10)
Xing Ye	Rice(G)	-	MHSL	R/A (20/6)
Karya Sentosa	Rice(G)	-	USTC	R/A (18/9)

Movement of Vessels for 15.03.2001

Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
J/12	Xpress Renown	I/12 Osg Alpha
J/13	B Bijoy	I/13 O Independence
CCT/2	QC Teal	CCT/2 B Bonik
DOJ	B Shourabh	I/7 O Blue
Kalco(U)	U Santosh	Sungrisan
	Samsun Honour	RM/6 Harting
		DOJ B Jyoti

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