

China NTR vote in US House may get tough

REUTERS, Washington
A vote in the US House of Representatives this spring to extend normal trade relations to China could be more difficult than last year because of Beijing's deteriorating record on human rights...

China's record on human rights, he is expected to approve a one-year extension. That would set the stage for China's critics in Congress to ask for a vote to overturn the decision.

Last month, the State Department's annual report on human rights said the situation in China was deteriorating, prompting the Bush administration to seek a condemnation of Beijing at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

Army said many of his colleagues shared the concern that human rights conditions have deteriorated in China over the past year. "They're not making it easy for us," he said.

Many House members are frustrated that they have to vote on the issue again, Army said. That would not be the case if China had concluded talks on joining the World Trade Organisation...

The bill to establish PNTR was conditioned on China entering the WTO under terms at least as favourable to its trading partners as those negotiated by the Clinton administration in 1999.

Since China is still haggling with WTO members in Geneva on the final details of its entry, President George W Bush will probably have to decide again by June whether to extend normal trade relations with China for another year.

Although Bush has criticised

to support a simple tax rebate or hand out the money as part of Bush's larger tax cut plan.

Bush's speech aimed to clarify his economic outlook, following criticisms from Democrats and some investors that he was "talking down" the economy to sell his tax cut plan...

"My policies face reality as we found it," Bush said.

"Oftentimes what I try to say in Washington gets filtered, and sometimes my words in Washington don't exactly translate directly to the people, so I've found it's best to travel the country," he said.

About 200 anti-Bush protesters demonstrated outside the gymnasium where the president spoke, waving signs, including one reading: "No tax cut. Pay your daddy's national debt," a reference to Bush's father, former President George Bush.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said before the speech that Bush's critics were out of touch.

The speech came as the House prepared to vote on Wednesday on a budget resolution containing Bush's tax plan, and as many Americans were left rattled by last week's sharp decline in the US stock markets.



British High Commissioner in Bangladesh Dr David Carter visited the factory of Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited at Savar recently. During his visit, Rupail Chowdhury, GM-Operations, Iqbal Karim, Plant Manager, and Imtiaz Ahmed Chowdhury, Production Manager of Berger Paints, accompanied him and explained the activities of different sections of the factory.

Pakistan may cut tax revenue target again

REUTERS, Karachi

Cash-strapped Pakistan, hamstrung by a slowing economy, may further reduce its tax revenue target for the fiscal year that ends in June, tax officials said yesterday.

Officials at the Pakistan's Central Board of Revenue (CBR), told Reuters this year's tax revenue target may be revised downwards for the third time and slashed by at least seven per cent. Islamabad's current tax revenue target for the 2000/01 (July/June) fiscal year stands at 417 billion rupees (\$6.86 billion), but that may be cut by 31 billion rupees, they added.

Reforms key to Pak future: ADB

REUTERS, Islamabad

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said yesterday it was crucial for cash-strapped Pakistan to keep its economic reform programme on track if the country was to solve its problems and win international support.

Marshuk Ali Shah, the ADB's resident representative in Islamabad, told a news conference that the key element for Pakistan's future was its ability to implement reforms and development projects.

"The world is focusing on the economic reforms of the government - how is it being implemented and at what pace?" said Shah.

The military-led government of General Pervez Musharraf said earlier this month it would seek \$6.0 billion in exceptionally soft loans from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the ADB over the next three years.

This would help manage a foreign debt that officials say has risen to unsustainable levels.

Shah said the \$6 billion target was ambitious but "possible."

"It all depends on the agenda that the government agrees with these institutions."



A 13-member delegation from the productive travel agents of Bangladesh left Dhaka for Singapore Monday on a four-day Educational Tour, jointly organised by Singapore Tourism Board and Singapore Airlines-Dhaka. Ahsan Sharif of SIA-Dhaka accompanied the team.

Ayeshya Airways to procure 4 Saab AB aircraft

Ayeshya Airways, a local private sector airline, recently signed an agreement with Swedish company Saab AB to procure four Saab aircraft for domestic and regional services, says a press release.

Chief Executive of Ayeshya Airways and the Chairman of ITC group Mahbubur Rahman and Director (Sales and Marketing) of Saab AB Steven Lever signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations.

Of these 4 Saab aircraft, 2 Saab 340-B are 37-seater and 2 Saab 2000-S 58-seater. Two Saab 340-B aircraft will arrive in June and 2 Saab 2000-S in October this year.

Ayeshya Airways has received license to carry passengers on the domestic routes and will start operation from August 2001. Ayeshya Airways is a company of ITC Group.

The airline will seek permission from the government to operate flights on regional routes. The government is actively considering to allow private airlines to carry passengers on the regional and international routes from Chittagong M A Hannan International Airport, the release said.



Ayeshya Airways, a local private airline, recently signed an agreement with Swedish company Saab AB to procure four Saab aircraft for domestic and regional services. Chief Executive of Ayeshya Airways and Chairman of ITC group Mahbubur Rahman (right) and Director (Sales and Marketing) of Saab AB Steven Lever (left) shake hands after signing the agreement in Stockholm.

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

Table with columns: TT/OD, BC, Selling, Currency, TT Clean, OD Sight, OD Transfer, Buying. Lists rates for USD, EUR, GBP, AUD, JPY, CHF, SEK, CAD, HKD, SGD, AED, SAR.

Usance Export Bills
TT Doc, 30 Days, 60 Days, 90 Days, 120 Days, 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
46.58/46.64 60.25/60.85 44.29/44.34 85.94/86.04 10440/10460 0.4113/0.4120

US dollar LIBOR
Buying, Selling, Months, 1, 3
Cash notes: 53.6300, 54.3100, USD, 5.05500%, 4.86000%
TC: 53.5800, 54.2900, GBP, 5.63500%, 5.47188%

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 28.3.2001.

Table with columns: Berth No, Name of Vessels, Cargo, L Port, Local Agent, Date of Arrival, Date of Departure. Lists various vessels and their schedules.

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Table with columns: Name of Vessels, Date of Arrival, L Port, Local Agent, Cargo, Loading Port. Lists vessels due at outer anchorage.

Tanker due

Table with columns: Name of Vessels, Cargo, Last Port, Local Agent, Date of Arrival. Lists tankers due.

Vessels at Kutubdia

Table with columns: Name of Vessels, Cargo, Last Port, Local Agent, Date of Arrival. Lists vessels at Kutubdia.

Vessels awaiting instruction

Table with columns: Name of Vessels, Cargo, Last Port, Local Agent, Date of Arrival. Lists vessels awaiting instruction.

Vessels not entering

Table with columns: Name of Vessels, Cargo, Last Port, Local Agent, Date of Arrival. Lists vessels not entering.

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

Project Director
Project Implementation Unit
Dhaka Urban Transport Project
Dhaka City Corporation
Nagar Bhaban, 14th Level
Fulbaria, Dhaka

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

IDA Credit No: 3163BD IDA Credit Name: Dhaka Urban Transport Project

1. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the International Development Association towards the cost of Dhaka Urban Transport Project and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for Construction of NMT Links, Footbridges and Footpaths of DCC; Contract No. (W) C4B. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits. However, the following countries not eligible under this Project also include: the Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, Cyprus, Kuwait, Qatar, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates.

2. The Dhaka City Corporation invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Construction of NMT Links, Footbridges and Footpaths.

3. Payments made under this contract will be in Bangladesh Taka. Interested eligible bidders (including foreign bidders who are willing to receive payment in Bangladesh Taka) may obtain further information from and inspect bidding documents at the office of the undersigned.

4. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at the office of the Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Dhaka Urban Transport Project Dhaka City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban, 14th Level, Fulbaria, Dhaka, Bangladesh for a non-refundable fee of Taka 3000.00 (Taka three thousand) only for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

5. The provisions in the instructions to bidders and in the conditions of contract are the provision of the Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Works (SBD), National Competitive Bidding (Trial Edition -- January 1998, Revised February 1999), issued by World Bank Office, Dhaka.

6. Bids shall be valid for a period of 91 days after bid opening and must be accompanied by security of minimum Taka 2.5 million in the form of Bank Draft or Pay Order or Bank Guarantee in favour of Mayor, Dhaka City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka from any schedule bank in Bangladesh and shall be delivered to the Project Director, Project Implementation Unit, Dhaka Urban Transport Project, Dhaka City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban, 14th Level, Fulbaria, Dhaka, on or before 07.05.2001 by 12:30 hours.

7. Bidders may deliver their bids personally or by Courier Service or Registered Mail with Acknowledgement Due, etc. which must reach the above office before the deadline for submission of bids. Bids received after the deadline will not be accepted.

8. Bids shall be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 12:45 Hours on 07.05.2001 at Nagar Bhaban.

9. A pre-bid conference will be held on 25.4.2001 in the office of the undersigned at 11:00 hours. All bidders are requested to attend the conference in time.

Shafiu Islam
Project Director
Project Implementation Unit
Dhaka Urban Transport Project
Dhaka City Corporation
Nagar Bhaban, 14th Level
Fulbaria, Dhaka
DCC/PRD/405/00-01
GD-275

Advertisement for Shaikha Insurance. Features a large 'শাখা' logo and text in Bengali describing insurance services. Includes contact information for the company and its branches.