

# WTO fails to reach accord on farm trade reform, drugs

## Tokyo ministerial meet ends

REUTERS, Tokyo

Ministers from more than 20 countries wrapped up divisive WTO talks yesterday, failing to find common ground on key issues of agricultural trade reform and poor countries' access to life-saving drugs.

How far and how quickly to tear down barriers to world farm trade was a key topic of the discussions, which showed countries were still widely split on the issue.

"Different views were expressed as to the levels of ambition or balance we should be seeking," Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, who chaired the meeting, told a news conference.

But Kawaguchi said that the latest informal talks, on everything from import duties to generic drugs, would help push forward trade liberalisation negotiations launched in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001.

"We had an intensive discussion and I believe we have contributed to

keeping and strengthening the momentum of the round," Kawaguchi said.

The Tokyo talks were meant to give ministers a chance to take stock of progress to date, as the clock ticked towards a March 31 deadline to agree on such controversial farm issues as targets for tariff cuts.

Failure to meet the March 31 deadline would reduce the chances of the overall set of World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations on agriculture, services, manufactured goods and other sectors being wrapped up by the target date of January 2005.

At the meeting, differences came to the fore over a plan released earlier by the WTO's chief agricultural mediator, Stuart Harbinson.

Harbinson's plan had proposed cutting the highest import tariffs on farm goods but not imposing ceilings on those duties.

two main camps in the talks: the United States and other big exporters that want aggressive liberalisation, and the more protectionist Japan and EU, which want less drastic change.

The two sides could not agree on whether the plan could form the basis for negotiations, so the blueprint had to be sent back to the drawing board.

Such differences were underscored by comments by various ministers after the conclusion of the talks.

"Australia and other members of the Cairns group are becoming increasingly concerned that if Europe is not prepared to play the same role it expects of its partners, the round could be headed for trouble," said Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile.

US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick criticised Japan for its stance on farm trade liberalisation.

Japan's strength on the altar of rice," Zoellick said.

Delegates also clashed over proposals to allow developing countries to import cheap copies of patented medicine when facing public health problems.

Washington's demand that extra restrictions be placed on the types of diseases to be covered has already caused the WTO's 145 member countries to miss an end-2002 deadline on the issue.

But, even after a working session on Saturday that often featured heated debate, ministers were able to agree on only the need to resolve the issue quickly, and failed to achieve concrete progress.

"I hope yesterday afternoon's meeting will contribute to further discussion in Geneva and to a solution as soon as possible," Kawaguchi said.



PHOTO: ACI LIMITED

Juan L. Blanch, general manager of Invesa International, Spain, shakes hands with M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman and managing director of ACI Limited, during his recent visit to ACI office.

## Invesa gives ACI high-tech communication equipment

Invesa International, Spain has given a high-tech communication equipment to ACI Limited.

The equipment will be used for mass communication with the farmers for better animal health practices, says a press release.

M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman and managing director of the company, received, the equipment from Juan L. Blanch, general manager of Invesa International, in Dhaka recently.

Dr F H Ansarey, executive director of Agribusinesses, Abed Hossain Habib, sales manager of animal health, senior officers and field forces of animal health business were present at the ceremony.

Invesa International is a multinational company, which manufactures, distributes and market animal health products all over the world.

## US-Vietnam textile talks begin Wednesday

AFP, Hanoi

The US-Vietnam bilateral trade agreement took six years of tortuous negotiations, but Washington is hoping for a speedier conclusion to a textile accord when talks get under way this week.

Vietnam will be an unwilling participant when the three days of formal negotiations laying out the ground rules for trade in textiles and apparel between the two former sworn enemies begin on Wednesday in Hanoi.

Despite US hopes for a swift result, the talks are likely to be a protracted affair, punctuated by cries of protectionism from Vietnam's communist government, which is fearful of quotas being imposed on its exports.

Hanoi has accused Washington of seeking to shield its small garment manufacturing industry from

cheaper imports from Vietnam, where labour costs are a fraction of those incurred in the United States.

"Industrialised countries always call on developing states to open their markets while they close their markets to products that developing countries have great potential for, such as textiles and garments," Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan told reporters last week.

Deputy Trade Minister Luong Van Tu will lead the Vietnamese side against a team headed by David Spooner, textile expert at the Office of the US Trade Representative, an executive arm of the White House.

Khoan, the key player in the July 2000 trade pact with the United States that came into force in December 2001, said the imposition of quotas would stifle the country's attempts to lift itself from poverty.

## CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's forex trading statement by <b>Standard Chartered Bank</b>						
Selling		Currency	Buying			
TT/OD	BC		TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer	
59.0000	59.0500	USD	58.0200	57.8496	57.7803	
64.6581	64.7129	EUR	61.7275	61.5462	61.4725	
96.0461	96.1275	GBP	92.9422	92.6692	92.5583	
35.7540	35.7843	AUD	33.6516	33.5528	33.5126	
0.4937	0.4941	JPY	0.4783	0.4769	0.4763	
43.6391	43.6760	CHF	42.2271	42.1030	42.0526	
7.0547	7.0607	SEK	6.8073	6.7873	6.7792	
38.9310	38.9640	CAD	37.8844	37.7732	37.7279	
7.5721	7.5785	HKD	7.4315	7.4097	7.4008	
33.7316	33.7602	SGD	32.9079	32.8113	32.7720	
16.1950	16.2087	AED	15.6696	15.6236	15.6049	
15.8589	15.8724	SAR	15.3496	15.3045	15.2882	
Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar						
Indian Rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai Baht	Norwegian Krone	NZ dollar	Malaysian Ringgit
47.84	57.8	96.845	43.100	6.9706	0.5624	3.80
Local Interbank FX Trading:						
The local interbank foreign exchange market was subdued on Sunday. US dollar remained the mostly traded currency and remained unchanged against the taka.						
Local Money Market:						
Demand for call money remained high on Sunday. Call money rate continued to remain high in the market. At the close call money rate remained unchanged from yesterday and ranged between 25-30 per cent.						
International Market:						
International market was closed on Sunday. The dollar rose on Friday against the European currencies but fell versus the yen after the UN's chief weapons inspectors gave a report on Iraq that left the Security Council divided over the necessity of war. Chief weapons inspectors Blix said that there was no evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and noted that Baghdad had taken some steps to cooperate with his team. The euro fell to \$1.0791, a loss of 0.3 per cent compared with New York's close on Thursday. The euro fell to 129.85 yen, a drop of 0.5 per cent on the day. The dollar also fell to 120.29 yen against the Japanese currency.						
At the closing of New York on Friday, euro was at 1.0789/92, GBP at 1.6139/44 and yen at 120.30/35 against the dollar.						
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## SHIPPING

### Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 16/2/2003

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disc
J/1	A.A Venture	GI (Log)	Yang	CLA	11/2	22/2	267
J/4	Suisen	Slag	Viza	SSA	3/2	16/2	1505
J/5	Sagaing (72)	GI	Chen	Everett	13/2	16/2	2350
J/6	Gui Jiang	Wheat	Kaki	Mutual	3/2	19/2	1533
J/7	Ocean Pride	GI	Yang	PSAL	11/2	26/2	728
		(Maize/Log)					
J/8	Bontrika Naree	GI	--	USL	R/A	16/2	771
J/10	Qc Lark	Cont	P Kel	QCSSL	11/2	17/2	365X
J/12	Jaami	Cont	Col	Everbest	14/2	18/2	118/08
J/13	Banglar Moni	Cont	Sing	BSC	12/2	16/2	199/236
CCT/1	Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	Pil (BD)	14/2	18/2	229/303
CCT/2	Kota Sing	Cont	Sing	Pil (BD)	11/2	16/2	161/161
CCJ	Handy Jade	C Clink	Sing	BSL	10/2	18/2	

### Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Banga Borti	16/2	P Kel	Bdship		Sing
Qc Teal	16/2	P Kel	QCSSL		Sing
Elena Heart	16/2	Ind	Litmond		Clink
Haneburg	16/2	Sing	Pil (BD)		Sing
Maritime Songkhla	17/2	Tarj	SSL		
Sushila	15/2	Kol	Sakhi		
Barge: S-657	16/2	Kol	Sakhi		
Tug Britoil-3	25/2	Bata	OTBL		
Sun Kist	25/2	Bata	OTBL	For Demolition	
Banga Lanka	17/2	Col	Baridhi		Col
Banga Borak	17/2	Prg	Bdship		Sing
Banga Bonik	17/2	Col	Baridhi		Col
Asimont	17/2	Pkl	Seaborne		Sing

Tanker Due				
Soeptre	16/2	--	Pana	CDSO
Danat Qatar	18/2	Jebe	Qatar	Crude Oil
Spera-1	18/2	--	Pana	CDSO
Gaza Master	20/2	Viza	Mali	Ammonia

### Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Outside Port Limit				
Miclyn Moon	--	--	Sakhi	R/A
Smit Boreno	--	Sing	Sakhi	2/2
Smit Luzon	--	Sing	Sakhi	2/2
Sea Panther	-	Sing	Sakhi	4/2

### Vessels at outer anchorage

#### Vessels ready

Jon Jin	Sugar	Tuti	Litmond	5/2
Prospects	Sugar	Col	Mutual	7/2
Express Manaslu	Cont	P Kel	RSL	15/2
Orient Freedom	Cont	P Kel	PSSL	15/2

#### Vessel not ready

Banglar Doot	Wheat	K Dia	Lams	R/A
Banglar May	Wheat	K Dia	Lams	R/A
Alexis	GI	Dunk	Litmond	R/A

### Vessels awaiting employment/instruction

Eltanin	-	-	Royal	R/A
Bosowa Delapan	--	--	Total	R/A

### Vessels not entering

Gemini-1	Coal	Tanj	BSL	7/2
Le Chang Ling	C Clink	Tanj	BSL	11/2

### Movement of vessels for 17/02/2003

Outgoing		Incoming		Shifting	
J/10	Qc Lark	J/13	B.Borti	J/13	Xp Manaslu
CCT/1	Dk Cahaya	CCT/3	Qc Teal	DD	B Kakoli
		J/10	Hane Burg		

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

## STOCK