

Bush signs historic tax cut bill, Republicans promise more

REUTERS, Washington

US President George W. Bush signed the third-biggest tax cut in history Wednesday, promising relief within weeks to millions of taxpayers but only a gradual pickup in the job market.

Bush initially dismissed the tax bill's \$350 billion size as "little bitty" after Congress cut his proposal in half. But in signing it into law, Bush embraced the smaller package as a "bold" compromise, which aides hoped would boost the economy and his 2004 re-election chances.

Former President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, lashed out his Republican successor for what he called tax-cutting gimmicks that would make

"the accountants for Enron blush".

Republican conservatives said Bush was laying the groundwork for more sweeping tax policy changes.

"We can say loud and clear to the American people: You got more of your own money to spend so that this economy can get a good wind behind it," Bush said at a signing ceremony that underscored the importance of the economy to his re-election campaign.

Bush said US employers could begin leaving more money in workers' paychecks starting next month. On the president's direction, checks worth up to \$400 per child will be sent to 25 million eligible families beginning in July.

While Bush said the nation was "on the path to greater job creation," he cautioned: "Increased hiring happens gradually."

Unemployment stands at 6 per cent and Democrats say the economy has shed more than 2.7 million private-sector jobs since Bush took office.

The signing ceremony in the grand East Room stood in contrast to the brief White House statement released without fanfare on Tuesday announcing the largest-ever increase in the statutory limit on the national debt.

The tax cut package -- Bush's third -- lowers the top rate on dividends and capital gains to 15 per cent through 2008 and accelerates

income tax cuts. It includes \$20 billion for cash-strapped states and tax breaks for businesses.

Democrats, who opposed the package, said it would benefit mostly the wealthy and add to the nation's ballooning debt and record-setting deficit.

"Instead of finding a real solution to the growing unemployment crisis, this bill will give millions to those who don't need it and very little to those who do," said Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota.

Clinton said Bush's tax cuts were too small in the short run "to do any good and way too big in the long run to avoid serious harm."

Mutual Trust Bank to buy Tk 5cr zero coupon bonds

Mutual Trust Bank Limited has signed an agreement with Industrial and Infrastructure Development Finance Company Ltd to purchase zero coupon bonds, says a press release.

Mosharraf Hossain, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank Limited, AKM Nozmul Haque, managing director of Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited, signed the accord on behalf of their organisations at the bank's board room in Dhaka on Wednesday.

Under the deal, the bank will buy Tk 5 crore zero coupon bonds from Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited.

Among others, Executive Vice President Nasiruddin Ahmed, Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Senior Vice President AKM Shameem and Md Liakot Hossain of MTBL were present at the signing ceremony.



PHOTO: IFIC BANK

Ashaf Ud Daullah, senior executive vice-president and head of the International Division of IFIC Bank Limited, and QSM Jehanzeb, country general manager of National Bank of Pakistan, sign an MoU between their banks in Dhaka on Tuesday for allowing local drawing facilities and routing of home remittance of overseas Bangladeshis. Ataul Haq, MD of IFIC Bank, and ASM Munirul Islam, deputy general manager of National Bank of Pakistan, were present.



PHOTO: MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Mosharraf Hossain, MD of Mutual Trust Bank Limited, and AKM Nozmul Haque, MD of Industrial and Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited (IIDFC), exchange documents after signing an agreement in Dhaka on Wednesday. Under the deal, the bank will buy Tk 5 crore zero coupon bonds from IIDFC.

IFIC Bank, Nat'l Bank of Pakistan sign MoU

International Finance Investment and Commerce Bank Ltd (IFIC Bank Limited) and National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), Dhaka have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to facilitate local drawings of NBP through different branches of IFIC Bank Limited.

Ashaf Ud Daullah, senior executive vice-president and head of International Division of IFIC Bank, and QSM Jehanzeb, country general manager of NBP in Dhaka, signed the deal on behalf of their banks in Dhaka on Tuesday, says a press release.

Ataul Haq, managing director, Mashiur Rahman, deputy managing director, Shafaat Ahmed Siddiky, senior executive vice-president of IFIC Bank Ltd, ASM Munirul Islam, deputy general manager and Nasir Abdullah, manager of National Bank of Pakistan, as well as other high officials of IFIC Bank Limited were present at the signing ceremony.

NBP on its part will arrange for IFIC Bank different drawing arrangements for routing of home remittance of overseas Bangladeshis through its various foreign branches, affiliates and subsidiaries.



PHOTO: PUBALI BANK LTD

Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, managing director of Pubali Bank Limited, speaks at a discussion on Artha Rin Adalat Ain 2003 held at the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. Among others, Deputy Managing Director AH Ziauddin Ahmed, general managers M Rafiqul Islam, Helal Ahmed Chowdhury and Abdul Hannan Bhuiyan were also present.

US shelved report of \$44t deficit: Press

AFP, London

In the midst of negotiating a steep tax cuts package, the US government shelved a report that showed the United States faces future federal budget deficits of more than 44.2 trillion dollars (37.6 trillion euros), a British business daily said Thursday.

President George W. Bush's administration chose to keep the findings -- commissioned by then-Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill -- out of the 2004 annual budget report, published in February, London's Financial Times reported.

The newspaper described the study as "the most comprehensive assessment of how the US government is at risk of being overwhelmed by the 'baby boom' generation's future healthcare and retirement costs."

The Financial Times hinted that


the decision not to publish the report may have been because the White House was campaigning for a massive tax-cut package that critics claim will expand future deficits.

The study, according to the same source, said that sharp tax increases, massive spending cuts or both are unavoidable if the US is to meet benefit promises to future generations.

"It estimates that closing the gap would require the equivalent of an immediate and permanent 66 per cent across-the-board income tax increase," the Financial Times said.

"The study was being circulated as an independent working paper among Washington think-tanks as Bush on Wednesday signed into law a 10-year, 350-billion-dollar tax-cut package he welcomed as a victory for hard-working Americans and the economy," the newspaper said.

CURRENCY				
Following is yesterday's foreign exchange rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank				
Selling		Currency	Buying	
TT/OD	BC		TT Clean	OD Sight Doc
58.7300	58.7800	USD	57.8000	57.6302
69.6714	69.7307	EUR	67.1520	66.9548
96.7753	96.8577	GBP	93.8267	93.5511
38.7089	38.7419	AUD	36.9111	36.8027
0.4989	0.4994	JPY	0.4830	0.4816
45.5448	45.5836	CHF	44.1558	44.0261
7.5488	7.5553	SEK	7.4103	7.3885
42.6043	42.6406	CAD	41.3596	41.2381
7.5386	7.5450	HKD	7.4042	7.3824
33.9853	34.0142	SGD	33.1498	33.0524
16.1209	16.1346	AED	15.6102	15.5644
15.7855	15.7990	SAR	15.2906	15.2457
Exchange Rates of some currencies against US dollar				
Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Nor kroner
46.905	57.6	97.225	41.813	6.7125
				NZ dollar
				0.6239

<div>SHIPPING</div>							
Chittagong port							
Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 29/5/2003.							
Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Lea-ving	Import disch
J/1	Eltanin	Rice	Kand	Total	8/5	2/6	1551
J/2	Pho Thae	Rice	Kaki	Able	20/5	8/6	406
J/3	Banglar Doot	Gl	Mumb	Royal	25/5	30/5	4874
J/5	Sonali	Rice/S.Ash	Kand	OWSL	18/5	2/6	1654
J/7	Eco Vision	RS/WT(P)	Sing	USL	21/5	2/6	821
J/8	Captain Michale (RS/Ye.PeiLentils)	Gl	Sing	Litmond	12/5	30/5	1398
J/9	Pyong Yang-813	Sug/Rice	Kand	Able	20/5	31/5	1108
J/10	Jat Na MU	Wheat	Viza	Uniship	R/A	3/6	1039
J/11	Shun Winner	Clink	Indo	TOSL	22/5	5/6	202
J/13	QC Honour	Cont	P.Kel	QCSL	27/5	30/5	333/175
CCT/1	Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	24/5	29/5	529/585
CCT/2	Kota Berjaya	Cont	Sing	Pil (BD)	27/5	30/5	443/212
CCT/3	Banga Bodor	Cont	P.Kel	BD Ship	25/5	29/5	136/X
RM/14	Banglar Kallol	Repair	Mong	BSC	26/5	5/5	
RM/15	Assets Victory	Wheat(P)	Viza	Uniship	19/5	31/5	
TSP	Bright Moon	TSP	Beihat	Unique	25/5	3/6	
RM/3	Swift Tiger	CPO	P.Kel	Rainbow	27/5	29/5	
Vessels due at outer anchorage							
Name of vessels	Date of	L Port	Local	Cargo	Loading		
Ocean Pride	29/5	Yang	PSAL	Gl			
bangla Borak	29/5	P.Kel	BD Ship	Cont		Sing	
QC Lark	29/5	P.Kel	QCSL	Cont		P. Kel	
Banga Bijo	29/5	Col	Bandhi	Cont		Col	
Seorgiost-T	30/5	--	RSSHIP		For Demolition		
Arctic Blue	25	Sing	JF		For Scraping		
Bosowa Sembilan	5/5	--	PSAL	Clink			
Kota Singa	3/5	Sing	Pil (BD)	Cont		Sing	
Banga Biraj	31/5	PKL	BD Ship	Cont		Sing	
Xpress Resolve	30/5	CBO	Everbest	Cont		Col	
Hellin	2/5	Sing	TMML	Gl		--	
QC Dignity	31/5	P.Kel	QCSL	Cont		Sing	
Banga Borti	31/5	PKL	BD Ship	Cont		Sing	
Asimont	31/5	PKL	Seaborne	Cont		Sing	
Blue Sea	31/5	--	PSAL	Clink			
Budi Teguh	31/6	Sing	Pil (BD)	Cont		Sing	
Vessels at outer anchorage Vessels ready:							
Al Monsoor	Rice	Kaki	PSAL	Total	8/5		
Kwa Mo Bong	Sug/Rice	Chand	SSTL	22/5			
Al Muztuba	Rice/WT	Kaki	Cia	25/5			
Siam Bhavas	Cpo	Pasi	Rainbow	26/5			
Myeik	Gl	Hald	sunshine	26/5			
Seabo	Gl	Hald	Sunshine	26/5			
Xpress Manaslu	Cont	P Kel	RSL	28/5			
Vessels awaiting employment/instruction:							
Banglar Shourabh	-	--	BSC	R/A(18/5)			
Andhika Aryandhi	Repair	--	Sing	R/A(24/5)			
Movement of vessels for 30/5/2003& 31/5/2003							
Outgoing		Incoming		Shifting			
30/5/2003							
J/3	B Doot	CCT/2	B Borak		J/12 Seabo		
J/8	C Michalis	J/12	QC Lark		J/11 S Winner		
J/12	Seabo	CCT/3	B Bijo				
J/13	QC Honour	J/8	O Pride				
CCT/2	K Berjaya	J/3	(P) Al Mansoor				
DDJ:	A Aiyandhi	DOJ:	H Rider				
RM/10	B Jyoti	J/3	(P) Al-Muztuba				
DDJ:	Dea Captain						
31/5/2003							
J/7	P Yong	J/13	XP Resolve		J/11 S Winner		
CCJ:	LE Chang Ling	J/11	K Singa				
		RM/3	O Champion				
The above is shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Family, Dhaka.							

STOCK