

US tourism industry appeals for easing new visa rules

AFP, Washington

The US travel industry on Wednesday launched a nationwide campaign against new "ill-advised" visa rules and regulations that it said threaten to devastate the already shaky tourism market in the United States.

The Travel Industry Association of America said the new restrictions, put into place as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks to keep terrorists out of the country, are

onerous and have had the effect of discouraging legitimate travelers to the United States.

"The entire travel and tourism industry now faces several new, ill-advised State Department and Homeland Security rules and directives," the group said in a statement announcing the new campaign.

"TIA is launching a coordinated effort to prevent these rules from harming an already fragile international visitor market," it said, calling on its members to protest the regula-

tions in letters to Congress, the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security and others.

The association, which represents thousands of US travel agents and tourism- and business travel-related concerns, said the new restrictions were cutting into the already soft market, noting a more than 26 per cent drop in inbound travel to the United States between 2000 and 2002.

That drop comes on top of a 37-per cent fall in the US share of world-

wide travel since 1992, it said.

Foreign tourists and business travelers resulted in nearly 90 billion dollars in spending in the United States in 2002 and the association said that amount, plus the one million jobs it supported were in jeopardy because of the new rules.

The State Department, which recently adopted a system whereby nearly 90 per cent of all applicants for US visas must go through a personal interview with a diplomat, gave a cool reception to the appeal.



PHOTO: GSP FINANCE

Md Mosaddiqur Rahman, general manager of BASIC Bank Limited, and Md Helal Uddin, adviser and director of GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited, sign a debenture subscription agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka recently. Md Salehuddin Quasem, managing director of BASIC Bank Limited, and Feroz U Haider, managing director and CEO of GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited, were present at the signing ceremony. Colonel (ret) M Nurul Islam, executive director of GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited, and executives of the two sides were also present.

BASIC Bank, GSP Finance sign agreement

BASIC Bank Limited and GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited signed an agreement on debenture subscription.

Md Mosaddiqur Rahman, general manager of BASIC Bank Limited, and Md Helal Uddin, adviser and director of GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited, inked the deal on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka recently, says a press release.

Md Salehuddin Quasem, managing director of BASIC Bank Limited, and Feroz U Haider, managing director and CEO of GSP Finance Company (Bangladesh) Limited, were present at the signing ceremony.

Aristopharma holds sales conference

The national sales conference of Aristopharma Ltd was held in Dhaka on Wednesday, says a press release.

MA Hassan, chairman and managing director of the company, inaugurated the conference.

Directors and managers of the company were present.

A cultural programme was held at the conference.



PHOTO: EMIRATES

Ahmed Khoory, senior GM, Airport Services of Emirates, Nasser bin Kherbash, GM-Middle East and Africa, pose for a photograph at the launching of Emirates' Dubai-Moscow service at Dubai International Airport on Tuesday.



PHOTO: ISLAMI BANK

ANMA Zaher, chairman of the Executive Committee of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited, speaks as chief guest at the inauguration of a training course on "Foreign exchange and foreign trade" held at the bank's training and research academy in Dhaka on Tuesday.

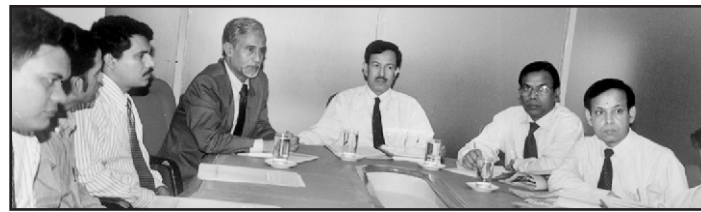


PHOTO: MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Officials of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd and Bangladesh Bank pose for a photograph at a seminar on "Prevention of money laundering" organised by Mutual Trust Bank in Dhaka recently.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Selling	Currency	Buying	Currency
TT/OD	BC	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc
58.8000	58.8500	57.8700	57.7000
68.4726	68.5308	65.9544	65.7607
98.6017	98.6858	95.6070	95.3262
40.7484	40.7831	38.6861	38.5725
0.5020	0.5025	0.4859	0.4845
43.9791	44.0165	42.6707	42.5454
7.3804	7.3887	6.8876	6.8874
44.2338	44.2714	42.9207	42.7946
7.5477	7.5541	7.4133	7.3916
33.7040	33.7327	32.8882	32.7916
16.1397	16.1534	15.6287	15.5642
15.8048	15.8182	15.3095	15.2646

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian Rupee	Pak Rupee	Lankan Rupee	Thai Baht	Nor Kroner	NZ Dollar	Malaysian Ringit
46.435	57.75	97.135	41.845	7.1915	0.6443	3.80

Local Interbank FX Trading:
The local interbank foreign exchange market was active Thursday. USD/BDT remained steady in the local interbank forex market yesterday and ended almost unchanged from Wednesday.

Local Money Market
Call money rate was steady. There was adequate liquidity in the market. Call money rate ranged almost unchanged at 2.50 and 3.00 per cent.

International Market:
Euro fell across the board on Thursday after German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder raised concerns that its rise this year could hurt the economy. Euro weakened against the dollar and fell below \$1.1450. Against the yen, euro was down three-quarters of a per cent at 135.26 yen. Euro, which had been weakening earlier and Schroeder's comment helped knock it through the chart levels. The dollar was flat against the yen at around 118.30.

At 1530 hours on Thursday, euro was at 1.1446/49. GBP at 1.6611/15 and yen at 118.35/40 against the dollar.

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SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 3/7/2003

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Indurwa Valley	Rice	Tuti	Able	28/6	4/7	1057
J/2	Asia Bridge	Gl	Chenn	H&SL	2/7	4/7	1497
J/3	Midas	Clink	Ind	SSA	21/6	7/7	1032
J/4	Amanat Shah	Rice	Mumb	CLA	28/5	5/7	1037
J/5	Tien Mu	W/Lentils	Sing	Mutual	22/6	12/7	843
J/6	Banglar Mamata	Gl	Pipa	Royal	19/6	4/7	1853
J/7	Levantracht	Gl	Sing	MSA	13/6	5/7	629
J/8	Helin	Gl	P Kel	TMMML	17/6	6/7	906
J/9	Erna Oldendorff	Peas/WT(P)	Sing	Mutual	8/6	4/7	2836
J/10	CSBC Nyon Ho	Sug/WT(P)	Kaki	SSTL	8/6	7/7	1276

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Date: 2/7/2003

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Banga Barta	3/7	Haid	Baridhi	Cont	Col
An Kang Jiang (Liner)	4/7	Yoko	Bdship	Gl	-
Express Manaslu	6/7	Col	Everbest	Cont	Col
Budi Teguh	4/7	Sing	Pil(BD)	Cont	Sing
Hpaan	4/7	Yangoon	Total	Rice(P)	B. Mpace
QC Teal	5/7	P.Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Banglar Robi	5/7	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Mardios	5/7	Hal	Everbest	Cont	Col
Cikik	5/7	Sing	OTBL	For Demolition	
Handy Rainbow	5/7	Sing	RSL	DAP(P)	
Banga Borak	6/7	P.Kel	BdShip	Cont	Sing
Banga Bonik	6/7	Haid	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Banga Biraj	6/7	-	Bdship	Cont	Sing

Tanker due

Encounter	3/7	Arju	GPSL	BS/SN (RM/3/5)
Victoria	6/7	Chenn	Pol	CDSO(RM/4)
Vernal Grace	8/7	-	Smbh & CO	CP/O(RM/3)
Filma	5/7	-	Seacom	ABD (RM/3)
Eagle	11/7	Rast	Owsl	Crude Oil

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Dea Captain	-	-	Arafeen	R/A(28/6)

Outside Port Limit

Dea Captain	-	-	Arafeen	R/A(28/6)
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Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready

Yayasan Tujuh	GI(R/Log)	Sing	Seacom	30/6
Orient Grace	Cont	P.Kel	PSSL	2/7
Asimont	Cont	P.Kel	POL	2/7
Ocean Pride	GI(Log)	Yang	PSAL	2/7
Kota Berjaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(BD)	2/7
QC Lark	Cont	-	QCSL	2/7
Xpress Manaslu	Cont	P.Kel	RSL	2/7
Chariot	CPO	Bela	POL	1/7

Vessels not ready:

Bosowa Delapan	Wheat (P)	Viza	Total	18/6
Bosowa Sembilan	Clink	Maka	Psal	30/6
Dolly	Mop(P)	Niko	Litmond	1/7

Vessels awaiting employment/instruction:

Banglar Shourabh	-	-	BSC	R/A (23/6)
Banga Lanka	Ballast	Col	Baridhi	30/6

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

STOCK