

Asean prepares road map for economic integration

AFP, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Southeast Asian nations are finalising a "road map" for integrating 11 industry sectors in an attempt to compete better with other regional trade powers, Indonesia's Trade Minister Rini Suwandi said Tuesday.

"We have decided to finalise a road map, which, among other things, calls for harmonisation of standards and customs procedures," she told reporters.

Asean economic ministers were on the last day of a two-day informal meeting to discuss ways to speed up economic integration in their grouping of some 530 million people.

"In April we will meet again in Singapore to talk about the road map, including the targets and timeframe," Suwandi said on the sidelines of the meeting.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) wants to achieve integration before 2010 in 11 industry sectors -- wood, rubber, automotive, textile, electronics, agriculture, information technology, fisheries, health care, air travel and tourism.

Suwandi said ministers were hopeful that some sectors could achieve integration before 2005 and all the others in 2008.

The Asean secretariat in Jakarta will coordinate the efforts, she said. Suwandi said economic inte-

gration was needed for Asean to compete with other regional economic powers.

"We need to achieve this fast and smoothly because now the world has been divided into regional blocs -- in Africa, in Latin America and the European Union is expanding with an additional 10 members in May," she said.

At their summit in Bali last October Asean leaders endorsed a plan to achieve a European-style single production base and market by 2020, with a free flow of goods, services and investments in the region.

Singapore and Thailand called at the time for the process to be speeded up.

Dollar fall, Iraq high on agenda in Davos meet

AFP, Davos, Switzerland

Final preparations were underway in the Swiss Alps on Tuesday for an annual meeting this week of the world's elite to ponder tough topics, ranging from the future of Iraq to the fall of the dollar.

Security will be tight at the 33rd World Economic Forum (WEF), which is set to run from Wednesday to Sunday, attracting more than 2,000 high-status guests from 94 countries to the small ski resort of Davos.

Fresh from talks in New York, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, US overseer in Iraq Paul Bremer and a delegation of Iraqi ministers are due to make an appearance at the event, along with US Vice President Dick Cheney.

Also headlining is Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, taking a break from upcoming parliamentary elections, and Libyan Prime Minister Shukri Ghanem.

It will be Libya's first appearance at the forum in more than two decades in recognition of recent diplomatic steps taken by Tripoli, which vowed in December to abandon all programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Under a theme of security and prosperity equals peace, participants will be kept busy at working breakfasts, lunches and dinners slotted around seminars, brainstorming sessions and workshops from 7:30 am to 10:30 pm.

On the economic front, European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet, US Commerce Secretary Donald Evans and Japan's Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Heizo Takenaka are among the big guns due in town.

They will likely use the occasion to put their heads together over the swooning dollar, setting the stage for a Group of Seven finance ministers meeting in early February.

In addition, attempts to relaunch global free trade talks will feature on the agenda, as the Swiss government plans to host a sideline World Trade Organisation meeting on Friday, which is due to gather more than 20 trade and economics ministers.

The latest round of WTO negotiations, due to conclude by January 1, 2005, has been on hold since a meeting in Mexico last September, which failed after bickering over cross-border investment and competition added to a more fundamental dispute over farm subsidies.



Denis Belisle, left, executive director of International Trade Centre, Geneva, poses for a photograph with Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (Basis) President Habibullah N Karim during his visit to Basis office in Dhaka recently.



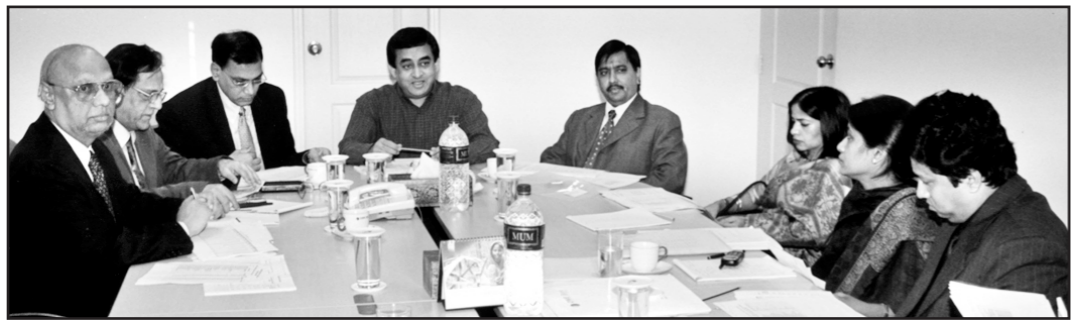
Abedur Rashid Khan, director of Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited (DBBL), inaugurates a new branch of the bank at Dania in Dhaka yesterday. Md Yeasin Ali, managing director, and senior executives of the bank, were also present.



Masum A Chowdhury, chairman of The Oriental Bank Limited, speaks at the Managers' Conference-2004 of the bank in Dhaka recently. Managing Director of the bank CM Koyes Sami is seen, among others, in the picture.



Shahed Noman, managing director of Dhaka Bank Limited, and MH Samad, managing director and CEO of Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL), sign an agreement recently in Dhaka. Under the deal, Dhaka Bank will serve as the full service depository participant under the central depository system in the stock market and secondary treasury market.



Sayeed Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of ONE Bank Limited, speaks at the inter-active session of the bank's sixth branch managers' conference held in Dhaka recently.

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 20/01/2004.							
Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	DI Of arrival	Leaving	Import Disch.
J/3	Rise	Sugar (P)	Viza	SSTL	23/10	24/01	--
J/6	Celje	Fert/GI	Sing	ANCL	06/01	---	275
J/8	Great Harmony	TSP(Fert)	Sing	Unique	02/01	22/01	1856
J/11	Orient Excellence	Cont	P. Kel	PSSL	19/01	22/01	123
J/12	Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	Pil (Bd)	15/01	20/01	--
J/13	Barrier	Cont	Col	Everbest	15/01	20/01	--
CCT/2	Qc Honour	Cont	P. Kel	QCSL	17/01	21/01	391
CCT/3	Xpress Manaslu	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	15/01	21/01	49
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	K. Dia	BSC	R/A	20/01	--
DD	Salamat-1	Repair	Iran	Olm	25/11	23/01	--
DDJ-1	Banglar Maya	--	Braz	BSC	21/12	20/01	--
RM/9	Banglar Shourabh	Repair	K. Dia	BSC	R/A	25/01	--
RM/10	Al Muztuba	Repair	--	Cl	R/A	25/01	--
Custom	Tug Sbm-1	Ballast	Sing	OTBL	09/12	--	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage					
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load Port
Orient Excellence	19/01	P. Kel	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Bonik	19/01	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Jin Cheng (Liner)	19/01	Xingang	Bdship	GI	--
Banga Borak	19/01	Sing	Bdship	Cont	P. Kel/Sing
Karadeniz	19/01	Stax	SSST	Gtsp(Fert)	--
New Blessing	20/01	P. Kel	Seaborn	Cont	Sing
Banglar Shikha	20/01	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Qc Dignity	20/01	P. Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Sea Venus	20/01	Taiw	Litmond	Clink	Shah
Luccott	21/01	Para	Aga	Scraping	--
Asian Prime	22/01	Indo	ASLL	Clink	P.C Aman Hol
Kota Singa	21/01	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Orient Freedom	21/01	Pki	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Borti	23/01	Sin	Bdship	Cont	Sing/Ptp
Mardios	22/01	P. Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Advance Pescadores	24/01	Yangoon	Everett	GI (St.C)	59 Units
Banga Bijoy	23/01	CBO	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Ocean Pride	22/01	--	PSSAL	Maize/Log	Sugar/Pulse
Kalja	22/01	--	Sunshine	GI (St. Rails)	--
Saging (Liner)	22/01	Yang	Everett	GI (St. C) 32 Units	--
Continent-4	23/01	Pipa	Cl	S. Ash	--
Xpress Resolve	23/01	--	Everbest	Cont	Col
Orient Enterprise	23/01	--	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Budi Aman	23/01	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Kota Naga	23/01	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Mong
Jaami	24/01	--	Everbest	Cont	Col
Kengtung (Liner)	24/01	Yangoon	Everett	GI (St.C)	--

Tanker due				
Vessel Name	Date	Port	Agent	Notes
Roberto Rizzo	20/01	Baha	EOSL	SKO/Jet-1 (DOJ)
Nagatino	20/01	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD (RM)
Gaz Master	22/01	Viza	MBL	W/Ld Ammonia

Vessels at outer anchorage					
Vessel Name	Port	Agent	Cargo	Date	Notes
Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	19/01	
Jin Cheng (Liner)	GI	Xing	Bdship	19/01	
Banga Borak	Cont	Sing	Bdship	19/01	
Vessels not ready					
Safinez	Fert	Fang	Unique	17/01	
Karadeniz	GTSP (Fert)	Stax	SSST	19/01	

Vessels awaiting employment / instruction:					
Vessel Name	Port	Agent	Cargo	Date	Notes
Banga Biraj					
Bdship		R/A (29/12)			
Aspen	Ballast	Mong	Cross	11/01	
Margret Oldendorf	--	Durb	Litmond	04/01	

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

CURRENCY

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

Sell	Currency		Buy		
	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
59.1500	59.2000	USD	58.2550	58.0839	58.0144
73.8843	73.9467	EUR	71.3391	71.1295	71.0444
106.2630	106.3528	GBP	103.2279	102.9247	102.8015
45.4923	45.5307	AUD	43.3767	43.2493	43.1975
0.5584	0.5589	JPY	0.5385	0.5369	0.5362
47.0340	47.0738	CHF	45.4726	45.3391	45.2848
7.9819	7.9887	SEK	7.4253	7.4035	7.3946
45.7605	45.7992	CAD	44.3408	44.2106	44.1577
7.6242	7.6306	HKD	7.4943	7.4723	7.4634
34.6921	34.7214	SGD	33.8692	33.7697	33.7293
16.2357	16.2495	AED	15.7327	15.6865	15.6677
15.8984	15.9118	SAR	15.4110	15.3657	15.3473
10.2442	10.2529	DKK	9.2926	9.2653	9.2542

STOCK