

Bush notifies Congress of new Central American FTA

REUTERS, Washington

President George W. Bush notified Congress on Friday that he intends to sign a new free trade agreement with five Central American countries, but did not say whether he would seek a potentially divisive vote on the pact ahead of this year's elections.

US law requires Bush to give lawmakers 90 days notice before entering into any trade agreement. The United States wrapped up free trade negotiations with El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala in December and

resolved remaining issues with Costa Rica last month.

In a letter to Congress, Bush said his administration was continuing talks aimed at including the Dominican Republic in the agreement and hopes to work with Congress on legislation to enact the pact. He did not say whether he would seek a vote on the agreement this year.

Democratic presidential front-runner Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts who won the endorsement of the 13-million member AFL-CIO labour coalition on Thursday, has announced his

opposition to the agreement unless it is renegotiated to beef up protections for workers and the environment.

Kerry has been criticised by his lead Democratic rival, Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, for voting in favour of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the House of Representatives.

The AFL-CIO and a coalition of environmental, consumer and human rights groups have set their sights on defeating the pact, which they fear could become a model for a larger trade agreement covering every country in the Americas except Cuba.

promotion authority" bill in 2002. But critics say the region requires a tougher approach because of its poor labour record.

Earlier this week, a senior US business official conceded that supporters did not yet have the 218 votes needed for approval of CAFTA in the House of Representatives.

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PHOTO: PBTL

Officials of Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited (PBTL), the owning company of CityCell mobile phone, and International School Dhaka (ISD) shake hands after signing a corporate agreement in Dhaka recently. Under the deal, ISD will get some exclusive services from CityCell.



PHOTO: BANGLADESH SHILPA BANK

M Ziaul Haq, managing director (current charge) of Bangladesh Shilpa Bank, addresses the inaugural session of the zonal and branch head conference of the bank in Dhaka recently.

Asian super stores start food fight in Canada

AFP, Vancouver, Canada

A food fight is brewing in Canada as Asian supermarkets blossom.

Local chains and newcomers are planning major expansions throughout the country from Western bases close to their Asian suppliers, to cash in on bustling ethnic food sales.

But Asian mom and pop stores, not mainstream grocers, have the most to lose, industry watchers say.

"There are huge Asian communities in major cities like Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver that have hit a critical mass, making it very economical to cater to them now. In fact, it's probably long overdue," said retail consultant Blake Hudema.

He attributes the increase in Asian supermarkets to a swell in the Asian-Canadian population and increasingly cosmopolitan tastes in the population at large. There are currently over 1.2 million Canadians of Chinese, Korean or Japanese heritage, according to Statistics Canada, up from 735,000 in 1991. Most live in Toronto and Vancouver.

"There's a lot more white-skinned customers looking for something different that are going to these along with Asian customers, too," Hudema said.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (Feb 22, 2004) forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell		Buy	
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean
59.1500	59.2000	USD	58.2550
75.0791	76.1426	EUR	72.0789
110.9654	111.0592	GBP	107.5387
46.3795	46.4187	AUD	44.1631
0.5476	0.5481	JPY	0.5286
47.3086	47.3486	CHF	45.7872
8.0544	8.0612	SEK	7.5668
44.5944	44.6321	CAD	43.2031
7.6170	7.6235	HKD	7.4840
35.0726	35.1023	SGD	34.1772
16.2357	16.2495	AED	15.7327
15.8988	15.9123	SAR	15.4114

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner
NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit			

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Local Interbank FX Trading	Key facilities
Local interbank market was subdued on Sunday as the international market was closed. Dollar ended unchanged against Bangladeshi taka due to rise in import demand.	key facilities helped spur the dollar more than 2 per cent higher against the yen and bolstered waves of dollar-buying across the board. Euro, meanwhile fell to a 2-week low against the dollar in a broad rally as investors scrambled to take profits in other major currencies after months of buying them against the US dollar. The dollar rose to a two-month high against the yen to 109.31. Euro also fell to a two-week low of \$1.2496 before raising slightly. Sterling also fell to a two-week low to \$1.8566.

Local Money Market
Money market was active. Call money rate continued to ease and ranged between 2.25 and 2.50 per cent compared with 2.50-3.00 per cent previously.

International Market:
International market remained closed on Sunday. The dollar stormed to a two-month high against the yen on Friday, helped by security alert in Japan. News that Japan had tightened security at 650

ReadyCash Raffle Draw Winner

The latest ReadyCash Raffle draw took place at ReadyCash Bangladesh office at Dhanmondi on last Thursday, says a press release.

Prizes	Name of Winner	Card No
Sentra Travels and Tours free Dhaka Cox's Bazaar Dhaka Biman Ticket	P arveen	S ultana
5047980010024512		
Bhuiyan Computers free Computer/English	Mrs. S abina	Y asmin
Spoken Course		
504798000006989		
System Information Technology free Computer learning Course	M d Enamul Hoque	
5047980000046500		
Drnk net free 100 hours Browsing	S iraj Uddin Ahmed	
5047980000048852		
You and Eye free Eye Test and Glass	S iddique Ahmed	
5047980000049559		
Nanking Chinese free Lunch/Dinner for Two	S.M. Mahfuzur Rahman	5047980010024335
Fedex free Shipment	M ohammed Sajjad	
504798000005765		
Fedex free Shipment	M d Abu Abrar	
504798000002757		
Fedex free Shipment	M d Abedullah Sarkar	

Winners can collect their prizes from the Executive, Promotion of ReadyCash within 30 days of this news circulation. ReadyCash encourages its cardholder to read The Daily Star and The Daily Prothom Alo for a new listing of card winner or call our Customer Service at: 8125294-7, 8130497, and 8123850.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 22/2/2004.

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch.
J/2	Pathein	Rice (P)	Kaki	GPSS	12/2	26/2	785
J/4	Xuan Cheng	Gi	Inch	Bdship	20/2	26/2	1876
J/5	Rise	Sugar(P)	Viza	SSTL	23/10	24/2	--
J/6	Star Providence	Gi (Hr C)	Jadda	RSA	16/2	20/2	2728
J/9	Faros	Gi (Y Peas)	Vanc	Litmond	28/1	24/2	2435
J/11	Xpress Resolve	Cont	Col	Everbest	20/2	24/2	50
J/12	Orient Freedom	Cont	P. Kel	PSSL	20/2	23/2	328
J/13	Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	Pii (Bd)	18/2	--	--
CCT/1	Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	20/2	24/2	156
CCT/2	New Blessing	Cont	P. Kel	Seaborn	17/2	22/2	--
CCT/3	Mardios	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	21/2	25/2	164
TSP	Banglar Kakoli	R Phos	Hamb	Seacoast	14/2	22/2	--
RM/3	Spring Wind	CPO	Lumut	Rainbow	17/2	19/2	--
RM/4	Ace-1	CPO	Sing	USL	17/2	24/2	--
DOJ	Al Badiyah	HSD/SKO	Kuwa	MSTPL	19/2	--	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Asean Energy	23/2	Yang	Goldview	GI (Log)	--
Banga Bijoy	23/2	Hald	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Banga Bodor	22/2	P. Kel	Bdship	Cont	Sing/Pkl
Qc Dignity	22/2	P. Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Eastern Treasure	23/2	Yang	H&S	GI (HRC)	--
Orient Enterprise	24/2	Sing	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Borak	24/2	Hald	PSSL	Cont	Col
Rio Negro	24/2	P. Kel	QCSL	Cont	P. Kel
Banga Borti	26/2	--	Bdship	Cont	Pip/Pkl
Kota Berjaya	27/2	Sing	Pii (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Feng Shun Shan (Liner)	26/3	--	Bdship	GI	--
Banga Bonik	27/2	--	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Kota Naga	27/2	Sing	Pii (Bd)	Cont	Sing

Tanker Due

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Thor Hawk	23/2	P. Kel	SSBL	--	--
Star Dream	23/2	Sin	Rainbow	L. Oil (Doj)	--
Roberto Rizzo	25/2	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/Jp-1(Rm)	--

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels Ready	Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Gec (Faith)			GI (St. Rail)	Damm	Sunshine	19/2
Dongtai Fortune			Cont	Sing	Pii (Bd)	2/2
Pagan			GI (Log)	Yang	MTA	2/2
Banglar Jyoti			GI (Log)	C. Oil	K Dia	BSC

Vessels not ready

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Maritime			C Clink	Tarj	--
New Merry Ocean			CPO	Dumai	Bma
Asian Prime			GI (Log)	Yang	ASLL
Cent Kaptanoglu			R Seed	--	Rainbow

Vessels awaiting employment / instruction

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Banga Biraj			--	--	Bdship

Vessels not entering

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Santa Barbara			Glink	Kant	Uniship
Bunker-2			Scraping	Col	Rsship
Ocean Wind			GI (Log)	Salt(P)	Kand
Accord			--	Sing	Viking

Movement of vessels for 23.2.2004

Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
J/7	Cec Faith	J/12
J/12	O Freedom	CCT/2
DOJ	B Jyoti	J/3
		J/8
		Doj (P)

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

STOCK