

RESUMPTION OF TRADE TALKS

WTO chief gives members one month challenge

AFP, Geneva

The head of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on Wednesday gave countries one month to start agreeing on elements in the latest round of free trade talks or risk missing a deadline to complete the process.

At a meeting of the WTO's 146 member states in Geneva, the director general Supachai Panitchpakdi welcomed a new willingness between delegates to discuss thorny topics such as farming but warned that time was running out.

The so-called Doha round of trade negotiations are due to conclude by January 1, 2005.

"We should be under no illusions

about the scale and the urgency of the tasks ahead of us," Supachai said.

"There is a window of opportunity but it is a window that is closing rapidly," he told the meeting, according to his spokesman Keith Rockwell.

"In order to achieve the objective of the framework agreement by the summerbreak no time can be lost. Elements of a framework package ... should begin to emerge by the end of May," he said.

Last month, countries said they would try to reach an agreement on a concrete framework to push the round forward by the end of July.

"People have to start to get a pretty decent idea of what they are shooting for by the end of May,

because that would only leave two months for them to try to stitch everything together in a way that would be acceptable to everyone," Rockwell told a news conference after the meeting.

Such a task is vital to ensure the second half of the year is not lost to domestic matters as powerful members such as the United States focus on leadership elections, while commissioners in the European Union are due to change.

Elections in India are already underway while South Africa also went to the ballot boxes over the weekend.

"We have elections going on everywhere," said Rockwell.

It was imperative that govern-

ments kept focused and overcome thorny problems such as subsidies on agriculture by rich countries and the high tariffs on farm imports from developing nations -- issues that divided WTO member states and left them unable to proceed at a meeting in Mexico last September.

"The coming days and weeks are critical for the Doha agenda and the multilateral trading system," Supachai said.

"If no tangible result is made by the summer this would not just result in wasting the rest of this year but a good portion of next year as well," he warned.



PHOTO: GREY

Chairman of Apex Footwear Limited Syed Manzur Elahi (2nd from right) presides over the 14th annual general meeting (AGM) of the company in Dhaka on Wednesday. Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director, along with other directors and senior officials of the company was also present.



PHOTO: NATIONAL BANK

National Bank Limited Chairperson Parveen Haque Sikder (5th from left) speaks at the Annual Conference-2004 of the executives and managers of the bank of Khulna, Sylhet and Rajshahi regions held in Dhaka on Sunday. Among others, directors of the bank Zakaria Taher, Md Mahbubur Rahman Khan, Md Khalilur Rahman, Shahadat Hossain, Mahbub Ahmed, and AM Nurul Islam, Managing Director MA Mazid Khan and deputy managing directors Mustaque Ahmed and Anwar Imam were present.



PHOTO: PACIFIC BANGLADESH TELECOM

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon (right) and Channel-i Director Shykh Siraj (2nd from right) are seen, among others, at the CityCell-sponsored programme "Medha Bikash" for the candidates of HSC examinations. Through the TV channel's programme examinees get opportunities to discuss exam-related problems with reputed teachers by calling at specific CityCell phone numbers. The programme, telecast everyday at 12:25pm, will run until May 10.



PHOTO: A POSITIVE ADVERTISING LTD

Fevicol brand adhesive maker Pidilite Industries Limited organised a dealers' get together in Dhaka on Monday. Vice-president of Pidilite Industries in Mumbai Manab Ghosh, company executives Aranya Mazumder and Ikramul Hasan, Mohammad Masum, chairman of M/S Fairdeal, sole importer of Fevicol in Bangladesh, and Monirul Alam, managing director of Fairdeal, were also present.

CURRENCY

Following is Thursday's (April 22, 2004) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank					
Sell			Buy		
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
59.4000	59.4500	USD	58.5050	58.3332	58.2633
71.1315	71.1914	EUR	68.6381	68.4365	68.3545
106.0349	106.1242	GBP	103.0039	102.7014	102.5784
44.0926	44.1297	AUD	41.9949	41.8715	41.8214
0.5505	0.5510	JPY	0.5310	0.5295	0.5288
45.7980	45.8365	CHF	44.2048	44.0749	44.0222
7.6829	7.6893	SEK	7.1118	7.0909	7.0824
44.1373	44.1745	CAD	42.7325	42.6069	42.5559
7.6244	7.6308	HKD	7.4946	7.4726	7.4636
35.2146	35.2442	SGD	34.3702	34.2693	34.2283
16.3039	16.3176	AED	15.7998	15.7534	15.7345
15.9656	15.9790	SAR	15.4771	15.4316	15.4132
9.8348	9.8430	DKK	8.9528	8.9265	8.9159
202.1715	202.3416	KWD	191.3742	190.8121	190.5837
Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar					
Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner	NZ dollar
44.05	57.39	98.18	39.605	6.9735	0.6723
					Malaysian ringit
					3.80

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 22/4/2004

Berth no.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Esco Horizon	Gl(Copra)	Banet	Mutual	15/4	27/4	679
J/4	Brave Royal	C. Clink	Kant	Arl	10/4	22/4	230
J/5	Bumi Jaya	Sugar(P)	Bang	Mutual	14/4	28/4	1234
J/6	Amar	Sugar(P)	Bang	Mutual	2/4	23/4	949
J/7	Derwent	W/Lentils	Sing	Mutual	7/4	3/5	1383
J/8	Lady East	Clink	Lumut	Move	9/4	22/4	2366
J/9	Yong Jiang	Gl	Busa	Bdship	18/4	23/4	2484
J/10	Banga Binoi	Repair	--	Bdship	R/A	23/4	--
J/12	Banga Borti	Cont	Col	Baridhi	19/4	22/4	41
J/13	Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	Pil (Bd)	20/4	24/4	204
Ccl/1	Pac Makassar	Cont	Hald	Pssl	20/4	22/4	63
Ccl/2	QC Dignity	Cont	P. Kel	Qcsl	19/4	24/4	357
Ccl/3	QC Honour	Cont	P. Kel	Qcsl	17/4	22/4	---
Tsp:	Banglar Kakoli	R. Sulp	B. Abb	Seacoast	20/4	27/4	
RM/5	Dailong	Hsd/MS	Sing	Mstpl	18/4	22/4	
RM/6	Al Kuwaitiah	Hsd/Sko	Mina	Mstpl	17/4	22/4	
Doj:	Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	K. Dia	Bsc	R/A	22/4	

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load-port
Xpress Manastu	22/4	P. Kel	Rsl	Cont	Sing
QC Pintail	22/4	Sing	Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Continent-4	23/4	Pipa	Cla	Gl(S.Ash)	--
Jimakos-T	23/4	Krabi	Litmond	Gypsum Shah	
Pacific Aries	23/4	Sing	Purbachal	Vehi	--
Taraman Bibi	23/4	B. Abb	Seacoast	R. Sulp/Tsp	
Banga Bonik	24/4	Cbo	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Banga Lanka	24/4	P. Kel	Bdship	Cont	Sing
New Blessing	24/4	Pkl	Seaborne	Cont	Sing
Maritime Changmai	24/4	Indo	Bsl	Clink	
Banglar Shikha	26/4	Sing	Bsc	Cont	Sing
Ambika	25/4	--	Kaptai	Gl(S.Ash)	
Rio Nergo	25/4	P. Kel	Qcsl	Cont	
Asian Tiger	25/4	P. Guda	Jfi	Scraping	Sing
Fraternity Wisdom	25/4	Yangon	Everett	Gl(St.C)	
Orient Wisdom	26/4	Cbo	Pssl	Cont	Col
Orient Excellence	26/4	Sin	Pssl	Cont	Sing

Tanker due

Gaz Master	22/4	Sing	Mbl	Ammonia K/A
Andhika Ariandhi	23/4	Maia	Usi	Cpo(RM/3/4)

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
-----------------	-------	----------------	-------------	-----------------

Outside port limit

Loulwat Qatar	Crude Oil	Jebel	Uss	15/4
Banglar Shourath	C. Oil	--	Bsc	R/A

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready

Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	Bdship	19/4
Espoir	Base Oil	Yang	Pst	21/4
Orient Enterprise	Cont	P. Kel	Pssl	21/4
Al Sabiyah	Hsd	Mina	Mstpl	21/4

Vessels not ready

Inwa	Gl(Y.Maize)	Yang	Gpsl	19/4
Tuking	Slag	Vize	Bsl	19/4
Samsun Apollo	Clink	Hoping	Move	21/4
Thanh Son	Feldchips	Vish	Asa	20/4

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

STOCK