

WTO chief appeals to NGOs to use their influence well in trade talks

AFP, Geneva

The head of the World Trade Organisation, Supachai Panitchpakdi, called on advocacy groups Tuesday to use a new responsibility they have earned through past actions to help the latest round of free-trade talks.

"You succeeded in making your voices heard and in having your arguments -- at least some -- taken into account by the WTO and its members," Supachai told a WTO symposium in Geneva that attracted

members of non-governmental organisations as well as corporate and political representatives.

"It is equally true that, because of this growing influence, you too can be partially held accountable for the success and failures this organisation has seen," the WTO director general said.

"The time has come to show that you can live up to that responsibility ... I urge you to use your knowledge and experience in a responsible way to the longer term benefit of the system and its members."

Last September at a WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico some member states accused NGOs of fuelling disputes that were already simmering between the rich and poor by encouraging developing countries to reject a draft text put forward by the European Union in the current round of trade negotiations.

After several lost months following Cancun, the WTO's 147 member states have once again started to discuss the so-called Doha trade round with a view to drawing up a framework for future negotiations by

the end of July.

Supachai said there was an important and historic window of opportunity, but he hinted that there was no time for setbacks with a deadline to complete the talks by January 1, 2005.

Failure to do so would result in a growing imbalance between multilateral and bilateral relations widening the gap between the rich and poor.

"If we don't make sufficient progress in the negotiations and conclude them successfully, it is the poorest countries that will lose the most."



PHOTO: SSOQ

ATDP Chief of Party Ron Gillespie, Head of Market Research and Development of GrameenPhone Ltd (GP) Rubaba Dowla Matin and Shrimp Seal of Quality (SSOQ) Coordinator Cedric Randolph, among others, pose for photographs at a function held to mark the launching of "SSOQ-GrameenPhone Shrimp News" service on Tuesday.



PHOTO: BKB

Deputy General Manager of Local Principal Office of Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) Masud Ahmed Khan, Executive General Manager of Aftab Multipurpose Farms Ahsanuzzaman, Managing Partner of Agribusiness Corporation KM Fashiur Rahman sign an agreement on behalf of their organisations on Saturday in Dhaka. Under the deal, BKB will provide loan facility to Agribusiness Corporation to purchase maize from growers directly and will also supply to Aftab Multipurpose farm.

Thailand, Australia to sign free trade deal in July

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will sign a free trade agreement with Australia when he visits that country in early July, a Thai government official said Wednesday.

"Thaksin will arrive in Canberra for the signing ceremony on July 5th along with a number of Thai cabinet members," an official told AFP.

"He will travel to Melbourne the following day to address a business meeting."

Both nations agreed on the trade deal last October during a visit to Thailand by Australian Prime Minister John Howard.

Tariffs are to be steadily reduced over time and are expected to be largely abolished on a total of 5,000-6,000 items by 2015.

Australia expects to benefit primarily from Thai tariff cuts aimed at its automobile manufacturing industry, as well as wine, wool, cotton, lead, zinc, aluminium and a number of steel products.

Thailand will benefit from better access for its textile and clothing exports and be granted preferential access to the Australian market for light trucks not produced in Australia.

The agreement is expected to boost Australia's gross domestic product by an estimated 6.7 billion US dollars and Thailand's by 32 billion dollars during a 20-year period.



PHOTO: ADCOMM

Sheikh Akijuddin, chairman of Akij Group, hands over the documents of an agreement to Geeteara Safiya Chaudhury, chairman and managing director of Adcomm Limited, after signing the deal on Sunday in Dhaka. Under the deal, Adcomm will advertise the products of Akij Food and Beverages Limited.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (May 26, 2004) forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell			Buy		
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
61.5000	61.5500	USD	59.9550	59.7789	59.7073
75.1961	75.2572	EUR	71.8381	71.6271	71.5413
112.1453	112.2364	GBP	107.6792	107.3629	107.2344
44.2185	44.2545	AUD	41.6387	41.5164	41.4668
0.5576	0.5580	JPY	0.5328	0.5313	0.5306
48.8988	48.9385	CHF	46.6830	46.5459	46.4902
8.1522	8.1588	SEK	7.4580	7.4361	7.4272
45.2839	45.3207	CAD	43.4016	43.2741	43.2223
7.8978	7.9042	HKD	7.6846	7.6620	7.6528
36.0683	36.0976	SGD	34.8555	34.7532	34.7116
16.8808	16.8945	AED	16.1918	16.1442	16.1249
16.5305	16.5439	SAR	15.8611	15.8145	15.7956
10.4260	10.4345	DKK	9.3772	9.3497	9.3385
209.2548	209.4250	KWD	196.1237	195.5476	195.3135

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
45.3	57.585	99.07	40.750	6.8005	0.6685	3.80



PHOTO: DHAKA BANK

Deputy Managing Director of Dhaka Bank Limited Mohammad Abu Musa (sitting 3rd from left), SAVP and faculty member of the bank's training institute, and Salahud Din Ahmed (sitting 2nd from left), AVP and faculty member, among others, pose for photographs with the participants of a training course on "Foundation Training for Bankers" held in Dhaka.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 26/5/2004

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch.
J/1	Celje	Fert(P)	Sing	ANCL	21/5	28/5	1838
J/2	Angela-R	Clink	Tanj	BSL	21/5	30/5	---
J/3	Tug Lara Saty	Survey	Chen	Mutual	24/5	28/5	---
J/6	Banglar Doot (Liner)	Gi (St. & Paper)	Hong	Prog	25/5	30/5	1162
J/7	Baltmar Venus	Gi/GI	Kapt	Sunshine	23/5	27/5	---
J/8	Pavonis	Gi (Log/Pulse)	Yang	PML	23/5	02/6	1392
J/9	Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	22/5	27/5	142
J/10	Orient Excellence	Cont	Hals	PSSL	25/5	27/5	146
J/12	Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	23/5	27/5	127
J/13	Qc Dignity	Cont	P. Kel	QCSL	21/5	26/5	---
CCT/1	Xpress Manaslu	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	23/5	26/5	---
CCT/2	Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Bandhi	23/5	29/5	223
CCT/3	New Blessing	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	23/5	27/5	458
GS-1	Maya	St. Ralls	Bay	Unique	25/5	28/5	---
TSP-	Silver Star	P. Acid	Tuti	BMA	23/5	26/5	---
RM/3	Salamat-1	Bitumen	Sing	Qlm	22/5	27/5	---
RM/6	Mount Rainter	Skoap-1	Mina	MSTPL	23/5	27/5	---

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Taruna Putra-1	26/05	Indo	Pacific	Scraping	---
Novgorod	27/5	Santo	KSM	Sugar (P)	---
Belgorod	27/5	Santo	KSM	Sugar (P)	---
Rio Negro	27/5	P. Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Stempress Desmers	27/5	Dubai	Rsship	Demolition	---
Pagan	28/5	Bank	GPSS	Sugar	---
Sittve (Liner)	27/5	Yang	Everett	Gi (St.C)	---
Pyongyang-813	30/5	Bank	USL	Sugar (P)	---
Princess Eva	28/5	Sing	Jf-1	Scraping	---
Xiang Jiang (Liner)	28/5	Nichon	Bdship	GI	---
Mardios	29/5	P. Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Xpress Resolve	28/5	---	Everbest	Cont	Col
Orient Freedom	28/5	Pkl	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Borat	30/5	Pkl	Bdship	Cont	Pkl/Sing
Shivaji	29/5	P. Band	Intraport	Scraping	---
Orient Wisdom	29/5	---	PSSL	Cont	Col
Kota Berjaya	29/5	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Pathen	29/5	Sangaon	Myan	GPSS	Sugar (P)
Sinar Sejai-2	29/5	Bang	MBL	GI (W. Ce)	---

Tanker due

Robert Maersk	27/5	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/Jp-1
Ocean Marlin	30/5	Sing	MSTPL	HSD/MS

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Dea Captain	---	---	IBSA	R/A (21/5)
Lombardia	Crude Oil	Jeba	OWSL	23/5
Banglar Shourabh	C. Oil	---	BSC	R/A

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready:	Vessels not ready:
Corona	Santa Maria
Banga Borak	
Qc Pintail	
Gaz Master	

Corona	CDSO	Hald	BMA	25/5
Banga Borak	Cont	Sing	Bdship	25/5
Qc Pintail	Cont	P. Kel	QCSL	25/5
Gaz Master	Ammonia	Sing	MBL	26/5

Banga Biraj	---	---	Bdship	R/A (29/12)
An Lu Jiang	Fert(P)	Qinz	RSA	11/5

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

STOCK