

Global brands seek to end in India textile

With just days to go before quotas on world textile exports are scrapped, international retailers are drawing up bold plans for India but are cautious about the ability of local firms to fill big orders and deliver on time.

Global retailers including Wal-Mart Stores, Target Corp, Federated Stores and JC Penney have all ordered more ahead of the abolition of quotas on Jan 1.

But they are doubtful if Indian textile firms have added enough capacity and fear that creaking infrastructure could dog their ambitious goals for the country.

"We have identified India as a centre where business will grow... but we would have liked to grow at a faster clip and do much more," said Adil Raza, country manager of JC Penney, India.

JC Penney expects business from India to grow briskly by 30-40 percent a year. It already sources apparel, home textiles and towels worth \$120-150 million directly from manufacturers, and another \$80-100 million indirectly from traders.

JC Penney sources about four times as much merchandise, close to \$1 billion worth, from China, but is waiting like other buyers to see whether the United States or the European Union imposes new curbs to slow the growth of China's textile sales, Raza said.

Washington has accepted 12 petitions for emergency "safeguard" restrictions, which are permitted under the World Trade Organisation pact scrapping the decades-old quota system, while the EU has set up a special monitoring mechanism.

Wal-Mart Stores is looking to double apparel and home textile sourcing and believes Indian firms will be more competitive after quotas end, said S Ramesh, general manager of the firm's global procurement operations in India.

"But we are aware of challenges in scale of production, infrastructure and technology, and compliance issues," he said.

Massive congestion in Bombay's main NPT port a few months ago caused delays of two to three weeks, forcing buyers to ship orders by air at much higher costs and raising questions about the ability of Indian firms to meet delivery targets.

"These instances seriously affect the reputation of Indian firms, and may result in lost opportunities for them," said Raza.

Once free of quota constraints, India is projected to double its share of the world textile and apparel market from 3 percent in just a couple of years.

By 2010, the Indian government is looking to boost textile exports to \$50 billion a year from about \$11 billion now.

Tommy Hilfinger, Gap Inc, and Carrefour are also among those that have increased their orders.

But buyers say the industry is fragmented and hampered by old regulations that limit manufacturing capacity.

"Firms have not achieved much economies of scale, and their overheads and cost of labour are still high," said Raza.

"There are not many exporters who can handle large orders either, so we have to source from several suppliers. As a result, larger orders may go to China and Vietnam, rather than India."

Putin defends state takeover of Yukos assets

Russian President Vladimir Putin Thursday strongly defended the takeover by state oil firm Rosneft of stricken oil major Yukos's key production unit, Yuganskneftegaz, calling it a legitimate business deal.

"Rosneft, which is de facto 100 percent state owned, bought Yuganskneftegaz. I think everything was done by market methods," Putin told a news conference.

In his most strident defence yet of the Kremlin's seizure of Yukos's prize asset, which pumps a tenth of Russia's oil, Putin said: "Today the state is using absolutely legal and market mechanisms to serve its interests."

Rosneft announced early on Thursday it had bought the unknown Baikal Finance Group, the surprise winner of Sunday's auction of Yugansk at a price of \$9.4 billion. The purchase effectively nationalised Yugansk.

The bizarre chain of events, including the role of Baikal, a shell company registered in a grocery store and cafe in the town of Tver north of Moscow, has stunned many in Russia and abroad.

"The world is laughing at us," said Arkady Volysky, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. "I don't understand why it was necessary to create a three-man company at one of Tver's beerhouses to buy Yugansk." Interfax agency quoted him as saying.

The Yugansk auction was the culmination of a Kremlin campaign to crush Yukos's politically ambitious principal owner, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, and seize control of strategic sectors of the economy sold off in the chaotic privatisations of the 1990s.

Khodorkovsky is on trial for fraud and tax evasion.

Putin, while not referring to Khodorkovsky by name, said many businessmen had broken the law in order to buy state assets on the cheap after the Soviet Union's collapse.

"You all know very well how our privatisation was carried out at the beginning of the 1990s. And how people were using different tricks, which included breaking laws then in force, in order to acquire... state property," he said.

Yukos has been left broken-backed, crushed under the burden of \$27 billion in tax claims. The purchase of Yugansk will make Rosneft one of Russia's biggest oil firms with production of 1.45 million barrels per day, almost as much as Opec member Libya.

The United States voiced dismay. "We are disappointed in the way this case has been handled" a US State Department spokesman said. "We certainly don't think it's been disposed of in a transparent or open way."

He added: "It sends the wrong signal to foreign investors and could negatively impact Russia's role in the global economy."

Tokyo-Mitsubishi forms Singapore hub

The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi opened an investment banking headquarters for Asia in Singapore on Friday to take account of growing demand across the region.

The Asian headquarters will integrate the operations of the bank's 32 branches and representative offices in Asia outside Japan, with 50 staff members including specialists sent from Tokyo.

The Japanese bank expects that demand for transactions such as securitisation, derivatives as well as merger and acquisition deals will expand further across Asia in the future, a company spokesman said in Tokyo.

The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi is part of Japan's second-largest banking group, Mitsubishi Tokyo Financial Group (MTFG).

MTFG and UFJ Holdings, which is the smallest and weakest of the nation's big four banking groups, plan to merge by October 2005 to create the world's largest banking group in terms of assets.

Niaz Rahim, managing director of Rahimafrooz Superstores Ltd, the owning company of chain store Agora, receives a card from an employee of the store's Dhanmody Outlet in Dhaka recently. The card was launched under a scheme styled Agora Infinity Programme to reward customers on their points earned while shopping at the superstore.



Md Sakhawat Hossain, additional secretary to the government and chairman of National Tubes Ltd, presides over the 24th annual general meeting of the company on Thursday at Tongi in Gazipur.



Chairman of Square Pharmaceuticals Limited Samson H Chowdhury (centre) poses for photographs at the company's annual sales and marketing conference on Thursday at Savar. Vice Chairman Samuel S Chowdhury (3-R) and Managing Director Tapan Chowdhury (4-L) are also seen with other senior officials.

STOCK

TRADED ISSUES IN THE WEEK

Company	FV/MIL (TL/No)	DSE			CSE			Financial Performance			Last EPS (Tk)	DPS (%)
		Price	Turnover	Share	Price	Turnover	Share	AGM	EPS	DPS		
BANK												
AB Bank Ltd.	10005	381.25	-1.80	21133	388.00	-0.64	390.50	2390	27/03/03	4.79	---	
City Bank Ltd.	10005	829.00	0.85	8222	725.00	0.00	800.00	23200	28/04/03	3.56	---	
ICBC Bank Ltd.	10005	405.00	0.25	404.00	3763	460.00	-1.08	465.00	07/12/04	15.8	---	
Islamic Bank Ltd.	10001	487.50	0.53	4801.25	4305.00	0.02	4807.50	482	17/09/04	162	---	
National Bank Ltd.	10002	474.25	1.34	468.00	36681	503.50	-5.80	477.25	14/06/00	17.0	---	
Bank of Commerce Ltd.	10005	1285.50	7.54	1336.25	6450	1346.25	1.32	1330.00	60	---		
Rupali Bank Ltd.	10010	639.00	1.30	743.50	46360	683.25	-8.00	749.25	34650	28.6	---	
UBCL	10005	1207.00	0.06	1206.25	8098	1190.75	-0.83	1201.00	535	---		
ABTA Bank Ltd.	10005	1298.50	4.24	1401.25	2401.25	833.00	-4.67	2439.00	215	---		
The Oriental Bank Ltd.	10005	1639.75	-1.82	1650.50	3098	---	---	---	50.0	---		
Eastern Bank Ltd.	10002	786.00	-1.41	787.25	520	930.00	---	---	---	---		
BDCL Ltd.	10020	1234.25	-1.70	1237.75	4160	1400.00	---	---	---	---		
United Leasing Co. Ltd.	10020	1963.00	-7.58	2114.00	9740	---	---	---	---	---		
United Finance and Inv.	10005	1069.75	-5.23	1129.00	13100	1061.00	-3.70	1101.75	150	---		
AI Andra Islami Bank	10005	3311.25	0.61	3391.25	1481	3438.50	0.77	3320.00	500	---		
Prime Bank Ltd.	10005	736.50	0.31	734.25	103269	745.00	-1.32	755.00	6707	20.0		
Southeast Bank Ltd.	10005	649.75	3.92	623.25	283082	645.25	-3.28	624.75	49785	29/09/04	37.3	
Bank of Asia Ltd.	10005	735.50	1.62	712.00	101812	720.00	-1.43	720.25	16850	29/06/04	29.0	
N C Bank Ltd.	10005	535.50	3.93	513.25	188868	533.50	3.95	513.25	40223	28/07/04	12.1	
Central Investment Bank	10005	1716.00	-0.76	1744.50	1250	---	---	---	---	---		
Quich Bank Ltd.	10005	1820.00	0.00	1820.00	901	2000.00	---	---	---	---		
Media Financing Ltd.	10005	396.50	4.28	414.25	2429	410.00	2.19	411.00	350	16/10/03	20.0	
Manul Bank Ltd.	10005	568.00	1.16	561.50	133770	570.00	0.48	567.25	23645	04/05/04	26.4	
First Lease Int'l. Ltd.	10005	409.50	0.92	409.25	37001	409.50	0.92	409.25	13700	09/05/04	11.1	
Standard Bank Ltd.	10005	450.00	0.05	457.75	101397	461.00	-0.27	459.75	10652	09/06/04	20.0	
One Bank Ltd.	10005	457.00	5.79	432.00	39750	457.75	0.48	430.00	10450	07/06/04	13.1	
Bank Asia Ltd.	10005	715.50	1.62	712.00	101812	720.00	-1.43	720.25	16850	29/06/04	29.0	
Mercantile Bank Ltd.	10005	510.00	0.79	503.25	210233	515.00	1.58	523.25	21200	14/06/04	17.0	
ICB	10005	702.25	4.33	738.25	308400	710.00	4.15	740.75	43450	---	---	
ICB	10005	200.00	0.00	200.00	570	130.00	---	---	---	---		
1st ICB Mutual Fund	10005	2730.00	0.06	2728.25	40	2860.00	0.00	2600.00	10	12/08/03	15.4	
2nd ICB Mutual Fund	10005	865.00	3.98	830.00	65	550.00	---	---	---	---		
3rd ICB Mutual Fund	10005	799.50	4.95	839.25	410	800.00	6.67	750.00	30	12/08/03	12.7	
4th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	587.50	-2.57	603.00	180	555.00	0.91	550.00	30	12/08/03	30.9	
5th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	116.50	-4.49	115.00	110	130.00	9.46	119.75	60	12/08/03	19.3	
6th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	196.75	-8.06	214.00	4130	201.75	-8.30	220.00	490	12/08/03	14.8	
7th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	190.00	-10.44	215.50	1450	215.00	-0.46	216.00	60	12/08/03	14.6	
8th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	205.00	1.11	202.75	3942	208.00	1.24	215.00	310	12/08/03	10.8	
9th ICB Mutual Fund	10010	100.00	-2.75	109.00	734	105.00	0.33	95.00	600	---	---	
AIMS Fund	12500	13.4	0.78	13.34	17500	13.5	-0.74	13.61957500	0.01101	---		
AIMS Fund	10005	26.00	5.13	32.00	23825	25.00	14.29	26.50	800	17/08/04	14.9	
ENGINEERING												
Alyat Automobiles Ltd.	10005	620.50	-3.46	642.75	7395	620.00	-6.56	663.50	390	13/12/03	87.7	
Asia Pipes Ltd.	10005	63.50	2.68	65.25	2925	64.25	-7.31	65.00	55	29/06/04	11.1	
Olympic Industries Ltd.	10005	235.50	5.23	237.75	64012	240.00	0.67	235.00	150	24/12/03	6.1	
Bangladesh Lamps Ltd.	10005	879.50	-7.03	946.00	330	940.00	-3.09	970.00	10	24/06/04	27.7	
Alkhan Cables Ltd.	10005	260.00	1.81	271.25	37001	261.00	-2.94	272.00	2210	06/06/04	51.1	
Singer Bangladesh Ltd.	10005	1661.75	-2.84	1710.25	2485	1690.00	-1.31	1745.00	70	10/05/04	77.7	
Atlas Bangladesh Ltd.	10005	346.00	2.18	339.00	16135	---	---	---	---	---		
Quich Bank Ltd.	10005	180.00	0.00	180.00	2100	---	---	---	---	---		
Quich Bank Ltd.	10005	22.00	3.34	21.65	645500	22.00	1.79	22.00	136000	17/12/03	10.1	
Renwick Jewellers Ltd.	10005	125.75	-12.67	144.00	3070	---	---	---	---	---		
Real Bangla Sugar Mills	10005	180.00	0.00	180.00	6160	---	---	---	---	---		
National Tubes Ltd.	10010	2300.00	-8.89	2112.25	3820	---	---	---	---	---		
BD & The Aluminium Ltd.	10001	151.25	-5.32	159.75	2020	158.00	-6.25	160.00	900	05/08/04	2.98	
Greenex Corporation Ltd.	10005	62.50	4.29	64.25	1890	62.00	-1.43	63.00	200	30/12/03	4.6	
Kay & Que (BD) Ltd.	10005	187.00	2.19	183.00	1600	173.00	-1.33	180.00	100	28/06/04	4.1	
Wonder Land Toys Ltd.	10005	22.00	14.29	19.00	7800	22.00	37.50	16.00	600	24/12/03	1.06	
Real Bangla Sugar Mills	10005	14.00	12.00	12.50	5950	14.00	14.29	16.50	2000	17/08/04	1.18	
FOOD & ALLIED												
Alpha Tobacco Ltd.	10005	21.00	33.72	17.20	7250	---	---	---	---	---		
Amran Sea Food Ltd.	10005	12.00	-4.76	12.60	240	45.00	---	---	---	---		
Alpha Foods Ltd.	10005	715.00	-9.38	728.00	10913	780.00	2.90	758.00	20	23/09/04	-2.9	
Bangas	10005	37.50	21.62	30.25	795	34.75	---	---	---	---		
Eastern Cakes Ltd.	10005	10.00	20.38	8.00	110	---	---	---	---	---		
BATCEL	10005	141.10	-1.26	142.00	72300	140.00	-2.23	143.00	800	30/06/04	15.4	
National Textile Co. Ltd.	10005	1125.00	0.05	1135.75	832	640.00	---	---	---	---		
Zee Bangla Sugar Mills	10005	1.80	2.70	1.70	6140	---	---	---	---	---		
Yul Dairy & Food Ltd.	10010	18.00	0.00	18.00	310	---	---	---	---	---		
Greenex Corporation Ltd.	10005	13.00	-7.46	13.50	64880	13.00	-3.45	12.00	840	26/06/04	-0.7	
Greenex Corporation Ltd.	10005	62.50	4.29	64.25	1890	62.00	-1.43	63.00	200	30/12/03	4.6	
Mexha Shamp	10020	14.75	-11.27	17.75	2680	17.00	-5.56	18.00	460	26/12/03	15.2	
Raspi In (bd) Ltd.	10005	0.00	0.00	0.00	123500	---	---	---	---	---		
Greenex Corporation Ltd.	10005	60.50	8.88	64.50	1890	62.00	-1.43	63.00	200	30/12/03	4.6	
Dhaka Fisheries Ltd.	10005	28.50	5.56	27.00	1450	35.00	---	---	---	---		
Shampur Sugar Mills	10010	3.75	8.32	3.40	16700	---	---	---	---	---		
Real Bangla Sugar Corp.	10005	14.00	12.00	12.50	5950	14.00	14.29	16.50	2000	17/08/04	1.18	
Gulf Foods Ltd.	10005	16.75	4.96	18.50	11500	15.0						