

China, EU meet for day three of textile talks

REUTERS, Beijing

China and the European Union began a third day of talks on Saturday on revising a two-month-old textile trade pact that has left huge amounts of Chinese-made garments stuck in European customs warehouses.

Discussions ran to near midnight in Beijing on Friday, but the two sides failed to reach a deal and agreed to continue into the weekend.

On Saturday, an EU spokesman in Beijing said talks were under way, but could not provide details on the

proceedings.

The June deal, which capped growth in 10 lines of Chinese textile exports at 8-12 percent a year, was hailed at the time as a sensible response to a deluge of low-cost clothes from China following the scrapping of global textile quotas on Jan. 1.

But most of the new ceilings have already been reached, leading to vast quantities of garments such as bras and blouses being held up by EU customs.

European retailers are furious that

they cannot take delivery of hundreds of millions of euros worth of goods that they bought for the holiday shopping season.

Negotiators are exploring solutions such as transferring quotas that have not been filled to more popular lines, "borrowing" from next year's quotas or allowing importers to bring in goods ordered before the June 10 curbs.

Based on the outcome of the talks, the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, could put a proposal to the 25-nation bloc next

week on clearing the warehouses, a commission official said.

Textiles have been a source of international trade friction this year following the Jan. 1 expiration of a long-standing global pact regulating the textile trade.

Chinese negotiators will sit down with US negotiators in Beijing next week to try to thrash out a deal similar to that with the EU to replace the quotas Washington has imposed following a surge in textile imports from China.



PHOTO: AKTEL

Md Nasir Bin Baharom, managing director of AKTEL, hands over a cheque for Tk 1.22 lakh to Linda Barberis, project manager of Street Children's Partner Bangladesh, at a function in Dhaka recently.



PHOTO: UNITREND

Masih Ul Karim, managing director of Berger Paints Bangladesh Ltd, inaugurates the 6th 'Berger Color Bank' at Rajib Hardware Stores on Nawab Sirajuddoula Road in Chittagong recently. Other senior officials of the company are also seen.

China-US 4th round textile talks next week

AFP, Beijing

China and the United States will hold a fourth round of textile talks in Beijing next week, the commerce ministry said Saturday, with the US pushing to limit Chinese imports to protect its own industry.

The August 30-31 talks follow a two-day meeting in San Francisco this month at which negotiators failed to overcome "fundamental differences" on how to cap the exports that have surged after a long-standing global quota system for textiles was abolished on January 1.

The two sides are analysing proposals to limit growth in the exports, with officials saying the level of percentage caps that would apply to Chinese apparel imports to

the United States was "one of the sticking points".

The US textile industry wants a deal that limits Chinese imports in more than 19 categories of apparel to a 7.5 percent growth rate per year until 2008.

The United States has already announced that it was implementing World Trade Organization "safeguards" that cap import growth at 7.5 percent on six Chinese products in an effort to protect its domestic textile industries.

China has expressed dissatisfaction with the unilateral implementation of the safeguards and threatened to enter a long-winded arbitration process unless Washington agrees to seek a bilaterally negotiated solution to the impasse.



PHOTO: GRAMEENPHONE

Abu Taleb, chief executive officer of STS Group, whose flagship organisation is Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, and Tanvir Ibrahim, head of Corporate Sales of GrameenPhone Ltd, sign an agreement recently in Dhaka. Under the deal, STS Group has become a corporate client of the mobile phone operator.



PHOTO: MERCANTILE BANK

Md Abdul Jalil MP, chairman of Mercantile Bank Ltd, speaks at the 'Half-yearly Business Conference-2005' of the bank recently in Dhaka. Golam Faruk Ahmed, chairman of Executive Committee, and Saber Hossain Chowdhury, chairman of Audit Committee, among others, are seen in the picture.

Russia looks for way to be oil superpower

REUTERS, Moscow

Russia is reaping the economic benefits of sky-high world oil prices, but appears uncertain how to translate its energy riches into lasting international political influence.

Russia's leaders seem in little doubt that, in an era of \$60 a barrel oil, they command more attention on the world stage than at any time since the break-up of the Soviet Union abruptly denuded Moscow of its great power status.

"In the 1970s and 1980s nuclear weapons are what gave the Soviet Union a position in the world. In this decade it's energy which has given Russian an entree to the top table," said Stephen O'Sullivan, a strategist at UFG in Moscow.

With energy supplies tight, a growing number of countries have their eyes on Russia, the world's second largest oil producer and its biggest source of gas reserves, as a potential long-term supplier of hydrocarbons.

"It's interesting for Russia to be courted by so many countries. The United States is interested in liquefied natural gas, Europe in gas and China in oil," said O'Sullivan.

Benchmark New York oil futures hit a record \$68 this week.

CURRENCY

Following is Saturday's (August 27, 2005) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell		Buy			
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
66.9600	66.9900	USD	65.7900	65.7681	65.7242
83.7067	83.7442	EUR	79.8098	79.7832	79.7300
121.7065	21.7610	GBP	117.4746	117.4355	117.3571
51.7534	51.7766	AUD	48.7438	48.7276	48.6951
0.6151	0.6154	JPY	0.5918	0.5917	0.5913
53.6152	53.6392	CHF	51.7665	51.7492	51.7147
8.8011	8.8051	SEK	8.1899	8.1871	8.1817
56.3304	56.3557	CAD	54.3405	54.3224	54.2861
8.6299	8.6337	HKD	8.4578	8.4550	8.4494
40.3982	40.4163	SGD	39.1258	39.1127	39.0867
18.3784	18.3867	AED	17.7696	17.7636	17.7518
17.9976	18.0056	SAR	17.4034	17.3976	17.3860
11.4976	11.5028	DKK	10.4101	10.4067	10.3997
225.8170	225.9204	KWD	224.1287	224.1287	224.1287

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
43.64	59.67	100.9	41.035	6.4690	0.6945	3.77

Local Interbank FX Trading

Local interbank FX market was subdued. Demand for dollar remained steady.

Local Money Market

Money market was active. Call money rate remained unchanged and ranged between 5.00 and 6.00 percent.

International Market

International market was closed on Saturday due to weekend. The dollar firmed on Friday, supported by softer oil prices, after posting losses earlier in the session in thin summer trading, analysts said. US oil futures fell more than \$1 to \$66.22 per barrel, as worries

eased that Hurricane Katrina was not expected to significantly affect offshore crude production in the Gulf of Mexico. High oil prices have hurt the dollar in the past, given that the United States is the world's largest crude importer. Late in New York trade, USD was up by around 0.1 percent against euro, Swiss franc and sterling. Against the Japanese yen, the dollar rose slightly. An unexpected fall in US consumer sentiment for August and remarks from Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan on Friday did not have a strong impact on the dollar.

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ReadyCash Raffle Draw Winners

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

Prizes	Name of Winners	Card No
Kamal General Store Free gift box	Md. Emran	5047980010035491
China Junction Chinese Restaurant Free Lunch/Dinner for two	Md. Abul Kalam	5047980000057927
Rainbow Free Lunch/Dinner for two	Md Abul Hossain	5047980010035466
Monorom free Gift Box	Junaid Hossain Chow.	5047980010035548
Pallabi Computers Free Internet Browsing	Md. Mustafizur Rahman	5047980010035474

Winners can collect their prizes from the Executive, Promotion of ReadyCash within 30 days of this news circulation by producing their ReadyCash card transaction vouchers. ReadyCash encourages its cardholders to read The Daily Star and the Daily Prothom Alo on every Sunday or call our Customer Service at : 8123850, 8130497, 8125294-7.

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