

Apec warns WTO talks could fail

AFP, Busan, South Korea

Asia-Pacific nations warned Sunday next month's WTO meeting in Hong Kong could fail and called on all nations involved in troubled global trade talks to make concessions.

The leaders of 21 Pacific Rim economies will express serious concern the deadlock in World Trade Organisation talks may lead to a "potential failure" of the Hong Kong ministerial meeting, a draft statement obtained by AFP said.

Attempts to unlock the tangle in the WTO negotiations will dominate the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum in the South Korean city of Busan over the next week, officials said.

Apec presidents and prime ministers, who govern a region accounting

for nearly half of global trade, will issue a separate statement after their two-day summit on November 19 in a bid to break the logjam.

South Korean official Kim Jong-hoon said Apec had concerns over whether the round of trade talks launched in the Qatari capital Doha in 2001 could succeed. But he said the exact wording of the statement was still being finalised.

"The statement will have a significant level of ambition, and so we are looking at a very powerful statement," he told reporters as Apec officials held a second day of talks to prepare for the summit.

"It's important to convey to the 149 economies of the WTO that continuing with the current situation will not be tolerated," said Kim, the chairman

of the APEC senior officials meeting.

The draft statement says that while expectations for the Hong Kong meeting could be scaled down, it is vital to ensure the Doha round of talks succeeds.

"We, therefore, urge all WTO members to make further, meaningful contributions to move the negotiations forward," says the draft.

The Doha round of WTO talks has become bogged down in a bitter dispute over agriculture subsidies which has pitted mainly rich nations against developing nations.

Developing countries argue that farm subsidies in the United States and countries of the European Union depress global prices and prevent growers in poor nations from competing.

But the dispute has also cut across rich nations. The EU is at loggerheads with the United States and Australia, while Japan, Norway and Switzerland have all expressed concern about the impact of tariff cuts on their farm sectors.

Throughout the past week trade officials have expressed gloom about the Hong Kong meeting, with EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson saying the talks would fail and accusing Brazil and other major farm producers of intransigence.

WTO chief Pascal Lamy, while scaling down the targets for the Hong Kong meeting, has warned that it must be more than a simple stock-taking. Ministers have also suggested a "Hong Kong II" meeting, possibly in March.



Arshad Hosein, managing director of Musafir Properties Ltd, a real estate company, and Rabiul Haque, chief executive officer of Tropical Lift International, the authorised agent of Thyssenkrupp Dongyang lifts, shake hands after signing an agreement recently. Under the deal, Tropical Lift will supply, install, commission and test four passenger lifts of the real estate company and provide technical support for Musafir Tower of the company.



Hafiz GA Siddiqi, chairman of Institute of Management Consultants Bangladesh (IMCB) and vice chancellor of North South University, and M Saidul Haq, IMCB president, pose for photographs with the participants of a month-long professional training programme organised by IMCB with financial support of SouthAsia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) in Dhaka recently.

Bush to push for more trade concessions from China

AFP, Washington

The United States and China may have secured a hard-fought deal on textiles, but President George W. Bush still has a battery of complaints to level on the trade front when he visits Beijing next week-end.

Bush, who heads to the Chinese capital Saturday as part of an Asian tour, is facing mounting pressure from US lawmakers for his administration to get tough over trade.

Figures out last week showed the depth of Washington's problem, with the US trade deficit exploding to a new record high of 66.1 billion dollars in September.

Nearly one-third of that was accounted for by the US deficit with China alone.

For many here, China is guilty of manipulating its currency rate to boost its exports, of turning a blind eye to a rampant trade in fake goods, and of shutting out US firms eager to enter the country's huge domestic markets.

The two nations removed one major trade headache in advance of Bush's trip by reaching an agreement last week to regulate Chinese textile exports to the United States, giving US manufacturers a breathing space from fierce Chinese competition.

But the US president is adamant that China needs to progress on other commercial fronts, according to national security adviser Stephen Hadley.

Bush will tell his hosts that "progress on intellectual property rights, currency reform, and market opening are good for our companies but they are equally good and important for China's own future prosperity," Hadley said.

Hadley pointed to Beijing's modest step in July towards letting markets decide the value of the yuan, and said there had been "very little since".

Last Wednesday, a Congressional commission called for trade sanctions against China as part of an aggressive policy response if Beijing does not adopt a more flexible currency regime to curb its rapid export growth.

Democratic Senator Byron Dorgan, a trenchant critic of China, said the mushrooming trade deficit demanded urgent action.

"All of the American workers fired, all the jobs in China. Why? Because you can pay 30 cents an hour and work them seven days a week" in China, he said.

"We have a one-way trade relationship with China. Will the president raise these questions? Not likely," he said.

By some measures, China's economy, as adjusted for purchasing power parity, is on course to overtake the US economy as the world's biggest in a little over a decade.

That kind of growth trajectory means that China is not just any old rival that the United States can muscle into submission.

And, analysts noted, Bush has other priorities in Beijing, such as persuading China's leaders to coax Stalinist North Korea into renouncing its nuclear weapons ambitions.

"The right wing of the Republican party wants a new Cold War. They want to take on China. And they might get it," Mark Weisbrot, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, told AFP.

"But for now US businesses with massive interests in China are driving policy and Bush isn't going to do anything to upset that. So from a purely business point of view, he doesn't have much room for manoeuvre," he said.

Elizabeth Economy, a China expert at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, said the Bush administration had tried to portray the textiles agreement as a sign of what can be achieved when China is engaged rather than confronted.



Officials of Dhaka Bank Ltd pose for photographs with the participants of a five-day training course on 'Human Resource Management and Marketing of Bank Services' organised by the bank recently in the capital.

US pressures Opec to up production

AFP, Abu Dhabi

US Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman urged Opec on Saturday to take measures to increase production at its next meeting, expressing hope Gulf countries would work hard to expand their output capacity.

"We encourage producers -- both members of Opec members and non members -- to make maximum product available to the market," he told reporters on a visit to the United Arab Emirates at the start of a tour of the Gulf states.

"Supply has difficulty to keep up with demand... I would hope that the (Opec) ministers would see fit to continue supplying the market," at their next meeting on December 12 in Kuwait, he said.

He lauded the UAE and his host President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan for taking steps towards increasing capacity, revealing the Emirates had briefed him about new

plans for raising production.

At its last meeting, Opec maintained its official production quota at 28 million barrels per day (bpd). The UAE is currently Opec's fifth largest producer, with output of just under 2.4 million bpd.

"There seems to be evidence that certainly here (UAE) there is significant investment in and interest in expanding capacity... and I hope that this is what we find when we visit other countries," he said.

"I do know that Saudi Arabia, for example has said that... they intend to expand," said Bodman, who was also due to visit Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The United States is the largest consumer of Gulf energy.

Bodman said the UAE leadership informed him "about plans to boost production and refining capacity about the Phase I of the new gas complex that we are very excited about, and about the Dolphin regional gas project."

"There are plans to expand investments in production activities in and around other reserves that the country has available to it, so we are very pleased to learn about it," he said.

The high oil price means that Gulf Arab countries are in no need of extra finance to pay for expanding capacity but technical expertise from outside companies can be of help, he said.

Bodman said signing bilateral free trade agreements with the UAE and other countries of the energy-rich Gulf Cooperation Council would help US oil and gas companies to make more investments in the energy sector of the region.

"There is plenty of capital in this region, certainly now with high oil prices. So capital is not the differentiating factor, it is really the technical skills, knowledge, experience of these companies that we believe can be useful to the UAE in developing its oil and gas reserves," he said.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 13/11/2005

Berth no.	Name of vessels	Cargo	Lport call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch.
J/1	Pavonis	GI (Log & Onion)	Yang PML	3/11	16/11	402	
J/4	Emily C	Cont	Col	Everbest	12/11	16/11	--
J/5	Kota Ratu	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	11/11	17/11	--
J/6	Kota Rukun	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	9/11	16/11	--
J/7	Qc Star	Cont	Sing	QCSL	7/11	13/11	102
J/8	Banga Bodor	Cont	--	Bdship	9/11	17/11	--
J/9	Oel Enterprise	Cont	Sing	PSSL	9/11	15/11	--
J/10	Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	9/11	16/11	184
J/11	Dawei	Cont	Sing	PML	9/11	14/11	128
J/12	Independent Spirit	Cont	Sing	APL	8/11	14/11	366
J/13	Fbanga Borti	Cont	Col	Bardhi	9/11	15/11	384
CCT/2	Qc Honour	Cont	P Kel	QCSL	9/11	--	310
CCJ	Maritime Chiangmai	C Clink	Tang	BSL	11/11	--	
GSJ	Orient Bulker	Wheat (G)	Sing	SSSTL	11/11	--	
DOJ/5	Al Deerah	HSD/JP-1	Kuwa	MSTPL	10/11	14/11	--
DOJ/7	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil	--	BSC	R/A	14/11	--
RM/8	Hk Deqin-201	GI SPTSP	Sing	KDSA	26/10	18/11	--
RM/9	Banglar Robi	Repair	P Kel	BSC	24/10	20/11	--
Custom	Tug Som-1	Ballast	Sing	OTL	9/12	--	--
Jetty							
CUJ/L	Meugang	Idle	Col	Jnship	6/10	16/11	--
K(U)	Bludance	Ballast	Sing	Everett	12/11	17/11	--
K(A)	Euro Viking	Ballast	Vizag	MBL	13/11	14/11	--
BB	Mona	Ballast	Krabi	BSL	31/10	--	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	Lport call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Germana	13/11	P Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Xpress Manaslu	13/11	P Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Borak	13/11	Sing	Bdship	Cont	P Kel
Eastern Star	14/11	Sing	PML	Cont	Sing
Thermopylae Sierra	14/11	Viz	Move	S Lag	--
Manyasi	15/11	Odessa	MTCL	Urea	--
Banga Bonik	15/11	Chnn	Bardhi	Cont	Col
Hua Xing	14/11	Sing	NYK	Vehicles	--
Giengo	15/11	--	ASAL	Wood Pulp	--
Kentung	17/11	Yangoo	Everett	GI (S Oil & Log)	--
Al-Gorgis	14/11	Kak	Rsship	Demolition	--
Qc Teal	16/11	--	QCSL	Cont	P Kel
Golden Star	16/11	--	Limond	Urea	BCIC
Kyaw Yadanar	17/11	Yang	MTA	Pulses (P)	--
Coastal Express	17/11	Chenn	BSCA	Cont	Kole
Ocean Pride	18/11	--	PSAI	Urea	BCIC
Mandalay	18/11	P Kel	PML	Cont	Ctg
Kota Ratna	18/11	--	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Banga Bjoy	18/11	--	Bardhi	Cont	Col
Oel Freedom	18/11	--	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Marisa Green	18/11	--	Everbest	Cont	Sing
Banga Borat	19/11	--	Bdship	Cont	P Kel/Sing
Kota Berjaya	19/11	--	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Feliz-1	20/11	Tunig	SSTL	FTSP/Fert	--
Banga Biraj	20/11	--	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Banglar Shikha	22/11	P Kel	BSC	Cont	Sing
Banga Lanka	22/11	--	Bdship	Cont	P Kel
Qc Dignity	22/11	P Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing

Tanker due

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	Lport call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Suzanne	17/11	--	Rainbow	Caus. Soda(RM/4)	
Ocean Gurnard	15/11	--	HOSLL	Naphtha	

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Orchid-II	C Oil	--	OWSL	8/11
Banglar Shourabh	C Oil	--	BSC	R/A(13/11)
Wira Kers	--	--	IBSA	R/A(12/11)

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready	NIL

Vessels not ready

Name of vessels	Cargo	Lport call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Atison	S Lag	Sing	Move	20/10
Layer Sentosa	Sugar (P)	Bank	Able	2/11
Cakra Kembar	Copra	Sing	Mutual	9/11
Sarim	Sugar	Santo	Limond	9/11
J Fortune	TSP/S Ash	Fang	Unique	11/11
Blue Sea	C Clink	--	BSL	11/11
Ames	Wheat (P)	--	Limond	11/11
Fenix	Wheat	Tua	Pol	12/11
Dai Viet	HSD/MS	Kuwa	MSTL	12/11
Great Change	Wheat (P)	Sing	SSSTL	13/11
Khakeda	For Repair	--	AMBL	13/11

Vessels awaiting employment/instruction

Name of vessels	Cargo	Lport call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Bumi Jaya	--	Visa	Unicom	10/11/2004
Dragonis	--	--	Seacom	R/A(10/11)

Vessels not entering

Name of vessels	Cargo	Lport call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Prestigious	Sugar	Santos	Mutual	R/A(29/9)
Winona	C Clink	Nant	USL	9/10
Diamond	C Clink	Lumut	Move	31/10
Manila Star	C Clink	Sing	Unship	3/11
Brave Royal	C Clink	Kuct	BRSL	3/11
Maris	C Clink	Lumut	Limond	6/11
Iran Navab	C Clink	Sing	USL	8/11
Pan Express	C Clink	Krabi	ASLL	4/11
Yaad-E-Mostafa	Salt/Soda	Indi	CLA	R/A(9/11)
Ks Harmony	Gypsum	Krabi	ASLL	6/11
Jersey Express	Ballast	Scrapping	Rsship	9/11

Movement of vessels for: 14/11/2005

Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
J/11 Dawei	NB B Borak	J/4 Emily-C
J/12 Ind Spirit	J/6 Xp Manaslu	J/5 K Ratu
CCT/2 Qc Honour	J/5 Germana	J/6 K Rukun
GSJ O Bulker	J/7 Hua Xing	
D/5 Al-Derah	J/4 Cakra Kembar	
D/7 B Jyoti	GSJ G Chang	
RM/8 Hk Deqin	D/7 B Shourab	
K(A) E Viking	D/6 Dai Viet	J/2 Hkd Deqin-201

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

Japan ministers reiterate need for sales tax hike

REUTERS, Tokyo

Key Japanese cabinet ministers reiterated yesterday that the government would eventually need to raise the nationwide consumption tax to improve its debt-burdened finances, a move widely regarded by analysts as inevitable but politically controversial.

"We must not let on with the illusion that spending cuts alone can fix Japan's fiscal situation," he said.

But Heizo Takenaka, Minister of Internal Affairs who is also in charge of postal reforms, told Yosano in the same TV Asahi show that the government should first focus on other means of improving its fiscal health.

"At some point we will need to discuss taxes," he said. "But what needs to be done first is to cut spending, and followed by the sale of government assets. Tax hikes should come after that. We must deliberate things in the right order."

Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki, who has urged a decision to be made in the fiscal year starting next April, said on television that further cuts in spending and debt issuance were necessary but not sufficient to turn around the governments finances.