

WTO heavyweights set to review Hong Kong prospects

AFP, Geneva

Top WTO negotiators were expected to release documents on Tuesday summing up the state of global trade talks before the body's key Hong Kong conference, as the heavyweights of international commerce tried to smooth the way to the December gathering.

New Zealand diplomat Crawford Falconer, who is trying to steer World Trade Organisation negotiations on farm trade out of their current impasse, and his counterpart Stefan Johansson of Iceland, who leads talks on industrial goods, were due to issue drafts outlining the state of play, officials said.

With the WTO's Hong Kong ministerial conference now just three weeks away, trade chiefs from Brazil, the European Union, India, Japan and the United States were meeting in Geneva largely to focus on "process and management", a diplomat told AFP.

The talks have been stumbling along for more than four years.

They were not expected to hold detailed discussions on enduring disputes, particularly over tariffs on farm goods, which are holding up the Doha Round of world trade talks.

"It is not a negotiating session and we're not expecting any breakthrough," said another diplomat.

Pascal Lamy, head of the 148-nation WTO, is trying to craft an overall agenda for the December 13-18 Hong Kong conference.

The aim there had been to approve the outlines of a treaty that would ultimately cut subsidies, tariffs and other trade barriers and use commerce to reduce poverty in the developing world.

Lamy had said two-thirds of the issues should be settled before the conference, seen as a key stage in the Doha Round.

But two weeks ago, WTO members said they would have to "recalibrate" their objectives for Hong Kong and would probably have to meet again in March in order to meet a December 2006 deadline for completing the round.

Exactly what they now plan to do in Hong Kong remains unclear.

The answer is likely to be found in Lamy's text, which he was expected to produce at the end of this week after examining the other drafts, diplomats said.

Nailing down an agreement among the WTO's big hitters is seen as a crucial step towards an accord among the full membership.

After weeks of finger-pointing among the heavyweights, as well as prodding from other members including those involved in last week's summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, there has been little to suggest that any last-minute compromise will emerge before Hong Kong.



Rafiqul Islam, general manager (Finance, Accounts, Administration & IT) of Shinepukur Ceramics Ltd, and Tanvir Ibrahim, head of Corporate Sales of GrameenPhone Ltd, pose for photographs at an agreement signing ceremony recently. Under the deal, Shinepukur Ceramics has become a corporate client of the mobile phone operator.



Kaiser Tamiz Amin, executive vice president of Brac Bank Ltd, inaugurates an ATM (automated teller machine) booth of the bank on Elephant Road in Dhaka recently. Other senior officials are also seen in the picture.



Syed Manzur Elahi, chairman of Mutual Trust Bank Ltd, inaugurates the expended premises of the bank's head office in Dhaka recently. Mosharrar Hossain, managing director, Iftekhar Ali Khan, deputy managing director, among other senior officials of the bank, were present at the inauguration.



Kazi Harun-ar-Rashed, chairman of Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd, speaks at the inaugural session of a training course on 'Entrepreneurship Development' organised by the bank in cooperation with Micro Industries Development Assistance & Services (Midas) on Saturday in Dhaka. Abdul Karim, managing director of Midas, among others, was present at the function.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (November 22, 2005) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank						
Sell			Buy			
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer	
66.6200	66.6500	USD	65.4500	65.4283	65.3848	
79.0047	79.0402	EUR	75.7649	75.7397	75.6892	
115.0328	115.0846	GBP	111.1472	111.1101	110.0360	
49.9850	50.0075	AUD	47.3073	47.2915	47.2600	
0.5665	0.5668	JPY	0.5460	0.5458	0.5429	
51.0615	50.0845	CHF	49.1551	49.1387	49.1059	
8.4744	8.4782	SEK	7.6493	7.6468	7.6417	
56.8430	56.8686	CAD	54.7470	54.7287	54.6922	
8.6116	8.6155	HKD	8.4215	8.4187	8.4131	
40.0096	40.0276	SGD	38.3961	38.3833	38.3577	
18.2856	18.2939	AED	17.6753	17.6694	17.6577	
17.9057	17.9138	SAR	17.3134	17.3077	17.2961	
10.8968	10.9017	DKK	9.9027	9.8994	9.8928	
224.6687	224.7721	KWD	222.9781	222.9061	222.7621	
Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar						
Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
45.65	59.885	101.915	41.200	6.7115	0.6889	3.78
Local Interbank FX Trading			International Market			
Local interbank FX market was active on Tuesday. USD was steady against BDT.			The dollar shuffled in a tight range on Tuesday, keeping gains made after the European Central Bank chief suggested that any upcoming interest rate rise would not necessarily herald and extended tightening cycle.			
Local Money Market						
Money market was active on Tuesday. Call money rate was unchanged and ranged between 6.00 and 6.50 per cent.						

STOCK

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 22/11/2005						
Berth No.	Name Of Vessels	Cargo	L. Port Call	Local Agent	Dt Of Leaving Arrival	Import Disch
J/1	Kakra Kember	Copra	Sing	Mutual	9/11	23/11
J/2	Reunion	Cont	Sing	Api	20/11	23/11
J/3	Sarim	Sugar	Santo	Limond	9/11	25/11
J/4	Pavonis	Gl(log & Onion)	Yang	Pml	3/11	20/11
J/5	Pha Shwe Gyaw	Y. Maize(p)	Yang	Mta	18/11	23/11
J/6	Kota Berjaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(bd)	20/11	24/11
J/7	Thermola Esterra S. Lag	--	--	Move	14/11	24/11
J/8	Tay Son-1	Gl(par/stl/c)	Busan	Prograti	21/11	26/11
J/10	Marissa Green	Cont	Sing	Everbest	18/11	23/11
J/11	Banga Borat	Cont	Sing	Bdship	20/11	24/11
J/12	Manadalay	Cont	P. Kel	Pml	20/11	23/11

Vessels Due At Outer Anchorage

Name Of Vessels	Date Of Arrival	L. Port Call	Local Agent	Type Of Cargo	Loading Ports
Qc Dignity	22/11	P. Kel	Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Coastal Express	22/11	Kolk	Bsca	Cont	Chnni
Oel Excellence	22/11	Sin	Pssl	Cont	Sing
Romy	22/11	Sing	Pil(bd)	Cont	Sing
Maritime Songkhla	22/11	--	Bsl	C. Clink	Htbl
Oel Wisdom	23/11	Col	Pssl	Cont	Col
Weston	23/11	Novo	Jnship	Wheat(p)	--
Independent Spirit	23/11	Sin	Api	Cont	Sin
Kyaw Yadanar	24/11	Yang	Mta	Pulses(p)	--
Xpress Nuptse	24/11	P. Kel	Rsl	Cont	Sing
Qc Star	24/11	P. Kel	Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Dawei	25/11	Sing	Pml	Cont	Sing
Oel Enterprise	24/11	--	Pssl	Cont	Col
Bursa	24/11	Odasa	Psl	Wheat(g)	--

Tanker Due

Suzanne	22/11	Hald	--	Rainbow	Caus. Soda(rm/4)
Smooth Sea-7	23/11	--	--	Rainbow	Cpo (rm/3)
Siam Sathaporn	23/11	Dumai	Snd	--	Cpo (rm/3)
Gaz Millennium	23/11	Sing	Mbl	--	Amonia K(a)
Tabtim	24/11	Mala	Mtcl	--	Cpo
Scottish Wizard	25/11	Kuwa	Mstpl	--	Hsd/sko
Port Russel	26/11	Kuwa	Mstpl	--	Sko/jp-1

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local Agent	Date Of Arrival
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Vessels at outer anchorage

vessels ready

Banglar Shikha	Cont	P. Kel	Bsc	21/11
Xpress Resolve	Cont	Col	Everbest	21/11
Banga Bijoy	Cont	Cl	Baridhi	22/11

Vessels - not ready

Alison	S-lag	Sing	Move	20/11
Layer Sentosa	Sugar(p)	Bank	Able	02/11
Khaleda	Ballast	----	Ambl	13/11
Manyasi	Wheat	Odessa	Mtcl	15/11
Al-sabiyah	Hsd/sko	Kuwa	Mstpl	16/11
Kyriakosm	Wheat(p)	Kerci	Usl	19/11
Krabi Navee	R. Sugar	Durban	Park	20/11
Eastern Star	Cont	Sing	Pml	R/a (21/11)

Vessels awaiting employment / Instruction

Bumi Jaya	--	Visa	Unicom	10/11/2004
Dragonis	--	--	Seacom	R/a (10/11)
Banglar Shourabh	--	--	Bsc	R/a (18/11)

Vessels not entering

Prestigious	Sugar	Santos	Mutual	R/a (29/09)
Yaad-e-mostafa	Salt/soda	Indi	Cla	R/a (09/11)
Santa Barbara	C. Clink	Krabi	Uniship	15/11

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