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Star BUSINESS

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Bangladesh gets attention of more French companies Say French trade commissioners

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

French trade commissioners from South Asian region yesterday vowed to promote Bangladesh as a future investment destination for French companies.

More than 20 French companies are now operating in Bangladesh and the country is drawing the attention of more large companies, they told a press briefing organised by French Trade Commission in Dhaka.

As part of the French Days 2005, Dhaka is hosting the regional meeting of the French Trade Commissioners representing India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka for the first time.

"We are convinced that French companies need to come in South

Asia in bigger ways," said Jean Leviol, head of South Asia French Trade Commissions.

France wants to provide the developing countries with more access to its market, he mentioned.

Developing countries, Bangladesh in particular, are exporting more to France while their imports are much less, he explained.

Opening up the market will help Bangladesh to attract more French investments, he observed. "It is a country where French investors can come as it is opening up its market."

French companies need to have their strong presence in this region and they will come to South Asia in bigger ways in the next 10 to 15

years, Leviol said.

Bangladesh is also hosting the regional meeting of French Business Council of South Asia, which is a network of 3,000 members of top executives of French enterprises operating worldwide.

Participants from big French companies such as Air France, St. Gobain, Suez, Degremont, Total, Alcatel and Lafarge working in South Asia will attend the meeting.

Speaking at the briefing, Dominique Simon, French trade commissioner in Dhaka, said France has targeted 10 percent of Bangladesh population to sell French products here that would help make an improvement in the trade balance between the two countries.

He termed export processing zones (EPZs) effective to attract foreign investment in Bangladesh, observing that French companies are not only operating in the EPZs but also in other parts of the country.

France is the fourth largest importer of Bangladeshi products after the US, Germany and the UK. French companies are now operating mainly in transports, telecommunications, textile, and cement industries.

Marc Philippe, head of French Business Council of South Asia, Hubert Colaris, trade commissioner in Colombo, Walid Otari, trade commissioner in Karachi, and Alain Raban, head of South Asia for Vossloh, were also present at the briefing.



A group of visitors crowd a stall at the 'Rehab Fair-2005' in Dhaka Sheraton hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

REHAB HOUSING FAIR 2005

Mid-income people eye 850-1,300 sqf flats

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A large number of mid-income people yesterday flocked to the Rehab housing fair at Dhaka Sheraton hotel, showing interest in 850-1,300-square-foot flats.

Fair participants said mid-income people, who include government officials, bankers and teachers, are eyeing apartments and plots worth Tk 12 lakh to Tk 20 lakh.

A total of 94 developers are displaying their products and services at five-day fair that began Wednesday. Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) has organised the show.

Developers are also building projects targeting middle income people. Multiplan Ltd offers 10 percent discount at the fair for its Multiplan Red Crescent City located at Mirpur-1.

"We have 937 apartments, ranging between 902 and 1155 sqf, in the project. Customers can buy flats with Tk 25,000 booking money and Tk 2 lakh down payment," said Md Abdur Rashid, business promotion officer of the company.

He added, "We will consider up

to 15 percent discount, if customers pay 50 percent price at a time."

Rangs Properties offers Tk 300 to Tk 500 discounts per square foot for its projects, said Shafiq Shirazee, assistant manager (sales) of the company. The company has 37 apartment projects in Dhaka, ranging between 1160-3025 sqf.

Bashundhara City Development Ltd offers Tk 10,000 discount per katha of land for its land projects, said Md Akhtaruzzaman, assistant manager (sales and marketing) of the company.

Japan Garden City Ltd, a Japan-Bangladesh joint venture company, offers apartments ranging between 1,013 and 1,985 sqf in the fair.

"We have 1,803 flats in 26 high rise buildings at Mohammadpur. The price range of the flat varies between Tk 18 lakh and Tk 36 lakh, said A R Khan, marketing executive of the company.

Saguta NM Housing Ltd offers Tk 20,000 to Tk 80,000 discounts per katha of land in its Pallabi project.

Hossain Mojumder Shohag, an executive of Building for Future Ltd, said, "We have a six-storey

project at Bashabo, where we offer 1,235 to 1,500 sqf flats for middle class people."

Shyamali Condoville is a middle class apartment project by Anwar Landmark Ltd, offering 960-1,350 sqf flats.

Sadat Hossain Salim, managing director of Anwar Landmark, said the fair is getting huge response from middle class people.

Keari Ltd offers 805 to 1,216 sqf flats in two projects at Wari and Kallyanpur, said Bidarul Islam, marketing executive of the company.

Middle class people are also enthusiastic about small flats. Shakhawat Ali Dewani, retired government official, said, "I want to buy a 850 sqf apartment in Mirpur area."

He said some developers offer reasonable prices as well as installment facility. But down payment amount is very high, he added.

Jahir Uddin Mollah, an engineer, said he is looking for a 1300 sqf apartment with three bed rooms in Mohammadpur area.

The fair will remain open from 9 am to 9 pm everyday until November 28.

EU trade chief warns of high stakes in WTO talks

AFP, Brussels

EU trade chief Peter Mandelson warned Europe's trade partners Wednesday against making "unrealistic demands", saying they could walk away from crunch trade talks empty handed.

"To some of our negotiating partners, my message is this: stop hiding behind your criticism of the EU, and making unrealistic demands," he said in a speech to the European Parliament.

"Instead enter into real negotiation with us on all issues. The alternative is to risk everything," he told the parliament's trade committee.

Brussels has come under fire for its offer in trade talks to cut agriculture subsidies and tariffs, which its WTO partners say does not go far enough.

WTO negotiators are working against the clock to flesh out an outline agreement ahead of a mid-December WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong despite growing gloom about the prospects for a broad accord.

Oil prices drop as US crude reserves go up

AFP, London

World oil prices fell on Wednesday after stronger US crude inventories helped to offset concerns about shortfalls in heating fuel supplies this winter.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for delivery in January, fell 13 cents to close at 58.71 dollars a barrel.

In London, the price of Brent North Sea crude for January delivery fell 20 cents to end at 56.21 dollars a barrel.

The falls came after a surge the day before owing to the onset of freezing temperatures in the north-eastern United States and western Europe, two of the biggest consumers of energy.

US inventories of crude oil, gasoline and distillate products all rose over the past week, the Department of Energy said.

Crude stocks climbed by 400,000 barrels for the week ended November 18 to total 321.8 million, the DoE said. That was in line with analysts' forecasts.



PHOTO: STAR

IMF Asia and Pacific Department Adviser Thomas Rumbaugh (left) speaks at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday as Jonathon C Dunn, resident representative of IMF Bangladesh, looks on. An IMF mission led by Rumbaugh is now in Dhaka to review the status of fulfillment of the conditions for the fifth PRGF (poverty reduction growth facility) tranche, which is scheduled to be disbursed early next year.

3-day knitwear exhibition begins Dec 13

UNB, Dhaka

A three-day Bangladesh knitwear exhibition, showcasing the country's knit products, will begin here on December 13.

Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) will organise the 2nd Bangladesh exposition at Winter Garden of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will formally inaugurate the exhibition titled "Knit Exposition 2005". Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman will be present as a special guest.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina is likely to attend the closing ceremony of the display as the chief guest, BKMEA sources said.

Knit manufacturers from India, Pakistan and host Bangladesh will display their products at some 80 stalls to be set up at the venue.

Organisers expect a spot order of US\$ 20-25 million in the exposition, which will remain open to visitors from 9am to 6pm everyday.

Social compliance scheme for knitwear units launched

UNB, Dhaka

Knitwear sub-sector of the apparel sector yesterday launched its social compliance development programme in an effort to meet buyers' requirements.

Nari Udday Kendra (NUK) and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) will jointly implement the programme to appease the buyers who are committed to sourcing goods from countries with strong safety and health regulations and enforcement.

Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury was present as chief guest at the launching ceremony in Dhaka. Commerce Ministry Advisor Barkat Ullah Bulu and DFID Head of Mission David Wood were present as special guests.

Chaired by BKMEA President M Fazlul Haque, the launching ceremony was addressed, among others, by NUK Executive Director Mashuda Khatun Shefali, Member Factory of BKMEA Zillur Rahim, Director of BKMEA MA Baser, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Labour and Employment Kazi Aminul Islam and First Secretary of the Delegation of European Commission to Bangladesh Charles Whiteley.

Addressing the function, the commerce minister said the buyers are now much more aware about compliance besides price, quality and other factors.

"The programme will lead the factories to achieve a certification

which will enable the industry to be more competitive and vibrant," Altaf said.

The minister underscored the need for raising awareness among all the stakeholders about the compliance issues.

BKMEA President M Fazlul Haque said the condition of social compliance in Bangladesh is better than in China, Pakistan and even Turkey's. "Unfortunately, we are under pressure by the buyers... but there is no question about China or Pakistan," he said.

The BKMEA president also asked, "Who does force you (buyers) to purchase from Bangladesh? You purchase from Bangladesh because we produce quality and very much price competitive products."

He said NUK and BKMEA have been keeping some 80 knitwear factories under its audit programme to meet the social compliance while some 45 have so far successfully adopted the compliance.

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 24/11/2005.

Berth	Name of Cargo	Port/Local/Of	Leaving Import	agent	arrival	25/11	1/12	23/11	23/11	23/11	disc.
J/1	Kalra Kember	Copa	Sing	Mutual	9/11	25/11	1/12	23/11	23/11	23/11	404
J/2	Hk Desin-201	G/Sp	Tip	Sing	KDSA	9/11	1/12	23/11	23/11	23/11	238
J/3	Sarim	Sugar	Santa	Litmond	9/11	25/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	2388
J/4	Romy	Cont	Sing	P/Bd	22/11	27/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	82
J/5	Oel Excellence	Cont	Tpk	PSSL	22/11	25/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	181
J/6	Banga Bijoy	Cont	Col	Barshi	22/11	28/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	148
J/7	Thermola Estars	S. Lag	—	Move	14/11	24/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	1733
J/8	Tay Son-1	G/Pap/Su/Che	Busan	Proga	21/11	28/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	23/11	2136

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	Port/Local/Type	Loading	agent	cargo	ports
Weston	24/11	Novo	Jrshp	Wheat(P)	—	—
Qc Star	24/11	P. Kel	QCCL	Cont	—	Sing
Bursa	25/11	Odasa	PSL	Wheat(G)	—	—
Paigan	25/11	Yang	MTA	Timber(Los(P))	—	—
Banga Biraj	25/11	Sing	Bdshp	Cont	—	Sing
Dawei	25/11	Sing	PML	Cont	—	Sing
Kota Cahaya	25/11	Sing	P/Bd	Cont	—	Sing
Golden Hope	25/11	—	Litmond	GTSP	—	—
Jon Jin-2	25/11	Viza	Saraf	Gr. Slag	—	—
Brave Royal	26/11	Krabi	BRSL	C. Clink	—	Aman
Oel Enterprise	26/11	Sin	PSSL	Cont	—	Col
Banga Bort	26/11	Sing	Bdshp	Cont	—	P. Kel
Yick Zao	27/11	—	Litmond	Urea	—	(BCIC)
Phu Tan	26/11	Ptp	PSSL	Cont	—	Sing
Talhe Hal	26/11	Huang	ASL	Scraping	—	—
Emly-C	26/11	Cbo	Everbest	Cont	—	Col
Kywe Yadanar	27/11	Yang	MTA	Pulse(P)	—	—
Qc Teal	27/11	Sing	QCCL	Cont	—	P. Kel
Qc Honour	27/11	P. Kel	QCCL	Cont	—	Sing
Ocean Pride	27/11	Sing	PSAL	Urea	—	Bcic
Lu Shan(Liner)	27/11	Sirasa	Cosco	GI	—	—
Banga Lanka	28/11	Sing	Bdshp	Cont	—	P. Kel/Sing
Banga Borak	29/11	Cbo	Barishi	Cont	—	Sing

Tanker due

Gaz Millennium	24/11	Sing	MALA	USL	CPO(RM/4)	—
Smooth Sea-7	24/11 <td>P. Kel</td> <td>USL <td>CPO(RM/4) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td></td>	P. Kel	USL <td>CPO(RM/4) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td>	CPO(RM/4) <td>—</td> <td>—</td>	—	—
Tablin	24/11 <td>Mala</td> <td>MTCL <td>CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td></td>	Mala	MTCL <td>CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td>	CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td>	—	—
Al Barakati	25/11 <td>Bela</td> <td>MTCL <td>CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td></td>	Bela	MTCL <td>CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td>	CPO(RM/3) <td>—</td> <td>—</td>	—	—
Scottish Wizard	25/11 <td>Kuwa</td> <td>MSTPL <td>HSD/Sko</td> <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td>	Kuwa	MSTPL <td>HSD/Sko</td> <td>—</td> <td>—</td>	HSD/Sko	—	—
Port Russel	26/11 <td>Kuwa</td> <td>MSTPL <td>SKO/Jp-1</td> <td>—</td> <td>—</td> </td>	Kuwa	MSTPL <td>SKO/Jp-1</td> <td>—</td> <td>—</td>	SKO/Jp-1	—	—

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local	Date of call	agent	arrival
Coastal Express-1	Cont	Cal	BSC	22/11	—	—
Qc Dignity	Cont	P. Kel	QCCL	23/11	—	—
Independence Spirit	Cont	Sing	Noi	23/11	—	—
Siam Sathapom	CPO	Dumai	SNCL	23/11	—	—
Oel Wisdom	Cont	Col	PSSL	23/11	—	—
Xpress Nuptsa	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	24/11	—	—
Alison	S. Lag	Sing	Move	24/11	—	—
Al Badiyah	Hsd/Ms	Kuwa	MSTPL	21/11	—	—
Maritime Songkhala	C. Clink	Sing	BSL	22/11	—	—

The above are the shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong Port as per Berthing Sheet of CPA. Supplied by HRC Family, Dhaka.

TENDER NOTICE FOR IMPORT OF SECURITY PAPER

Sealed quotations are hereby invited from the bonafide manufacturers of Security Papers or their Local Agents for supply of 800 (eight hundred) reams of sensitized Security Papers. These security papers will be used for printing of various Security items of our Bank viz. Cheque Book, Pay Order, Draft etc.

Necessary Tender Schedule containing detailed particulars of security papers and other terms and conditions may be collected from the undersigned against cash payment of Tk.500.00 (five hundred)

only (non-refundable) within 01/12/2005 during office hours. The Tender/Offer in sealed Envelope shall have to be dropped into the Tender Box kept in the Logistics & Support Services Division (2nd Floor), Head Office, 29, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka - 1000 on 06/12/2005 from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. and shall be opened at 3.10 P.M. on the same day in presence of the Tenderers or their Representatives, if any.

The Bank Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the quotations with or without assigning any reason whatsoever. Further, the Bank shall not be under any obligation to accept the lowest quotation. Suppliers shall have to give a demonstration of their items for processing the approval.

For details, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Assistant Vice President
Logistics & Support Services Division

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