

Star

BUSINESS

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Asia's airports full, investments needed for upgrade

AFP, Singapore

Airports in Asia are operating at close to full capacity and urgent investment is needed for upgrading infrastructure, an industry consultancy said Sunday.

The problem is acute in the fast-growing markets of India, China, Indonesia and Vietnam, which are driving the region's booming air travel demand, the Sydney-based Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation said in a report.

"The problems are most severe at airports serving the fast-growing emerging markets, including China, India, Indonesia and Vietnam," the consultancy said in the report.

"The problems are not confined to infrastructure at airports. Urgent attention is needed to relieve air traffic congestion in traffic hotspots, including the Pearl Delta and Yangtze River delta regions in China," it said.

According to the consultancy's executive chairman Peter Harbison, the region's airports run the risk of undermining competitiveness if steps are not taken to address the issue.

"Strong predicted traffic growth will exacerbate capacity shortages at many Asia Pacific airports in the years ahead and a determined approach to developing fresh capacity is vital," said Harbison.

"The capacity shortages run the risk of undermining hub competitiveness, not to mention inconvenience to passengers," he said, adding "some of Asia's leading airports are operating close to or beyond design capacity, due to continued strong traffic demand."

Figures from Airports Council International projected Asia will likely outpace the world in terms of passenger growth with 5.8 percent annual average expansion over the next 20 years, the Sydney-based consultancy said.

The region is also poised to overtake North America as the world's biggest aviation market by 2025 with India and China leading

the way on the back of their huge domestic markets, it said.

Harbison said Asia's airport congestion woes are also a burden on airlines.

"Airport congestion is also a major factor in costly added fuel burn for airlines at a time when environmental concerns are beginning to match cost factors," said Harbison.

Estimates calculated by the consultancy showed 60 leading global airport investors have a combined pool of 50 billion US dollars ready for investment.



PHOTO: ONE BANK

Muzaffar Ahmed, president and chief executive officer of CRISL, recently hands over the credit rating report to Syed Nurul Amin, managing director of One Bank Limited. One Bank received 'A' rating from the credit rating agency CRISL.

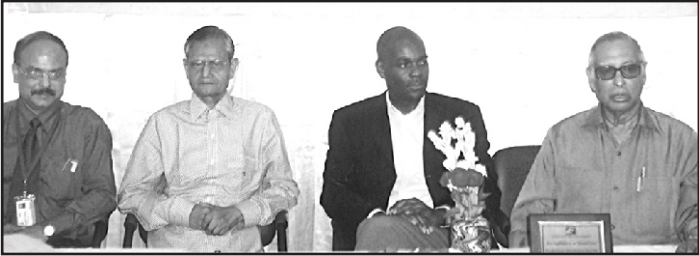


PHOTO: MIDAS

SM Al-Husainy (right), chairman of Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services (MIDAS), is seen at a concluding session of a series of training programmes for retrenched women RMG workers on Thursday in Dhaka. Jean Claude Malongo from the Delegation of the European Commission, Abdul Karim, managing director of MIDAS, and ASM Mash-ur-Rahman, GM of MIDAS, were also present at the workshop, organised by MIDAS under the auspices of European Commission.



PHOTO: AKTEL

Jahir Uddin, director and chief executive officer of Mostafa Group of Industries, and Ahmad Bin Ismail, managing director of AKTEL, exchange documents after signing a corporate agreement recently. Under the deal, the mobile phone operator will provide complete communication facilities for Mostafa Group. Senior officials from both the sides are also seen.

Consumer spending in Vietnam to hit \$53b in 2010

ANN/VIET NAM NEWS

Consumer spending is estimated to reach VND840-860 trillion (US\$53 billion) by 2010, according to Viet Nam's Ministry of Trade.

For the past 10 years, the figure has average about 70 per cent of the country's GDP per year, the ministry said, a high level compared to neighbours like Singapore (55.9 per cent), Malaysia (58.2 per cent) and Thailand (67.7 per cent).

The ministry predicted the ratio would remain at around 70 per cent through 2020 as the nation gives the priority to promoting investment and exports.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (March 18, 2007) forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank				
Major currency exchange rates			Exchange rate of some currencies	
	BC Sell	TT Buy		
US dollar	69.10	68.10		
Euro	93.66	89.17		
Pound	135.69	130.60	Indian rupee	43.97 1.56
Australian dollar	56.14	53.15	Pak rupee	60.69 1.13
Japanese yen	0.60	0.58	Lankan rupee	109.80 0.62
Swiss franc	57.73	55.87	Thai baht	32.93 2.08
Swedish kroner	9.90	9.20	Malaysian ringgit	3.51 19.55
Canadian dollar	59.30	57.36		
Hong Kong dollar	8.86	8.71		
Singapore dollar	45.78	44.41		
UAE dirham	18.97	18.40		
Saudi riyal	18.87	18.02		
Danish kroner	12.92	11.65	1 M	68.20 69.20
Kuwaiti dinar	235.77	234.11	2 M	68.32 69.32
* All currencies are quoted against BDT				
* Rates may vary based on nature of transaction				
			3 M	68.47 69.50
			6 M	68.67 70.10

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 18/3/2007							
Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Grace Casablanca	Gl (St. C)	Sing	H&sl	17/3	18/3	5781
J/3	Kola Ratna	Cont	Sing	Pil (bd)	10/3	22/3	79
J/4	Xpress Resolve	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	13/3	21/3	50
J/5	Banga Bortl	Cont	P. Kel	Bandhi	9/3	20/3	115
J/7	Xpress Manaslu	Cont	Col	Seacon	9/3	20/3	268
J/8	Cape Bonavista	Cont	P. Kel	Bdship	13/3	22/3	43
J/9	Sea Master One	Cont	Sing	Pml	7/3	18/3	25
J/10	Pac Palawan	Cont	Passer	Cel	13/3	20/3	185
J/11	Banga Borat	Cont	Sing	Bdship	6/3	19/3	37
J/12	Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	13/3	22/3	--
J/13	QC Wiscom	Cont	Sing	Qcsl	8/3	19/3	228

Vessels due at outer anchorage					
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
An Tao Jiang (liner)	19/3	Para	Cosco	P/cargo	--
Majori	19/3	Sura	Jf	Scraping	--
Theodor	19/3	Viza	Move	Slag	--
Mare Hibernum	18/3	P. Kel	Seacon	Cont	Sing
Pacific Express	19/3	Sing	Pil (bd)	Cont	Sing
Kissama	19/3	Sing	Vega	Cont	Sing
Ausonia	19/3	B. Abb	Usl	Scraping	--
Qin Hai	20/3	Durb	Rainbow	R. Sugar	--
Oriente Victoria	23/3	Busa	Oil	Gl (st. C/pr)	--
Zhe Hai-315	20/3	Sin	Pml	Cont	Sing
San Mateo	20/3	Sin	Nyk	Vehi	--
Mir Damad	21/3	Chenn	Bsca	Cont	Kol
Coastal Express	22/3	Kol	Bsca	Cont	L/para

Tanker due				
Vernal Grace	18/3	Belw	Rainbow	Cpo (m/4)
Anies	19/3	Kuwa	Mstpl	Hsd
Sc Guoji	2/4	Dumai	Wla	Cpo (m/4-3)
Port Arthur	21/3	Kuwa	Mstpl	Hsd
Mercure	22/3	Kuwa	Mstpl	Hsd

Vessels at Kutubdia				
Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
Outside port limit				
Sea Drill-6 (rig)	Pro. Equip	--	lbsa	8/1
Gulf Drill-9 (barge)	Pro. Equip	--	lbsa	3/1
Wira Keris	--	--	lbsa	R/a (21/2)
Pacific Champion	--	--	lbsa	R/a (15/3)
Vana	C. Clink	Sing	Move	16/3
Rose	Crude Oil	Jebel	Uniglobal	6/3

Vessels at outer anchorage				
Vessels ready				
Eagle Progress	Cont	P. Kel	Ct	11/3
Xpress Makalu	Cont	Col	Seacon	14/3
Josco View	Cont	P. Kel	Rsl	14/3
Yogxing	Cont	P. Kel	Pssl	15/3
Banga Biraj	Cont	Sing	Bdship	15/3

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

STOCK