

Star BUSINESS

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EU mulls its own version of US Green Card scheme

AFP, Brussels

Inspired by the famous American "green card" scheme, the European Commission is considering introducing its own "blue card" system to attract more qualified immigrants.

An impact assessment is currently being drawn up and will be ready "in the next two months or so" after which the Commission will draft detailed proposals, EU justice spokesman Friso Ascam Abbing told AFP.

He admitted that EU member states hold differing opinions over legal migration but added that "everyone understands immigration will be part of the solution to the aging population."

"We had better manage immigration properly as it is going to happen

anyway," he said.

The "blue card" -- taking its name from the EU flag, blue with gold stars -- "would allow holders to move around the EU," EU Immigration Commissioner Franco Frattini said recently.

"Today if a multinational wants to move an engineer from a non-EU country from Rome to Brussels, they have to go through visa procedures, get a residency permit, a work permit," explained Frattini, who plans to present a formal proposal on the matter in September.

The Commission, the EU's executive arm, hopes the scheme will aid member states as they seek to remain economically competitive as well as tackle the problems they face from aging populations.

The 27-nation European Union

trails both the US and Canada, which have a "very active recruitment policy," an EU official close to the issue said. "There is that kind of potential in Africa which could be very useful to the EU."

A green, or indeed blue, card scheme would help the EU bring in the best workers from abroad, and target areas where they are particularly needed.

According to Brussels, half the immigrants to North America from the Mediterranean, Middle East or north African regions are university graduates. Throughout Europe that figure stands at under 13 percent.

While the Commission does not intend to go as far as the United States, where the Green Card endows a permanent status, Frattini stresses that "if it is going to be

attractive, there have to be inducements; no language requirements, the possibility of bringing the family over and a reasonably long permission to stay, more than just a year or two."

Many EU nations have been working towards a more selective immigration policy.

Britain, for example, plans to introduce a points system this year for selecting immigrants.

Last year France adopted a law creating a "competencies and talents" card to attract more qualified people, plus high-level artists and sports people.

The details of the initiative remain to be ironed-out.



Cancer specialist Dr Steven J Tucker of Singapore-based The West Clinic Excellence Cancer Center announces launching of the clinic's Bangladesh liaison office at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.



Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd (DBBL) Managing Director Md Yeasin Ali hands over study materials to a visually challenged student at a ceremony in Dhaka on Monday. DBBL extended financial support to Bangladesh Society for Disabled (BSD), a non-profit organisation, to publish study materials for the visually challenged.

CURRENCY

Following is Tuesday's (March 20, 2007) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Major currency exchange rates	Exchange rate of some currencies			
	BC Sell	TT Buy	Per USD	BDT per Currency
US dollar	69.05	68.05		
Euro	93.13	88.90	Indian rupee	43.93 1.56
Pound	135.82	130.69	Pak rupee	60.73 1.13
Australian dollar	56.46	52.88	Lankan rupee	109.80 0.62
Japanese yen	0.60	0.57	Thai baht	34.85 1.97
Swiss franc	57.80	54.91	Malaysian ringgit	3.50 19.60
Swedish kroner	10.32	9.34		
Canadian dollar	59.58	57.16	USD forward rate against BDT	
Hong Kong dollar	8.86	8.69	Buy	Sell
Singapore dollar	46.27	44.43		
UAE dirham	18.96	18.38	1M	68.15 69.16
Saudi riyal	18.56	18.00	2M	68.27 69.38
Danish kroner	12.89	11.62	3M	68.42 69.60
Kuwaiti dinar	235.48	233.81	6M	68.87 70.33

*All currencies are quoted against BDT

*Rates may vary based on nature of transaction

*The forward rates are indicative only and fixed dated



SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 20/3/2007

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Vinashin Mariner	Cont	Pssl	15/3	24/3	--	--
J/3	Kissama	Cont	Sing	Vega	19/3	24/3	--
J/4	Mare Hibernum	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	18/3	24/3	--
J/5	Banga Borti	Cont	P. Kel	Baridhi	9/3	20/3	--
J/6	An Tao Jiang	Cont	Gi	Paro Cosco	19/3	21/3	212
J/7	Xpress Manasu	Cont	Seacon	09/03	20/3	--	--
J/8	Cape Bonavista	Cont	P. Kel	Bdship	13/3	25/3	160
J/9	Xpress Resolve	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	13/3	22/3	158
J/10	Pac Palawan	Cont	Passer	Col	13/3	21/3	37
J/11	Kota Ratna	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	10/3	22/3	--
J/12	Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	13/3	22/3	199

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Ausonia	20/3	B. Abb	Usi	Scraping	--
Qin Hai	20/3	Durb	R. Sugar	--	--
Pacific Steel	20/3	--	Ibsa	P Equip	--
Quan	20/3	Hong	Rsship	Scraping	--
Natzulec	21/3	Fuku	And	Slag	--
Zhe Hai-315	21/3	Sing	Pml	Cont	Sing
An Qing Jiang (Liner)	22/3	Osaka	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Mong
Kota Petani	21/3	Sing	Qcls	Cont	L/Pp
Rio Lawrence	21/3	Sing	Pml	Cont	Cont
Gao Cheng	24/3	Sing	Col	Cont	Sing
Dali	21/3	Chenn	Bsca	Cont	Col
Mir Damad	21/3	Kol	Bsca	Cont	Kol
Coastal Express	22/3	Pagan	Yang	Cont	L/Para
Pagan	24/3	Sing	Mta	Gil(Log)	--
Phu Tan	21/3	Sing	Pssl	Cont	Sing
Banga Bijoy	22/2	Col	Baridhi	Cont	L/Cbo

Tanker due

SC Guoji	22/3	Dumai	Wta	Cpo(Rm/4/3)
Port Arthur	21/3	Kuwa	Mstpl	Hs
Mercur	22/3	Kuwa	Mstpl	Hsd
BW Hovsol	22/3	Kaki	Mbl	Ammonia

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Outside port limit				

Sea Drill-8 (Rig)	Pro. Equip	--	Ibsa	8/1
Gulf Drill-9 (Barge)	Pro. Equip	--	Ibsa	3/1
Wira Keris	--	--	Ibsa	R/A(19/3)
Pacific Champion	--	--	Ibsa	R/A(15/3)
Rose	Crude Oil	Jebel	Uniglobal	6/3

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready				
Eagle Progress	Cont	P. Kel	Ct	11/3
Xpress Makalu	Cont	Seacon	14/3	
Joso View	Cont	P. Kel	Rsl	14/3
Yogking	Cont	P. Kel	Pssl	15/3

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

STOCK