

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

tracks 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.



PHOTO: DBBL

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.



PHOTO: STRATEGICA

Asif Iqbal, head of marketing of AKTEL and AKM Fahim Mashroor, convener of BASIS SOFTEXPO2007, sign an agreement in Dhaka recently. Under the MoU, the mobile phone operator becomes the main sponsor of the ICT exposition to be held in the capital during March 28 to April 1.

## S'pore cancer clinic launches liaison office in Bangladesh

The West Clinic Excellence Cancer Center, a Singapore-based healthcare service provider, has set up a liaison office in Bangladesh.

Renowned cancer specialist Dr Steven J Tucker announced the launching of the office at a press conference here yesterday, says a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Tucker said the liaison office would offer a new ray of hope for the cancer patients of Bangladesh for liaising with the center in Singapore.

## 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  |         |        | * The forward rates are indicative only and fixed dated |         |                  |
| * Rates may vary based on nature of transaction  |         |        |   |         |                  |

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  | Sing        | 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 Bort       | Cont  | P. Kel      | Baridhi     | 9/3           | 20/3    | --           |
| J/6       | An Tao Jiang     | Gi    | Para        | Cosco       | 19/3          | 21/3    | 212          |
| J/7       | Xpress Manaslu   | Cont  | Col         | 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      | Cel         | 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       | Usl         | Scraping      | --            |
| Qin Hai               | 20/3            | Durb         | Rainbow     | R. Sugar      | --            |
| Pacific Steel         | 20/3            | --           | Ibsa        | P. Equip      | --            |
| Quan                  | 20/3            | Hong         | Rship       | Scraping      | --            |
| Natzulec              | 21/3            | Fuku         | Ancl        | Slag          | --            |
| Zhe Hai-315           | 21/3            | Sing         | Pml         | Cont          | Sing          |
| An Qing Jiang (Liner) | 22/3            | Osaka        | Cosco       | Gi            | --            |
| Kota Petani           | 21/3            | Sing         | Pil(Bd)     | Cont          | Mong          |
| Rio Lawrence 21/3     | 21/3            | Sing         | Qosl        | Cont          | --            |
| Gao Cheng             | 24/3            | Sing         | Pml         | Cont          | Sing          |
| Dali                  | 21/3            | Col          | Seacon      | Cont          | Col           |
| Mir Damad             | 21/3            | Chenn        | Bsca        | Cont          | Kol           |
| Coastal Express       | 22/3            | Kol          | Bsca        | Cont          | L/Para        |
| Pagan                 | 24/3            | Yang         | Mta         | Gi(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          |
| Mercure     | 22/3 | Kuwa  | Mstpl | Hsd         |
| BW Havsol   | 22/3 | Kaki  | Mbl   | Ammonia     |

#### Vessels at Kutubdia

| Name of vessels | Cargo call | Last Port | Local agent | Date of arrival |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
|-----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|

#### Outside port limit

|                      |            |       |           |            |
|----------------------|------------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Sea Drill-6 (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 |      |
| Josco View     | Cont | P. Kel | Rsl  | 14/3 |
| Yogxing        | 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