

# Major trade players meet for make-or-break Doha talks

AFP, New Delhi

India and other key trading powers will meet here this week for potentially make-or-break talks to end a deadlock in the Doha Round of global trade negotiations.

Ministerial representatives from the G4 group of influential trading players -- the European Union, the United States, Brazil and India -- will strive to reach a common position on agriculture, industrial goods and services during the two-day meeting which starts Wednesday.

"These talks are timely and important," EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said in Brussels ahead of the talks.

"If we fail (at these talks), Doha's prospects for this year will be lost."

The meeting in the Indian capital will be attended by Mandelson, Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath, US trade representative Susan Schwab and Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim.

"We hope there'll be some movement (at this meeting) but it depends on how far developing countries' aspirations are fulfilled," an Indian government spokesman told AFP in New Delhi.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is hoping to conjure up a deal before the end of June when crucial trade negotiating powers of US President George Bush are set to expire.

India's Nath has said there is "no commitment by India on the deadline" and factors like the expiry of Bush's Trade Promotion Authority should not dictate the pace of negotiations.

If a breakthrough can be achieved by June, a conclusion to the Doha talks -- which have been called a once-in-a-generation chance to help bring millions out of poverty -- could be reached in about eight months, WTO officials say.

Otherwise the Doha round, launched in the Qatari capital Doha in 2001 risks years of delay, they said.

An agreement among the world's two biggest trading powers, the US and EU, and the two leading developing nations India and Brazil, is seen as crucial to hopes of brokering a compromise among the WTO's 150 members this year.

India and Brazil have emerged as leaders in the developing world's challenge to the wealthy nations to curtail generous farm subsidies as they seek to keep their own agriculture supports.

None of the big players had made concrete offers on tariffs and farm subsidies, the main stumbling blocks, and India would prefer "no deal than a bad deal," the Indian commerce minister said.

The EU and other WTO members have called for Washington to make a new, more radical proposal on cutting farm subsidies while the EU is being pushed for steeper reductions in farm product tariffs.

"We want real, effective reductions in huge farm subsidies by countries like the US which distort world agriculture prices," the Indian spokesman said.

"We must have a level playing field so the round's development mandate is fulfilled, the official said.

Developing nations are being pressed to open their markets wider to industrial goods and services and the United States is seeking fewer farm products on their "protected" list.

But India and other developing nations says they needs their farm tariffs to protect the livelihoods of their huge farming populations. Up to 80 percent of the workforces in developing nations depend on agriculture.

Mandelson said India, Brazil, the EU and the United States need to put solid offers on the table if negotiations are to succeed.

"It's the responsibility of the G4 to put the numbers on the table" on reductions in farm support and agriculture and industrial tariffs, he said.



PHOTO: SLBCCI

The annual general meeting (AGM) of Sri Lanka- Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SLBCCI) was held in Dhaka on Saturday. Sri Lanka High Commissioner V Khrishnamoorthy and SLBCCI President S Renganathan were present among others.



PHOTO: HSBC

Mamoon M Shah, head of Personal Financial Services of HSBC Bangladesh, and A H M Mahfuzul Arif, managing director of Computer Source Ltd (CSL), exchange documents after signing an MoU recently. Under the accord, customers will get HSBC's interest free loan and other facilities while buying specific branded computers from CSL. Senior officials from both the sides are also seen.



PHOTO: GRAMEENPHONE

Ghalib Ahmed Ansari, head of Market Communication of GrameenPhone Ltd, and Badrudduza Choudhury, head of Consumer Banking of The City Bank Ltd, signed an agreement recently. Under the deal, GP's post-paid subscribers would enjoy discounted annual fee on the bank's international credit cards.

## Japan, China to agree on farm, environment

AFP, Tokyo

Japan will offer China help to curb greenhouse gas and Beijing will agree to resume importing Japanese rice when China's premier pays a landmark visit here this week, reports said Sunday.

Premier Wen Jiabao is due here Wednesday in the first visit by a Chinese leader to Japan since 2000, as the Asian powers try to repair frayed relations.

A joint statement during Wen's summit with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will feature about 10 items including Japan's agreement to transfer energy-saving technology to China, the Nikkei business daily said, without citing sources.

The Kyoto Protocol requires cuts in greenhouse gas emissions but makes no demands of emerging economies, leading the United States and Australia to shun the pact.

## Asian business still far from being self-reliant

AFP, Washington

Asia may be the world's fastest growing region and biggest market with booming regional trade and plentiful foreign reserves, but it is still far from being self-reliant, experts say.

Some Asian pundits have argued that the potentially large spending power of the region of nearly four billion people may help it weather a US slowdown and soften the impact of a global downturn.

They cite rapidly growing China and India, the world's two most populous nations, and the explosion of trade between China and other East Asian nations to support the view that Asia is decoupling from the global business cycle.

But new studies by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and private economists strongly challenge the theory.

"We find that contrary to what is generally perceived to be emerging wisdom in developing Asia, the relationship between Asia and the industrialized north has in fact increased" since 1997, the ADB's chief economist Ifzal Ali said at a forum in Washington.

"There is a school of thought emerging in Asia that there is an uncoupling of Asia from the industrial nations for two reasons," he said.

"Asia is growing so rapidly that it has more weight on the global system, and secondly, the rapid increase in regional trade is substitute for trade with the industrialized world," he said.

But he insisted ties between Asia and the "industrialized north" have "increased since the 1997 crisis (rather) than decreased."

## SHIPPING

### Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 8/4/2007							
Berth no.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Shwe Thara Phu	Gl(Y. Ma)	Yang	TCL	28/3	9/4	343
J/3	Asrar-a-mostafa	Rice(p)	Kaki	Cla	1/4	11/4	1040
J/4	Ju Yong Guan	Gl	S. Hai	Cosco	7/4	14/4	1273
J/5	Blue Ribbon	Gl	Sing	Prog	7/4	11/4	1290
J/6	Eid-e-mostafa	Gl(log)	Yang	Cla	3/4	8/4	2065
J/7	Banga Borak	Cont	Sing	Bdship	1/4	9/4	64
J/8	Cape Bonavista	Cont	P. Kel	Bdship	1/4	9/4	84
J/9	acific Express	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	4/4	11/4	103
J/10	Vinashin Mariner	Cont	Sing	PSSL	2/4	8/4	37
J/12	Phoenix	Cont	Sing	PSSL	1/4	8/4	20

Vessels due at outer anchorage					
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Dolphin-ii	8/4	Vizag	Sunshine	St Bil(gi)	--
Maritime Chiangmai	8/4	Tarj	BSL	C. Clink	--
Tug Century Star-1	10/4	Viza	Mutual	Towing Barge: Star-3002	--
Barge Star-3002	10/4	Viza	Mutual	Gl(St. Bil)	--
Bunga Mas-11	8/4	Sing	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Oel Freedom	9/4	Sin	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Natzutec	8/4	Kant	ANCL	C. Clink	--
Protec	9/4	Kohsi	ANCL	C. Clink	--
Banga Bijoy	11/4	Col	Baridhi	Cont	CBO
Yong Yue-8	9/4	Col	Seacon	Cont	Col
Pac Palawan	10/4	Sing	CEL	Cont	Sing
Csav California	10/4	--	PSSL	Cont	Col
Mir Damad	11/4	Chenn	BSC	Cont	L/viza
Banga Bodor	11/4	--	Baridhi	Cont	Sing
Cape Henry	9/4	Sin	APL	Cont	Sing
Amer	11/4	Sing	CEL	Cont	Sing
Banga Lanka	12/4	Col	Baridhi	Gl(cont)	Mong/CBO
Zhe Hai-315	10/4	Sing	PML	Cont	Sing

Tanker due				
Tablim	10/04	Dumai	Rainbow	CPO(RM/3)
Al Kuwaitiah	10/04	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD

Vessels at Kutubdia				
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Outside port limit				
Sea Drill-6 (rig)	Pro. Equip	--	IBSA	8/1
Gulf Drill-9 (barge)	Pr. Equip	--	IBSA	3/1
Wira Keri	--	--	IBSA	R/A(19/3)
Pacific Steel	P. Equip	--	IBSA	R/A(31/3)
Cherry-ii	Crude Oil	Rast	Uniglobal	3/4
Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	--	BSC	R/A(7/4)

Vessels at outer anchorage				
Vessels ready				
Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	6/4
Kissama	Cont	P. Kel	Vega	6/4
Banga Biraj	Cont	Sing	Bdship	7/4
Martha Russ	Cont	Sing	QCSL	7/4
Pac Aquila (cont)	Cont	Sing	Seacon	5/4
Khadajah	CPO	Belw	MTCL	8/4
Kota Pelani	CPO	Sing	Pil(Bd)	8/4
Sc Guoji	CPO	Mala	USL	6/4
Kota Rukun	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	6/4

Vessels not ready				
Odigitra	Wheat(tp)	Novo	Mutual	6/4
Hiona	R. Sugar	Kosi	Park	6/4
Theodor	G. Slag	Viza	Saraf	7/4

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

## STOCK